

TEACHER GUIDE TO THE  
**ILLINOIS RIVER ENCOUNTER**



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*\*Copies of these documents will be printed for you and handed out at PRM.*

## ILLINOIS RIVER ENCOUNTER

Please read through this document at least once before arriving at the museum for your field trip.

The information found in this guide (on page 3) is intended to provide you, the teacher, with background information and a general plan for your gallery experience.

We will provide you with a copy of this Teacher's Guide upon your arrival at the museum for use during your time in the gallery, so you don't need to bring your own copy.

You are encouraged to adjust or change the elements outlined in this guide to best suit your class' needs. The main objective of your time in the gallery is to reinforce your curriculum goals related to animal classifications.

Please **do not** plan on reading this guide aloud to your students verbatim, but rather, become comfortable with the material and then present it to your class at their learning level.

You will receive copies of the student worksheet (pages 4-6) upon arrival at the museum, so don't bring your own copies.

If you have questions, feel free to contact:

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# TEACHER GUIDE TO THE ILLINOIS RIVER ENCOUNTER

**Before walking in the Gallery, please remind your students of the following:**

How should we behave when we're inside the gallery?

1. Walk.
2. Use inside voices.
3. You are allowed to touch the exhibits in this gallery, but make sure that you are being gentle and respectful.

**As you enter the Illinois River Encounter gallery, begin a discussion with your students.** You could start by saying something similar to the following:

This exhibit is called the Illinois River Encounter. Can anyone guess what we will see inside this gallery?

*Answer: This gallery explores the relationship between people and the Illinois River. This museum actually sits on the banks of the river (you can see the Illinois River from the windows in the main lobby). Many people made their home by the river because it provided a source of food, water, protection, and trade. In the gallery, you will get to learn about the different types of people that have called this area their home throughout history, and about the animals that lived here as well. As we walk around, you should pay special attention to the animals and their habitats.*

Who can tell me why we classify animals? How does it help us?

*We classify organisms to better understand how all living things are connected. Humans do this kind of organizing all of the time. We classify aisles in grocery stores by food type, we classify sports by the type of balls and techniques they use, we classify things all the time by putting them into groups based on similarities because it helps us think about them.*

Who can tell me the different classifications of animals and the traits of each?\*

1. Mammal: live young; fur/hair; nurses young; warm-blooded
2. Reptile: scales; dry skin; usually lays eggs; cold-blooded
3. Birds: feathers and wings; lay eggs; warm-blooded
4. Amphibians: live on land and water; cold-blooded; lay eggs; moist skin; webbed feet
5. Fish: breathe underwater (have gills); scales and fins; cold-blooded; lay eggs

*\*If you haven't covered this in class yet, you can go over the information for the first time; students will have copies of the information on their worksheets.*

## TEACHER GUIDE TO THE **ILLINOIS RIVER ENCOUNTER**

As we walk through the gallery, keep an eye out for the many different kinds of animals that live along the river. You will need to find the animals on your worksheet, observe them in their natural habitat, and then use their traits to classify them.

**You may now guide your students through the exhibit, or allow them to move freely in their chaperone groups.**

**Most animals/habitats are found in the second alcove of the gallery; this area can only hold 5-7 students at a time. Please help monitor this area and keep it from becoming overcrowded.**

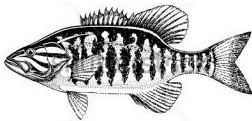
**The in-visit activity, “Classifying Animals,” will most likely take about 15 minutes to complete. Students who finish early may be given the “Bonus Activity” on page 7 which should take between 5 & 10 more minutes to complete.**

# CLASSIFYING ANIMALS

The gallery you are in is called the Illinois River Encounter gallery. This room explores the relationship between people and the Illinois River. One of the important parts of learning about the river is learning about the animals that live in it or near it. Scientists study these animals to learn about the people that live near the river, and even how healthy the river is!

