

BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS

- Your assignment is to observe the feeding or social behavior of an individual animal at the San Francisco Zoo, and to record your detailed observations in a scientifically useful format.
- Free admission to the zoo for two days has been arranged for you to complete this assignment -- inform the gate attendant that you are a City College student enrolled in the Zoology 10 course.
- The specific animal that you select for observation should be a bird or mammal species that interests you and that is actively engaged in observable and describable feeding or social behavior.
- You should not select an organism that is only resting, sleeping, napping, relaxing, reposing, roosting, reclining, lying, lolling, lounging, standing, sitting, sprawling, floating, sunning, hiding, retreating, or comparably inactive unless there is a justifiable and compelling reason.
- Though your behavioral observations will focus upon a single organism, you should also analyze its reactions to other animals nearby as well as to yourself and other zoo visitors.

REPORT - Answer the following questions, and number all of your answers.
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1. Species - What are the common and scientific names of the animal you observed, and why did you select this organism?
2. Description - Describe the individual characteristics of your animal, including its size, age and sex (if apparent), and other distinguishing features.
3. Enclosure - Describe the physical environment of your animal, including a sketch of the cage or enclosure (along with complete labels), numerical estimates of its dimensions, the construction materials used, and the presence of any vegetation.
4. Natural habitat - How successfully does this enclosure mimic the natural habitat of the species, and how you would improve it if unlimited funding were available?
5. Other animals - Identify the number and species of all other organisms found within or adjacent to this enclosure, and whether any family or social relationships were observed.
6. Food - What kinds of food can you observe that was available to your animal?
7. Observations - Describe in excruciating detail the minute-by-minute feeding or social behavior of your animal for a total of 30 minutes. Be sure to record the exact time that you started and the exact time of every minute observed. Write down everything since no details or actions should be considered too trivial. Avoid anthropomorphic comments in your notes.
8. Instincts - Which aspects of the observed behavior were clearly instinctual and not learned? Provide a detailed explanation and analysis.
9. Wildness - Which aspects of the observed behavior accurately reflected the animal's natural behavior in the wild? Provide a detailed explanation and analysis.
10. Captivity - Which aspects of the observed behavior seemed unnatural and may have been induced by captivity? Provide a detailed explanation and analysis.