## Research-Based Recommendations for Teachers Leading Field Trips*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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| Chaos/Over-stimulation | • Use pre-visit lessons specifically related to the (museum) topics.\(^1\)  
• Plan trips that introduce moderate novelty; use pre-trip orientation to reduce the novelty of new settings.\(^2,3\)  
• Prepare for novelty: cognitively, geographically, psychologically.\(^4\) |
| Limited Time | • Students show better retention when the content is linked to the curriculum\(^5,6,7\)  
• Use the museum’s website to plan logistics and extend lessons in the classroom\(^8\)  
• Incorporate science standards in lesson planning\(^9\)  
• Limit the number of exhibits students visit to improve learning\(^10\)  
• Allow time for small group exploration\(^11\) |
| Teaching Tools (such as tasks, worksheets, or prompts) | • Consider students’ input, interests, and abilities in planning your trip\(^12,13\)  
• Give students choice in exploring\(^14\)  
• Some less structured time can be good\(^15\)  
• If you use worksheets, emphasize concepts rather than a broad survey of the content, and preference questions that prompt students to interact with exhibits and allow some degree of choice in response\(^16,17\)  
• Encourage social interactions, (even) while using worksheets\(^18,19\) |
| Surprises | • Determine the trip’s purpose first, then plan the setting\(^20\)  
• If you choose a museum destination, consider how it supports your agenda\(^21\)  
• Visit the field trip site ahead of time and coordinate with staff on safety, logistics, expectations and learning\(^22,23,24\) |
| Chaperones | • Recognize and support multiple roles of chaperones and encourage chaperones to use new approaches to facilitating learning.\(^25\)  
• Encourage chaperones to promote conversations among students (because most of students’ talk in a museum is learning talk\(^26\)), and ask questions that require students to explore exhibits\(^27\)  
• Encourage chaperones to interact with students in a family-like way in small groups\(^28,29\)  
• Consider providing chaperones with a list of questions and a bag of props they can use to focus students’ attention and inquiry\(^30\)  
• Model interest in exhibits\(^31\)  
• Prepare chaperones with an understanding of students’ current ideas, thinking, values, and learning needs\(^32\) |

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19 Watson, K., Aubusson, P., Steel, F., & Griffin, J. (2002). A cultural of learning in an
informal setting. *Journal of Australian Research in Early Childhood Education*, 9(1), 125-137.


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