**Today, your job is to locate some of the animals in this gallery, observe them in their natural habitat, and then use their traits (things like their skin or fur) to put them into the correct group.**

*If you need help figuring out which group an animal belongs in, flip this paper over for a few clues!*



**Small Mouth Bass**  
Describe where this animal lives.

Describe this animal (circle the answer):


Skin has: FUR                      FEATHERS                      SCALES

Skin is: DRY                      WET

Does it have: TAIL                      WEBBED FEET

This animal is a (circle the answer):

Mammal   Reptile   Bird   Fish   Amphibian



**Woodpecker**  
Describe where this animal lives.

Describe this animal (circle the answer):

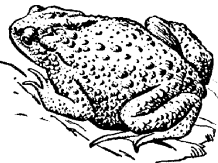
Skin has: FUR                      FEATHERS                      SCALES

Skin is: DRY                      WET

Does it have: TAIL                      WEBBED FEET

This animal is a (circle the answer):

Mammal   Reptile   Bird   Fish   Amphibian



**Toad**  
Describe where this animal lives.

Describe this animal (circle the answer):

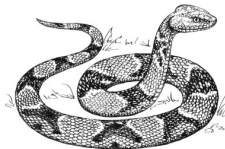
Skin has: FUR                      FEATHERS                      SCALES

Skin is: DRY                      WET

Does it have: TAIL                      WEBBED FEET

This animal is a (circle the answer):

Mammal   Reptile   Bird   Fish   Amphibian



**Snake**  
Describe where this animal lives.

Describe this animal (circle the answer):

Skin has: FUR                      FEATHERS                      SCALES

Skin is: DRY                      WET

Does it have: TAIL                      WEBBED FEET

This animal is a (circle the answer):

Mammal   Reptile   Bird   Fish   Amphibian

# MAMMALS

• give birth to live young?



• have hair or fur



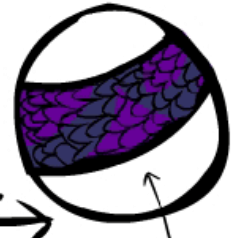
• mammal mothers nurse their young with milk.

• **Warm**-blooded

# REPTILES

• have scales, not fur.

• they have dry skin.



• usually lay eggs, sometimes live young

• **Cold**-blooded.

# AMPHIBIANS

• live on land & in water.

• **Cold**-blooded.

• lay eggs.

• moist skin.

• webbed feet.



# FISH

• breathe underwater using gills.

• have scales and fins.

• **Cold**-blooded.

• lay eggs.



# BIRDS

• have feathers & wings

• lay eggs



• **Warm**-blooded

## Bonus Activity

How many can you find? Be sure to look high and low!

When you've found an animal, mark its classification: put a CIRCLE around mammals, a SQUARE around birds, a TRIANGLE around reptiles, a CLOUD around amphibians, and a STAR around fish.

**FOX**

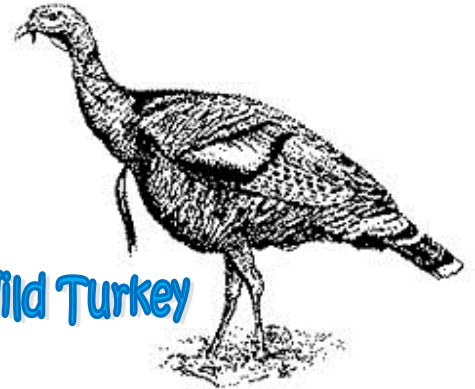
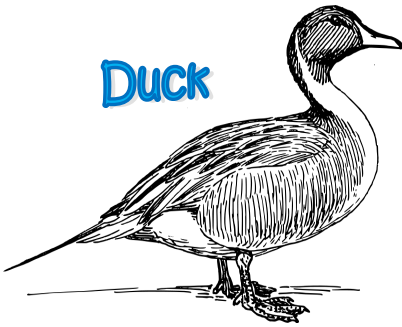


**Canada Goose**



**Raccoon**

**Duck**

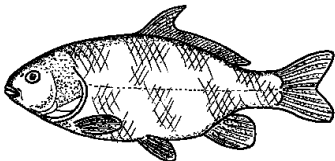


**Wild Turkey**



**Woodpecker**

**Buffalo Fish**



**Snake**



**Pheasant**

**Beaver**



**Toad**



**Turtle**

