We are going to visit...

We will learn about the animals and fish that live in and around the water.

The Aquarium is located at
701 Channelside Drive
Tampa, Florida 33602

What is this?
We will see this symbol for Social Scripts on some pages.

This will tell us the page with the symbol contains extra suggestions or strategies than other pages, which might contain more basic information.
Planning the visit

I am visiting the Florida Aquarium with:
__my family
__my classmates and teacher
We will go to the Aquarium
__in a car
__on a bus
We will park
__in the parking lot
__at the bus area
We will be there
__all day
__just for the morning
__just for the afternoon
From the parking lot, we will follow the signs. If we cross a street we will be sure any cars or buses have stopped before we cross. If we need tickets, we will go to the ticket booth.
Map of the Florida Aquarium

1. **Wetlands Trail**
   - Takes visitors on Florida's Wetlands Trail and sees alligators, otters, and frigate birds. Imagine 50 years in the future.

2. **Bays & Beaches**
   - Experience an exciting journey! Meet up close with a 300-pound Orinoco crocodile. Spy on dolphins, manatees, sharks, and a touch-log experience at Stingray Beach.

3. **Coral Reefs**
   - Touch touchstones that house no reefstone aquariums, warm corals, and sea stars and more.

4. **Drakens**
   - See real Drakens of Australia and their underwater adventures.

5. **Explore Abound**
   - Enjoy educational shows and hands-on exhibits at the Touch-A-Bay activity area and get the first signs of touch.

6. **Heron Creek Lagoon**
   - Excavate what you see in the Heron Creek Lagoon, where you can touch moray eels! Learn about this ancient creature that dates back over 450 million years ago.

7. **Family Restroom**
   - Family Restroom

8. **Elevator**
   - Elevator

9. **Changing Rooms**
   - Changing Rooms

10. **Lockers**
    - Lockers

11. **ATM Machine**
    - ATM Machine

12. **Phone**
    - Phone

13. **Restrooms**
    - Restrooms

14. **Selling Your Aquarium Here!**
    - Selling Your Aquarium Here!!

15. **Timer**
    - Timer
Restrooms

I may need to use the restroom while visiting the Florida Aquarium.

I will look on the map for this symbol to see where the restrooms are located.

Using the Restrooms
Sometimes restrooms can be noisy. That’s because the sounds of water running, toilets flushing, people talking, or hand dryers blowing echo on the tile floor and walls. There are sometimes unpleasant smells in restrooms too. They might be caused by other people using the restroom. Or they might be from soap or cleaning.

If I need to use the restroom and I notice noises or smells, I can do these things:
• Cover my ears or nose
• Take some deep breaths with my mouth
• Finish in the restroom as quickly as I can
• Tell myself I’ll be more comfortable when I’m done using the restroom
We will start on the 2nd level
Going up to the exhibits

The exhibits are the tanks, displays and areas that hold the animals and fish.

The exhibits are their homes at the Florida Aquarium. Most of the exhibits are on Level 2.

To see them, we must go up...

The escalator only goes up. It does not go down.

We can walk up the stairs if we prefer.

If we have trouble walking, or we are with a baby in a stroller, we can use the elevator.
The Wetlands Trail
We can see a map when we enter the Wetlands Trail, and read information about what we will see.
Wetlands Trail

Even the signs that show us the rules look just like the ones we see at the state parks!
Entering the Wetlands Trail

It looks like we are entering a dark cave. There is light just ahead, around the curve.

We will see a big window with fish in it.

If we look up, we will see more fish, and maybe some turtles!
On the Wetlands Trail

On the Wetlands Trail, we will see low, open tanks of water. They are the homes for many animals and fish.

We will be very careful to keep our hands away from the tanks.

Visitors do not feed the animals. Visitors do not put hands in the tanks or throw things in the water.

This may scare the animals or make them sick.
What to do with my hands

Sometimes a Ranger might bring one of the animals out so we can see it up close. We can keep our hands by our side, or point to something interesting.

While we are on the Wetlands Trail, we can hold someone’s hand or we can hold our map or other stuff we have with us.
It’s All About the Animals: Alligators

Alligators are large reptiles that live in the swamp and streams of Florida.

The alligators we will see at the Florida Aquarium live in a large tank with high glass walls.

We can see them, but they can’t come out of the tank.
It’s All About the Animals: River Otters

River otters are active brown animals that live near the ponds and rivers of Florida. They love to swim and play.

