Animal Ambassador Evaluation Tool Checklist

Updated 4-26-23

A Few Days Before the Program
- [ ] Look at Education schedule and determine which Naturalist is teaching the class
- [ ] Connect with them and establish:
    - Whether you are driving separately or together
    - What time you are leaving the zoo
    - Any way you can help them logistically to make their program go smoother
    - Anything they would like feedback on their teaching this day
- [ ] Check the grey "Empathy for Wildlife" bag (located in the Island closet or wherever is convenient for you) and make sure it has enough forms, pencils, etc. (see full list of what should be in it below).
- [ ] Let Liz know if you need anything else printed.

Day of the Program
- [ ] Grab the "Empathy for Wildlife" grey bag from the Island Closet. It will contain:
    - Blue Clipboard/case
    - Copies of evaluation tool
    - Pencils
    - Your cell phone (this works best)
- [ ] Meet the Naturalist at the appointed time and travel to the site.

When you Arrive at your Program (before it starts)
- [ ] Introduce yourself to the contact who greets you when you arrive.
- [ ] Explain that we are evaluating our programs to see how we can better provide programs for our new audience. For example, you may include:
    - The zoo is now focusing all its outreach efforts on reaching groups who have barriers to coming to the zoo. This includes seniors, memory care, adults with disabilities, etc.
    - We have done some training on how to make these programs a success and are here gathering data to see how we do in the real world.
    - We will not be taking pictures or writing down names, just observing the program.
- [ ] Find a place in the back where you can view not only the Zoo Naturalist but also the faces of the participants. Make sure you can get up and walk around (if need be).
- [ ] Write down the name of the facility
- [ ] Count the number of participants and caregivers and note on the sheet
- [ ] Draw a picture of the set-up and circle which participants you plan to observe later

Introduction and First Animal

In this section you will be looking at how the instructor used empathy and culturally responsive best practices. You will only be recording what the Minnesota Zoo Naturalist does. You DO need to note when this starts and ends, so we have an idea of the duration.

- ☐ Write down the time the Naturalist starts talking
- ☐ Complete form
- ☐ Note what time the animal is put away
- ☐ At the end of this section, please rate how verbal the audience seems to help us understand the rest of this form.

Second Animal

In this section, you will be specifically looking at the closer look/touching portion of the class. You do not need to note when this portion started and ended, but you do need to keep track of the time you view the participants.

- ☐ Get out your cellphone and/or stopwatch, you will need it for this section.
- ☐ Count how many people are in the room (this can change over the course of a program)
- ☐ Draw a map of the room and circle three individuals that you plan to observe during the touching portion.
  - • One should be closest to the Naturalist in seating
  - • One in the middle
  - • One furthest away
- ☐ When the instructor begins to approach your person, start the timer. You will observe each person for one minute. This will include the time they are being approached, during the closer look/touch, and afterward.
- ☐ At the same time, take a tally of who touches/gets a closer look at the animal.

Third Animal

In this section we are looking at responses from the participants that may be verbal and non-verbal, we are also once again counting how many people take a closer look or touch. You DO need to note when this starts and end and count again how many people are in the room since this may have changed.

- ☐ Count how many people are present and record on form
- ☐ Write down the time the Naturalist starts talking
- ☐ Complete form
- ☐ Note what time the animal is put away
- ☐ At the end rate how, the process went

Fourth Animal

This is time for you to complete the questions about how the day went and any feedback for the teacher. If there is another opportunity for a touch/closer look at an animal or biofacts, it is optional to record this data.

Location: _____ Time Scheduled to start _____ Date: _____
Data Collector _____ Naturalist_____
Group: _____ # of Participants: _____ # of Caregivers:_____

