



GUIDELINES FOR BRINGING YOUR OWN CENTER ACTIVITIES

You are welcome to use your own activities and resource people in addition to or in place of those in our Activity Center booklet. However, we ask you to contact us well in advance and inform us of the content so that we may:

- Advise you if it is an acceptable activity for this program
- Assist you in any way (site, materials, etc.)

In planning your own activities, please consider the following criteria.

1. Is your proposed activity center lesson...
 - a. Supportive of our desert ecology emphasis?
 - b. Taking advantage of the Cooper ELC desert environment?
 - c. An active rather than a passive activity?
 - d. Compliant with the CORE curriculum?

If your answer to any of these questions is "no", then perhaps the lesson is better suited for the classroom setting as a pre or post-trip activity.

Please read through the Activity Center lesson plans. You will notice that most of the activities are active and make optimum use of our desert setting. Also, the center kits provide many materials you may not have access to at school.

2. If you are bringing your own activity center, here are some suggestions:
 - a. If you are doing an art activity, have the children create their own sketches, paintings, models, etc. as they observe the desert. Avoid coloring-book page "art" or projects that could be better done in the classroom.
 - b. If you are asking a speaker to come in to instruct at one of the centers, ask that person to make use of the environment. If it's a sit-down lecture session, it may be best if that speaker presents the lesson back in the classroom.
 - c. Choose lessons that are appropriate to the Cooper Center for Environmental Learning mission statement which is included in your packet, but is restated here:
 - Offer programs and workshops to increase understandings of and deepen feelings for the earth and its life;
 - Provide extended educational experiences for students, teachers, and individuals;
 - Inspire individuals to develop ecologically sound practices in the Sonoran Desert;
 - Promote partnerships between Southern Arizona Schools, the University of Arizona, and the local community to help prepare educators to better integrate environmental learning and sustainable practices in the classroom.