Lots of people like to watch the river otters swim and play. Sometimes there are special shows to watch at the otter tank. It can get crowded and noisy. Or I might smell a strange smell from the otters and their tank. If this happens, I can say these things:

“Let’s go now”
“We can come back later.”
“It’s too crowded and noisy right now”
“Something smells strange. I don’t like it.”
Homes for the Trees and Plants

Inside the Wetlands dome there are also exhibits for many different trees and plants. These exhibits are also homes for lots of fish and birds that live in them.

Hammocks

Sometimes trees and plants grow on a patch of ground that is higher than the ground around it. This is called a hammock.

Birds and Fish

Both hammocks and mangroves are homes for many birds and fish.

Mangroves

Mangroves are strong trees that grow with their roots in or above the water.

When I visit these exhibits, I will try not to disturb the animals or plants. I will use a quiet voice and keep my hands away from them.
Homes for the Birds

Can you see a nest in the bushes?

Flying Birds

Some birds may fly around near us. They are busy getting food or building nests. They will not bother us. We can watch them and enjoy seeing them up close.
Snakes

We will see exhibits of Burmese pythons and rat snakes. Maybe one snake will be in the exhibit, or maybe more.

The snakes are behind glass. They cannot get out.
Mangrove Tunnel

We will walk through a tunnel of mangrove trees. We can see the light coming from the other side. It will be fun. Some branches are hanging very low. It is very interesting!

We can see fish and other wetland birds and animals on either side of the trail as it goes through the tunnel of mangrove trees. We will keep our hands out of the water and we won’t try to touch any of the birds or animals.
African Black-footed penguins dive, swim and play in their South African beach themed home.
Lots of people enjoy watching Animal Encounter shows at the Ranger Station. Sometimes the Animal Encounter shows are about birds. Other times, they are about snakes or turtles. They can even be about dogs. We may not know what animal will be in the show until it starts. We will have fun no matter what animal comes out for the Animal Encounter show!

Here are some things I can do to enjoy the Animal Encounter show at the Wetlands Ranger Station:

*I can sit quietly and listen to the animal handler when he or she is talking*

*I can share the space on the benches with the other visitors that want to see the show.*

*I can keep my hands in my lap and my feet on the floor.*

*I will only touch the animal if the handler says it’s OK.*
Once we are done visiting the Wetlands Exhibits, we might want to see Journey to Madagascar. Journey to Madagascar is on the third floor of Florida Aquarium. We can go there by climbing these stairs near the Ranger Station in the Wetlands Exhibit.
To visit Journey to Madagascar, we have to climb the stairs. On the stairs, there will be places to stop and look around. Other people may want to look around too.

I will be careful not to bump or push them. I will use the yellow hand railing to climb the stairs.
As we walk up the stairs we will see an owl and some gopher turtles. There may be a different owl in the next box each day. The sign will show us how to identify the owl we see.
Taking the elevator to Madagascar

If we need to take the elevator because it is difficult to walk up or down stairs, we will find the elevator on the first or second floor map by following this symbol.

Go to the 3rd floor

Follow the path and the signs

Go through the vertical rubber strips. They are soft and quiet. They will not hurt or make noise. They keep birds from flying in or out.

Go out the doors
Entering Journey to Madagascar

When we walk in to the Journey to Madagascar, we may notice it is warmer than the exhibits below, and we may go from lots of sunlight into a darker area. It will be OK. Our eyes will adjust soon to the darkness inside.
Reefs of Madagascar

This beautiful picture has the words of a proverb from Malagasy (the language that is spoken in Madagascar): **Tsihy be lambanana ny ambanilantra**

It means: All who live under the sky are woven together like one big mat.

We will see a large salt water aquarium with lots of colorful fish from the ocean waters near Madagascar.
Creatures of Madagascar

Several exhibits in Journey to Madagascar include information boards and hanging metal information cards.

Can you see the chameleon?

Now can you see it?
Creatures that are hard to see

Some creatures are very hard to see. Sometimes they might be hiding where we can’t see them at all. Maybe we will see them next time!
Some roaches are noisy!

These roaches make a hissing sound. We will hear a recorded version of it near the exhibit. The sound will come every few seconds. We can be ready for the hissing sound when we hear it.

Here’s a fun thing to do. If I am small enough, I can crawl underneath the hissing roaches exhibit. I can look up and see the exhibit from below!
A window in the floor

When we walk through is a window in the floor. We can look down through it to see stingrays and other big fish swimming below us. The window is very strong. No one will fall through or break it when they step on it. The sharks and fish cannot break through it either. They are safe, and so are we.

If I don’t want to step on this window, I can do one of these things:

• Close my eyes and step over it quickly
• Step around the edges of the window
• Step across it with a friend or an adult
• Tell myself “This might seem scary, but I’ll give it a try”.
Lemurs

There are many different signs and other types of information about lemurs in this exhibit.

