

TEACHER GUIDE TO THE ILLINOIS RIVER ENCOUNTER



Included in this Packet:

Cover Page/Table of Contents	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
How to Use this Guide	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Teacher Guide*	-	-	-	-	-	-	3-4
In-Visit Student Activity*	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Bonus In-Visit Student Activity*	-	-	-	-	-	-	6

**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 5-6) upon arrival at the museum, so don't bring your own copies.

If you have questions, feel free to contact:

Holly Johnson

309-863-3013

hjohnson@peoriariverfrontmuseum.org

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.

What is an animal habitat?

A habitat is the immediate environment in which a living organism (an animal or plant), exists. A habitat can exist in any size and can even be as small as a rock pool or a log that is decaying on the forest floor. The word habitat however, generally refers to the grouping of animals and plants, together with their surroundings. Habitats contain both living organisms and non-living objects and can contain anywhere from just a few species to thousands of them, all coexisting in a very small space.

Freshwater rivers are often home a wide variety of species from insects, to amphibians, reptiles, fish, birds and even mammals. Turtles, ducks, otters, crocodiles, catfish, dragonfly and crabs can be found in rivers all around the world, and the Amazon River is even home to the rare and pink, freshwater dolphin. An extraordinary number of different fish species can also been found in rivers and streams all over the world.

What kind of animals do you think might be found living in a freshwater habitat like the area around the Illinois River?*

There are many animals that live in or near a river, some of them include: fish, snails, insects like butterflies, bees, dragonflies, mosquitos and flies, snakes, beavers, otters, fox, eagles, turkey, pheasant, frog, toad, woodpeckers, and more! These animals all need something from the river in order to survive, like water, food, or even a place to live!

**If you haven't covered this in class yet, you can go over the information for the first time.*

TEACHER GUIDE TO THE **ILLINOIS RIVER ENCOUNTER**

As we walk through the gallery, look for the different animals that live near the Illinois River. When you have found an animal that you really like, stop and try to draw a picture of the habitat in which they live. You can draw the kind of home they live in, the kind of food they eat, or the other animals that live near them. Use a pencil to create your drawing now, and you can take it home to add color to it later.

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, “Drawing an Animal Habitat,” will most likely take about 15 minutes to complete. If some students finish early and you would like them to complete another worksheet, you may make use of the bonus connect-the-dot activity found on page 6. The completed pictures are of Large Mouth Bass fish.

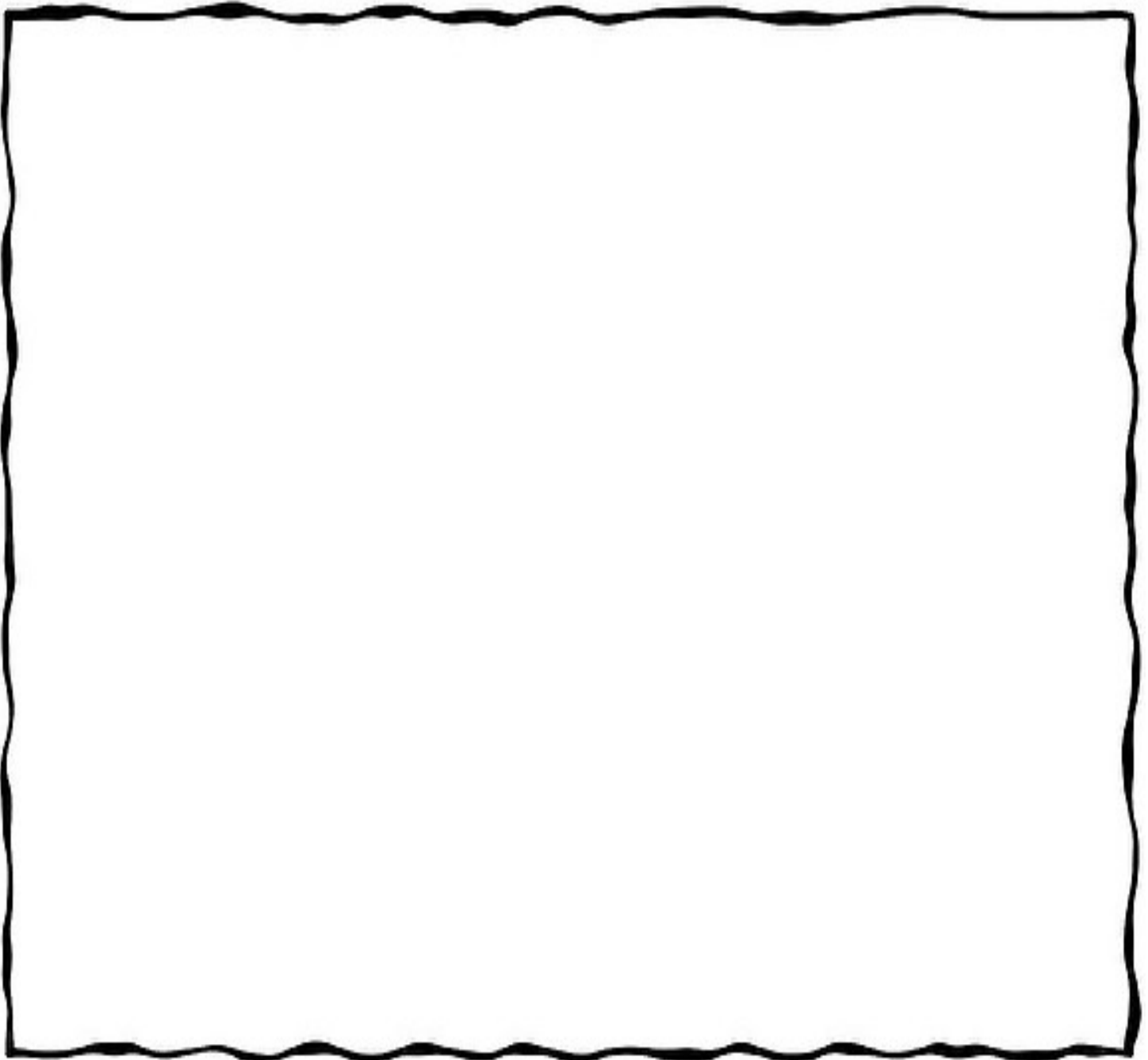
Name: _____

DRAWING AN ANIMAL HABITAT

The gallery you are in is called the Illinois River Encounter gallery. In this room, you will find many different animals that live in or near the Illinois River, a freshwater habitat.

When you find your favorite animal, stop and draw a picture of its habitat. You can include plants and animals, the food that your animal eats, and even the kind of home your animal lives in, like a nest or a burrow.

You will use your pencil to create your picture while you are here in the museum, but you can always take your picture home and color it in later.



Bonus In-Visit Activity

Can you connect the dots to complete the pictures?

Can you figure out which kind of fish these are? HINT: you can find them in our fish tank!

This fish is a _____