Map of Program Area

Directions: Draw a Map of the room below and how guests were situated. Put a circle around the guests that are being observed and indicate which order they were observed in.
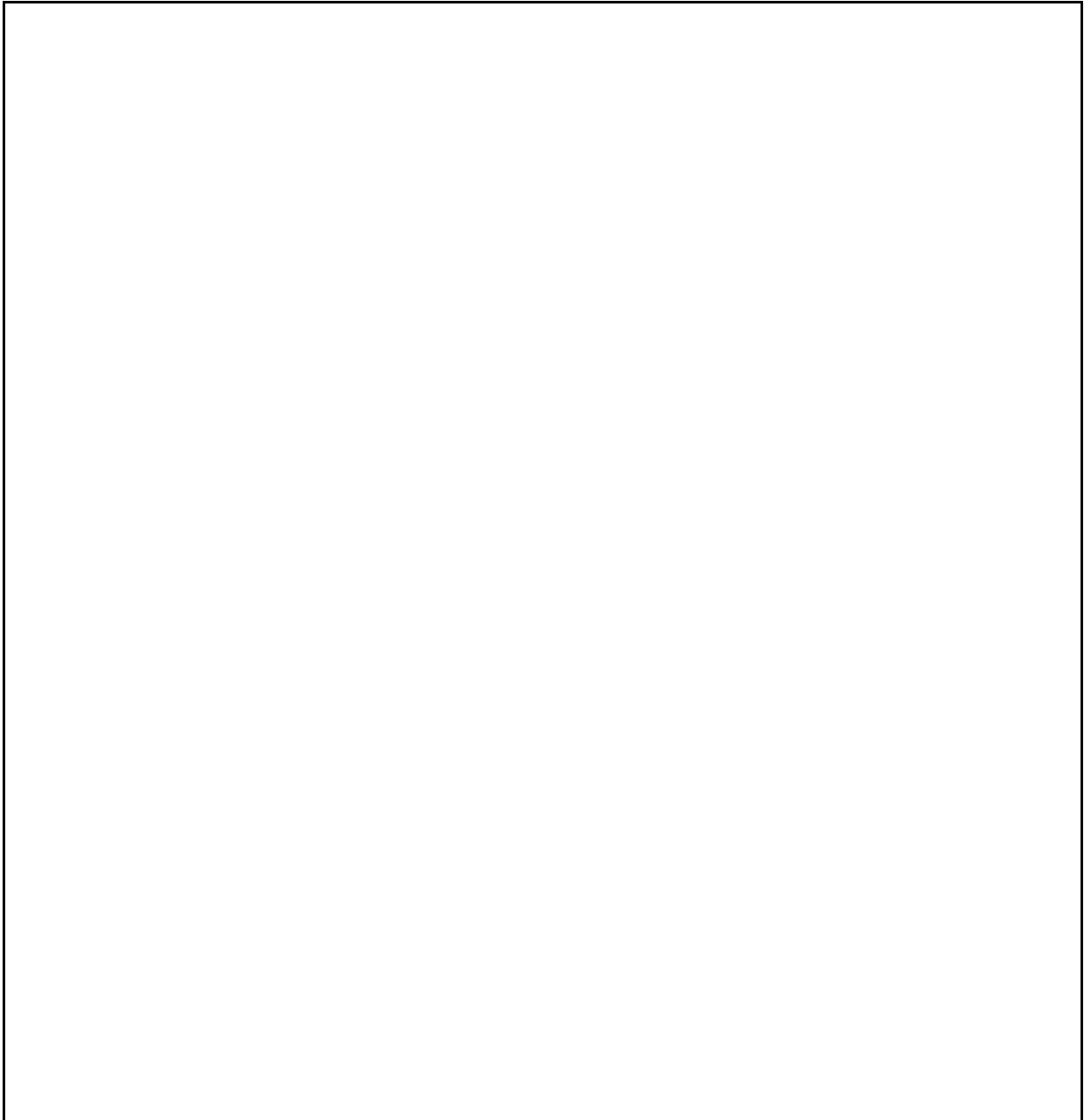
Instructor: _____ Date: _____ Start time: _____ End time: _____
Group: _____ # of Participants: _____ # of Caregivers:_____
Animals Observed: _____