We can look at this book to learn more about lemurs!

Interactive sliding boards
We may notice a slight smell when we are near the lemurs.

This is normal for the lemurs.

If the smell bothers me, here are some things I can do:

- **Cover my nose**
- **Take some deep breaths with my mouth**
- **Ask someone if I can move away from the smell a few steps**
- **Tell myself I’ll be more comfortable when we go out of the lemur area**
Lemurs are very beautiful animals. They are fun to watch.

This door is only for Aquarium workers.
Leaving Journey to Madagascar

When it is time to go down to the first or second level, we will take these stairs near the lemurs.

If we will be going down in the elevator, we will look for this door and go to the walkway that leads to the elevator.
We will see and learn about many fish and birds that live in the salty water of our state’s bays and shores.

Exhibits in Bays and Beaches are brightly lit, even though the gallery is dark.
Inside Bays and Beaches

When we first step inside the Bays and Beaches Gallery, we might want to stop to let our eyes get used to the dark.

It will be easier to find our way through the gallery if we do this.

We will see many brightly lit tanks inside the gallery. They are home for lobster, fish and seahorses.
Water Lab

One exhibit in the Bays and Beaches Gallery shows people at work.

They are the biologists who take care of the animals, fish and plants at the Florida Aquarium.

- *We can watch them through the window.*
- *We will stand still and keep our hands away from the glass.*
- *We can talk quietly.*

This way, we wont bother biologists while they are working.
At Stingray Beach, we will learn about sea turtles, shore birds and stingrays.

If it is time to touch stingrays, we will read the signs and follow instructions.

If the stingrays are resting, we will not touch them, but we can see them swimming.
At Stingray Beach, we will learn about sea turtles, shore birds and stingrays.

If it is time to touch stingrays, we will read the signs or listen to the Aquarium worker, and follow instructions.

If the stingrays are resting, we will see a Time Out sign. If we see the sign, we will not touch them, but we can see them swimming.
What to Do if I Hear a Bird

When I visit the Bays and Beaches Gallery, I might hear the sound of birds.
It might be real birds inside the exhibit,
or it could be a recording of birds coming from the speakers.

If these sounds bother or scare me, here are some things I can do:

• I can put my hands over my ears.
• I can say, “I don’t like those bird sounds. Let’s go somewhere else.”
• I can tell myself, “It’s just the sound of birds. I don’t like it, but I’m OK.”
• I can take a deep breath and let it out slowly.
• I can say to myself, “Birds are everywhere. I will try to get used to them.”
No Bone Zone is a special exhibit we can find after visiting the Bays and Beaches Gallery.

All of the animals in it live without any bones in their bodies!

Things to remember about touching the animals:

- **Touch with 2 fingers only**
- **Touch only the animals on the top shelf of the tank**
- **Do not pick up or move any of the animals**

The Coral Reefs Exhibit is a place to see up close all the fish, sharks and other sea creatures that live among the coral reefs and deeper water of our state.

Before entering the Coral Reefs, we will see the Hurricane Simulator. We can go inside and feel how strong the wind is during a hurricane. This will cost extra money. Maybe we will not go in the hurricane simulator this time. Maybe we will go in it another day.
Megalodon Photo

Before the entrance to the tunnel, maybe we will get our picture taken inside Megalodon, the giant shark jaw fossil. If we do not get our picture taken today, maybe we will another day.

The photographer will take our picture inside the giant shark jaws. We will stand in front of a green wall, just like the one on the first floor near the entrance. After we get the picture back, we will see a different picture behind us.

We will buy all of the pictures we had taken at this visit in the lobby, on our way out.
Going Through The Tunnel

The path of the coral reef exhibit is a tunnel. It has large curving windows on both sides. We can see the fish and other sea life all around.

The ceiling of the tunnel is curved and low. Light comes through the windows.

Inside the tunnel, we may hear soft music or underwater sounds.

They won’t be loud.

They may change from time to time.

At the end of the tunnel is the entrance to the Coral Cave.
Watching the Divers

In the coral reefs exhibit, there are many large tanks that are big enough for divers to swim in.

The divers clean the tanks, take care of the fish and plants and sometimes perform in special shows.

When we visit the coral reefs exhibit, we might see divers, or we might not.
Inside the Coral Cave

The coral cave is a dark room with a very large window.

Behind it is a tank that looks like the bottom of the ocean.

We can see all the sharks, fish and other creatures that live there.

We can sit on the benches or we can stand up close.

Sometimes there are a lot of people in the Coral Cave, sometimes only a few. Everyone wants to have a chance to watch the fish swim by or watch the show. If there are a lot of people in the coral cave, I will remember to:

- Talk in a quiet voice
- Keep my hands and feet still, especially near the benches
- Stand a few steps away from the tank window, so other people can watch too.
The creatures in Dragons Down Under are very delicate. They are sensitive to light and noise. That means they can be disturbed by these things.

If we use a flash on our camera or tap on the sides of the tanks with our hands, it will disturb them.

The sea dragons and sea horses will be very happy if we watch them quietly and do not disturb them.

Photos OK
Flash not OK!
Ocean Commotion is a fun place to play. There are lots of videos, sounds and movement.

The walls are dark, but the lights are bright. Some of them are flashing on the walls and floor.

Going in and out of Ocean Commotion, we must walk through a fog screen.

It looks like a picture on the wall, but it’s not hard. It won’t hurt to walk through it. There may be a slight smell. When we are on the other side we will see lots of interesting stuff.
We will now be on the 1\textsuperscript{st} level
Things to Do in the Lobby

The lobby is the big space we walk through on our way into and out of the exhibit galleries. In it there are other things to do. We can:

- Ask questions or get help
- Have our picture taken
- Make a suggestion to the Florida Aquarium
- Shop in the gift shop
- Have something to eat at Café Ray
- Visit Horseshoe Crab Lagoon
Ask Questions or Get Help

Just inside the main entrance is the Guest Services desk.

We can go there if we need to ask a question or want some help.

We can go there if we get lost or can’t find the people we came with.

People who work at the Guest Services desk wear blue shirts that have the Florida Aquarium logo on them.

They can answer questions or help us if we need it.

It will be OK to talk to them.
Have Our Picture Taken

Sometimes when people visit the Florida Aquarium, they like to have their pictures taken. We can do this too if we want, in the lobby or at the Megalodon. Taking our picture will help us remember the fun we had on our visit. We can show our friends and family what we looked like on that day.

Things to remember when I’m having my picture taken:

- If I’m having my picture taken with someone else, I may need to stand close or even touch them. They may need to touch me. This is OK. It might be a little uncomfortable, but it will not take long and the picture will look nice.

- It’s important to stand still in one place, smile and look straight at the camera. That way my picture will look just like I do!

- Sometimes when people pose for pictures, they want to take more than one. If this happens, I can wait a little longer and pose for another picture.

If we get any photos taken, we can pay for them and pick them up at this desk in the lobby.
Visitors to the Florida Aquarium can also shop in the Gift Shop. The shop sells books, posters, T-shirts and toys. The gift shop does not sell snacks or drinks.

Shoppers in the Gift Shop:

- Talk quietly
- Are very careful handling the items for sale
- Ask for help if they don’t see what they are looking for
- Pay for the things they want to buy
Have Something to Eat at Café Ray

We might get hungry while we are visiting the Florida Aquarium. Café Ray is a place where we could have a snack or sit down for a meal.

If we want something to eat, we can place our order in line. People behind the counter will prepare the order. It will be ready at the end of the line. We must pay for it before we can eat.

We can order our food from the menu on the columns.
Explore A shore is an outdoor area of the Florida Aquarium.

Visitors can play in some of the fountains and the playground equipment.

It is a place where it is very important to follow the rules.

This is the entrance to Explore A Shore.

It is in the lobby.
Sometimes We Will, Sometimes We Won’t

When we visit the Florida Aquarium, we may not go to Explore a Shore. Sometime we will go there, other times we won’t.

On today’s visit...

We will NOT visit

___ the weather is too cold  rainy  hot
___ we are going as a school group
___ we don’t have time
→- it will be too crowded and noisy
___ we won’t bring our bathing suits
← we are too old or big to play there
___ _____________________________

We WILL visit

___ the weather is just right
___ we are going as a family
___ we have lots of time
→- it will not be too crowded and noisy
___ we will bring our bathing suits
← we are the right age and size
___ _____________________________
Following the Signs

There are lots of signs in Explore A Shore. They tell us:

- Where things are located.
- Rules for the water play areas.
- How tall we must be to play in the play area.
Fountains

There are lots of fountains spraying water in Explore A Shore.
Some of them are OK to play in, but others are not OK.
They are not safe to play in.
They are just for looking at, not getting wet.

This fountain is OK for water play.

These fountains are not OK for water play.
Having Fun at Explore A Shore!

In Explore A Shore, there are lots of fun things to play with and climb on in the water. We will follow the rules, stay safe and have a good time!
Time to Go!

After our visit is all done, it will be time to go out the exit. If we want to tell the people at the Aquarium something about our visit, we can stop here and leave a comment.

Goodbye Aquarium! Thank you for a wonderful visit. See you next time!