

Self-Guided Field Trips in Geoscience Instruction

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Self-Guided Field Trips

- On-campus: rock pit and local geology
- American Museum of Natural History, New York City
- Maritime Aquarium Norwalk, Connecticut

On-campus Rock Pit & Local Geology

- Rock pit - “interesting” limestone from upstate NY
- sedimentary structures and fossils for students to identify
- building stones and bedrock on campus give view of a different geological setting

American Museum of Natural History, New York City

- Self-guided field trip for introductory geology class
- Assignment is to complete field trip report
- Gottesman Hall of Planet Earth
 - Major themes of exhibit:
 - How has Earth evolved?
 - How do we read the rocks?
 - Why are there ocean basins, mountains, and continents?
 - Why is Earth habitable?
 - What causes climate and climate change?

Maritime Aquarium, Norwalk CT

- Self-guided field trip for Oceanography course for non-science majors
- Assignment is to complete field trip report
- Major themes:
 - Environmental issues of Long Island Sound Estuary
 - Life in the ocean
 - Think of educational value of museum displays

Constraints

Accessible to all students

- public transportation
- extended hours (weekends)
- students with disabilities

Lessons Learned

- students enjoy making connections with material from lectures and what they see at museum
- provokes additional curiosity
- more resources than we have in a typical classroom
- frustrations generated from crowds, noisy children, finding a significant block of time to go on trip, public transportation