Naturalist (N)			
Behavior	**Description**	**Observations**	**Examples**
Instructor **uses supports** to help transition to real animal	Types of support (circle): Visual, tactile, video, schedule, other _____	Yes or No	
Instructor assures the **welfare** of the animal	Stating that you will do everything possible to make sure this animal feels good, space setup	Count	
Instructor provides personal **facts and natural history** facts about the animal.	Facts about the species (e.g. "She lives in the rainforest")	Yes / No	
Instructor **models** appropriate **behavior**	Tone of voice, reaction to animal, talking to animal, etc.	Yes or No	
Instructor uses animal **pronoun** / name	Uses "he/she/they" or name (not "it" or "that")	Count	
Instructor **shares positive emotions / attachment** to animal.	"He's so cute." "Don't you just love her?"	Count	
Instructor **avoids negative** emotions / reinforcing **fear or disgust**.	e.g. Calling animal "my friend." e.g. Laughing when snake climbs up sleeve.	Yes or No	
Instructor talks about animal **emotional state**	"He's calm right now"	Count	
Instructor tells a short **story** or anecdote about each animal.	Individual traits, what he/she likes to eat or do	Yes or No	
Instructor invites participants to **share own experiences** with animal	Have you seen this animal before? What was s/he called?	Count	
Instructor invites participants to **ask questions**	Any questions? What are you curious about?	Count	
Instructor asks participants **open ended questions**	e.g. "What is something you noticed about him right away?"	Count	
Instructor invites participation through **body actions**	(e.g. raise hands, thumbs up, pretend to be animals)	Yes or No	
Instructor asks participants to **compare** self to animal or **find similarities** with animal	Touch your shoe, can you feel it? That's like a tortoise and its shell.	Count	
Instructor suggests simple **caring actions**.	What are some ways you can take care of the earth?	Yes or No	

Person #1 (one minute of observation)

Time:

Observe lower empathy	Lower empathy description / examples	Observe higher empathy	Higher empathy description / examples	Notes
	facial expression -negative emotional facial expression (e.g. anxious, fearful, overwhelmed, disgusted, lip biting, etc)		**facial expression** -positive emotional facial expression (e.g. smiling) -caring / concerned facial expression (forehead wrinkled, eyes narrowed / squinted)	
	body language / gestures -hand pushing away, protecting self -other negative expressive body language -lack of expressive body language -crossed arms & legs		**body language / gestures** -pointing, reaching -nodding or other positive expressive body language -open body language (uncrossed arms & legs)	
	interpersonal distance -more distance between participant and animal (e.g. moving away, unwilling to touch animal)		**interpersonal distance** -smaller distance between participant and animal (e.g. leaning in, willing to touch animal, appropriate touch)	
	vocal characteristics -vocal sounds that are negative (e.g. yikes!, ew!, fearful or disgusted sounds)		**vocal characteristics** -vocal sounds that are positive (e.g. ooohh, aw!, sighs, laughter, happy squeals, etc)	
	gaze direction -avoidance of looking at animal or naturalist -low eye contact with animal or naturalist (if appropriate for population)		**gaze direction** -looking at animal or naturalist -high eye contact with animal or naturalist (if appropriate for population)	
	attention -fidgeting or other indications of disinterest or boredom		**attention** -deep attention, willingness to listen and observe animal or naturalist	
	synchrony -low bodily synchrony with animal and/or naturalist		**synchrony** -high bodily synchrony in movement with animal and/or naturalist	

Person #2

Time:

Observe lower empathy	Lower empathy description / examples	Observe higher empathy	Higher empathy description / examples	Notes
	facial expression -negative emotional facial expression (e.g. anxious, fearful, overwhelmed, disgusted, lip biting, etc)		**facial expression** -positive emotional facial expression (e.g. smiling) -caring / concerned facial expression (forehead wrinkled, eyes narrowed / squinted)	
	body language / gestures -hand pushing away, protecting self -other negative expressive body language -lack of expressive body language -crossed arms & legs		**body language / gestures** -pointing, reaching -nodding or other positive expressive body language -open body language (uncrossed arms & legs)	
	interpersonal distance -more distance between participant and animal (e.g. moving away, unwilling to touch animal)		**interpersonal distance** -smaller distance between participant and animal (e.g. leaning in, willing to touch animal, appropriate touch)	
	vocal characteristics -vocal sounds that are negative (e.g. yikes!, ew!, fearful or disgusted sounds)		**vocal characteristics** -vocal sounds that are positive (e.g. ooohh, aw!, sighs, laughter, happy squeals, etc)	
	gaze direction -avoidance of looking at animal or naturalist -low eye contact with animal or naturalist (if appropriate for population)		**gaze direction** -looking at animal or naturalist -high eye contact with animal or naturalist (if appropriate for population)	
	attention -fidgeting or other indications of disinterest or boredom		**attention** -deep attention, willingness to listen and observe animal or naturalist	
	synchrony -low bodily synchrony with animal and/or naturalist		**synchrony** -high bodily synchrony in movement with animal and/or naturalist	

