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