Person #3

Time:

Observe lower empathy	Lower empathy description / examples	Observe higher empathy	Higher empathy description / examples	Notes
	facial expression -negative emotional facial expression (e.g. anxious, fearful, overwhelmed, disgusted, lip biting, etc)		**facial expression** -positive emotional facial expression (e.g. smiling) -caring / concerned facial expression (forehead wrinkled, eyes narrowed / squinted)	
	body language / gestures -hand pushing away, protecting self -other negative expressive body language -lack of expressive body language -crossed arms & legs		**body language / gestures** -pointing, reaching -nodding or other positive expressive body language -open body language (uncrossed arms & legs)	
	interpersonal distance -more distance between participant and animal (e.g. moving away, unwilling to touch animal)		**interpersonal distance** -smaller distance between participant and animal (e.g. leaning in, willing to touch animal, appropriate touch)	
	vocal characteristics -vocal sounds that are negative (e.g. yikes!, ew!, fearful or disgusted sounds)		**vocal characteristics** -vocal sounds that are positive (e.g. ooohh, aw!, sighs, laughter, happy squeals, etc)	
	gaze direction -avoidance of looking at animal or naturalist -low eye contact with animal or naturalist (if appropriate for population)		**gaze direction** -looking at animal or naturalist -high eye contact with animal or naturalist (if appropriate for population)	
	attention -fidgeting or other indications of disinterest or boredom		**attention** -deep attention, willingness to listen and observe animal or naturalist	
	synchrony -low bodily synchrony with animal and/or naturalist		**synchrony** -high bodily synchrony in movement with animal and/or naturalist	

Who wants to touch the animal? (tally)   Who wants to take a closer look? (tally

Group: _____Start time: _____ End time: _____
Animal Observed: _____ # of Participants: _____ # of Caregivers:_____

How many people verbally participated? Circle one: 1=none, 2= some (1-2 people in an audience of 15), 3= a few (3-5 people in an audience of 15), 4= a Lot (More than 5 in an audience of 15)

Participants (P) & Caregivers (C)				
Behavior		**Description**	**Observations**	**Examples**
Animals as Individuals	Uses pronouns/name of animal (+)	"he" "she" "slinky"	Count	
	Speaks to or greets animals	Waves, says hi, or bye or talks to animal	Yes / No	
Perspective	Predicts animal's **positive emotion** or other internal state	"He looks relaxed."	Count	
	Predicts animal's **negative emotion** or other internal state	"I think he is hungry." "She looks scared."	Count	
	Compare animal to themselves (similarities and differences)	"They have grinding teeth, just like people!"	Count	
	Pretends to be an animal	"I'm a cat" or moves like a cat	Count	
Emotion	Expresses own positive emotions	"I'm excited" or shows excited body language	Count	
	Expresses own negative emotions	"I am scared" or shows fear body language (e.g. backs away, fearful / nervous facial expression)	Count	
Curiosity	Verbalizes observations	"I can see…"	Count	
	Seeks info about animals	Asks questions when called on or without being called on	Count	
	Wanting to see more	e.g. Coming back for 2nd look, moving closer	Count	

Who wants to touch the animal? (tally)   **Who wants to take a closer look? (tally)**

1. **What was going on in the program before the animal ambassadors?**

What was naturalist doing?	What were participants doing?	Other observations / comments

2. **How did participants react to the idea of meeting animal ambassadors?**

3. **How did the instructor create an environment where participants could access their prior knowledge and fully participate?**

4. **What access or inclusion practices did you see that were tuned into the needs for this group?**

_____ Checks with group leader about how they can best serve the needs of this group
_____ Verbally checks in with participants (e.g. how are you doing? have you been to the zoo?want to see more? would you like to take a closer look; etc)
_____ Adjusts teaching plan based on participant behaviors or requests (e.g. changes content if participants do not look engaged; pivots responsively based on participant interaction; asks if want assistance to view or touch)
_____ Provides nonverbal supports (visual, tactile, video, schedule, other) – also coded above
_____ Affirming facial expressions, body language, and verbal expressions (Smiling; "I love sharing this with you!" ; "What a nice group you are!")

5. **Strengths, Suggestions, and other observations**

Strengths	Suggestions	Other observations / comments

6. Subjective rating: How well did the session go? Circle one: 1=not well, 2=okay, 3=great

Explain below: