



Finding God Everywhere

Program Director's Guide

**A 4-day Spirit Camp Adventure for
Children 5 to 10 years old.**

You are invited to explore all the places we find God.

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Welcome



The Purpose/Vision

This is a four day Spirit Camp experience based on exploring how we can find God within everything, everybody and within every experience.

This program is easily adapted for large or small programs. The children are divided into “Safari” crews of not more than 10. The program comes with materials for 4 groups of 10 but other groups could easily be added for a larger attendance. If you have a small attendance you would just use one or two of the Safari Crews.

What Will Be Explored & Experience

The Spirit Camp provides the opportunity for children to look at every person and every situation in a new way. We are searching for the God Spirit that is present within all things. The activities and adventures are age appropriate and invite the participants into experiences that are fun and interactive.

Key learning objectives

- Finding God in me tells me that I am a unique child of God and that I have special talents to share.
- Finding God in our families and friends helps us recognize the gifts that others bring to us and to the world.
- Finding God in nature reminds us that we are all responsible for our planet.
- Finding God in the world helps us to understand that no matter what our differences are, God’s light shines from each one of us. We are here to see our common ground and to serve God.

Ages

The lessons are designed for children 5 to 10 years old.

If your teens that would like to participate in the program invite them to fill some of the leadership roles. They would experience the program and materials from a different perspective and still be able to share the experience with their families.



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Setting the Stage



The Dates

- Check your church calendar and in the local community for other summer program dates to avoid conflicts.

Choose Your Format & Location

- How many days will it be?
- Which ones will they be?
- Will you meet in the mornings or afternoons?
- Will it be offered for 2 ½ or 3 hours a day?
- Where will you meet?
- How many rooms do you need?

Set a Cost or Love Offering

The choice to charge a fee for your Spirit Camp is one that varies greatly. It will depend upon whether the Spirit Camp is an item in the general church budget; a part of the Youth Ministry budget; or is not a designated church fund.

If the Spirit Camp has no financing some possible ways to fund it are:

- Registration fees may be set in advance and collected with registration forms. The amount may be a token amount to confirm registration or it may be calculated based on the estimated costs of the program.
- Amounts may be set on a per child basis; or there may be a maximum per family. Keep in mind that many families have multiple children to pay for.
- One process which has been successful in totally covering costs: On the first day of Spirit Camp provide parents with a letter explaining the costs per child for the week's program. Include, with the letter, an envelope clearly marked that contents will go to Spirit Camp Expenses. Emphasize the voluntary nature of the contribution. Offer parents the opportunity to contribute all or part of the costs and a means for them to return the envelope.

Suggestions for minimizing costs:

- Begin your planning early.
- Watch supermarket sales for drinks & snacks that can be stored.
- Consider crafts which use recyclables & ask congregation members to collect the needed items.
- Ask volunteers to provide the printed materials instead of purchasing them - registration, attendance, publicity, etc. Consider carefully which add the greatest benefit. Where can personally created items save over the purchased materials?



Rotation Model

This curriculum has been created using a model called “The Rotation Model.” This model uses three different creative experience stations that the participants rotate through in their small groups. This gives them the opportunity to explore the ideas presented in the lessons in various ways. This is particularly effective in honoring the Multiple Intelligences found within every person.

How the “Rotation Model” is different from a site-based model:

- The site-based model is the more commonly found model in our youth ministry programs.
- In a site-based model the groups stay with one leader in the same classroom for the entire day.
- Each classroom leader teaches the entire program to their group of students.
- In the rotation model participants, called Adventurers, are divided by age into smaller groups called, Safari Crews.
- In the rotation model instead of teaching the entire program to one group of children the leaders called, Discovery Zone Leaders, are assigned to a particular station for each day of the program. They teach only their particular activity to all of the children.
- Safari Crews rotate through the Discovery Zones in a staggered order.

Pre-registration

(Requested to determine staffing needed and supplies, but not required.)

- Begin registering the children in your church about one month before camp begins. Simply have the registration forms available in the common areas of the church and also hand them out with the parent letters after Sunday school. Include registration form in newsletter and bulletin insert if possible.
- Set up a table in your Fellowship Hall and have someone available so parents have a place to turn forms in and gather more information about the program.

Registration:

Registration is the first opportunity to welcome the children to the program and help them feel at ease.

Have all the supplies needed for registration on hand such as:

- Registration tables with areas for children already registered and new registrations.
- Plenty of volunteers
- Extra flyers
- Registration forms
- Parents authorization
- Medical/liability release forms
- Pencils and paper

After Spirit Camp is Completed:

- Collect and store supplies
- Mail follow-up postcards
- Report on Spirit Camp to the Church and Board of Trustees
- Leave the presentations on display so they can be shared with the entire congregation
- Meet with the staff afterwards:
 - Record good ideas
 - Address problems
 - What needs to be developed?
 - Keep a record of the people interested in serving again



Church Facilities

Spaces Needed



Survey Church Facilities

A major concern faced by many thriving Spirit Camp programs is where to find the space to provide for all the children! The areas needed to host your Spirit Camp can be adjusted to fit the space you have available. The spaces needed can be set up in individual rooms or can be in a large space that is divided up. Your needs will depend on your total attendance.

- Examine your facilities with an open mind & a clear understanding of the types of activities planned.
- If you are tight on table space, some children enjoy the floor & lapboards for completing worksheets.
- If you have space outdoors, tables & chairs under a picnic canopy can be an inviting spot.
- Really tight on space -- do you have a narthex or vestibule that can accommodate a story-time activity?
- Space can be used efficiently if using the rotation model concept. Determine which activities can be held in which areas (music but certainly not crafts might work in the sanctuary). Small children need a secure safe area with appropriately sized furniture. Create a schedule which allows the children to move from one activity to another. As one group moves out of an activity, a new group moves in -- thus maximizing space use.
- Be alert to activities which benefit from large groups and be aware of those where small grouping is more beneficial. For example, a combining of groups works great at music time; but working on worksheets or crafts requires smaller groups if space and staff support is to be successful.
- Snack time is one activity that benefits from being moved outside as it takes on a picnic atmosphere the children enjoy. (Just watch out for bees!)

Spaces Needed for Jungle Safari Spirit Camp

- **Safari Central** - (Check-In Area) Can be a large hallway or area outside of the main room. This is where registration takes place on the first day.

Supplies needed:

- *Registration Tables*
- *Chairs*
- *Colored poster board (one in each Safari Crew color), tape & markers. Write the appropriate Safari Crew name on each one and tape them to the wall. Let the children know that this is where they will line up each day. This way attendance can be taken and then the Safari Crew leaders can take them to the appropriate location.*

What happens in this space:

- *This is the spot where everyone gathers before heading to the first event.*
- *Decorate the area to look like a jungle base camp.*



- **Nature's Landing** – (Gathering Space) Open area large enough to hold the entire attendance. This space can be decorated with trees and wild animals and look like a base camp in the African jungle. As the day begins, the Safari Crew leaders direct their crews to where they are to sit.

Supplies needed:

- Chairs + Open area

What happens in this space:

- Opening Adventure
- Everyone begins together in prayer
- Share a song that sets the tone for the day
- Connecting Activity

- **Celebration Circle**

What happens here:

- Whole group comes back together & reviews events of the day.
- What to expect tomorrow
- Closing song

- **Rain Forest Theater** - (Storytelling & drama experience) Open space or space with a small stage area set up. You can use leafy vines to create a curtain for your stage. Floor pillows can be used as easily moveable seating.

What happens in this space:

- Drama
- The leaders assist the children in acting out the Bible stories
- Age appropriate story discussion

- **Jungle Grub Cafe** - (Snack Area) Located within Nature's Landing to save space. This is where the food preparation takes place. The recipes are very simple but some may have ingredients that need to be prepared ahead. The Congo Cooks are the people who are responsible for creating the make-ahead food. These food items are listed within the lesson plans. Some microwaving and baking is needed. One microwave should be sufficient unless you have a huge attendance. It also might be fun to decorate this area as if it was a cafe in the middle of the jungle. Many supplies can be found at party stores.

Supplies needed: (See Congo Cook's Guide for more detailed list of supplies)

- Tables & Chairs for seating
- Tables for food preparation
- Microwave & Oven

- **Discovery Zone Trekking Stations** – (Creative experience classroom areas) Areas where Creative Experiences take place. The 3 stations can be located in one room as long as the room can be divided into enough space for the participants to work. Participants rotate through the 3 stations.

- **Art Expressions** - (Arts & Crafts activities) This is the station where the participants will have the opportunity to use their imaginations. There will be a variety of art supplies so that everyone can use this time to explore what the lesson means to them.

Supplies needed:

- Tables & Chairs

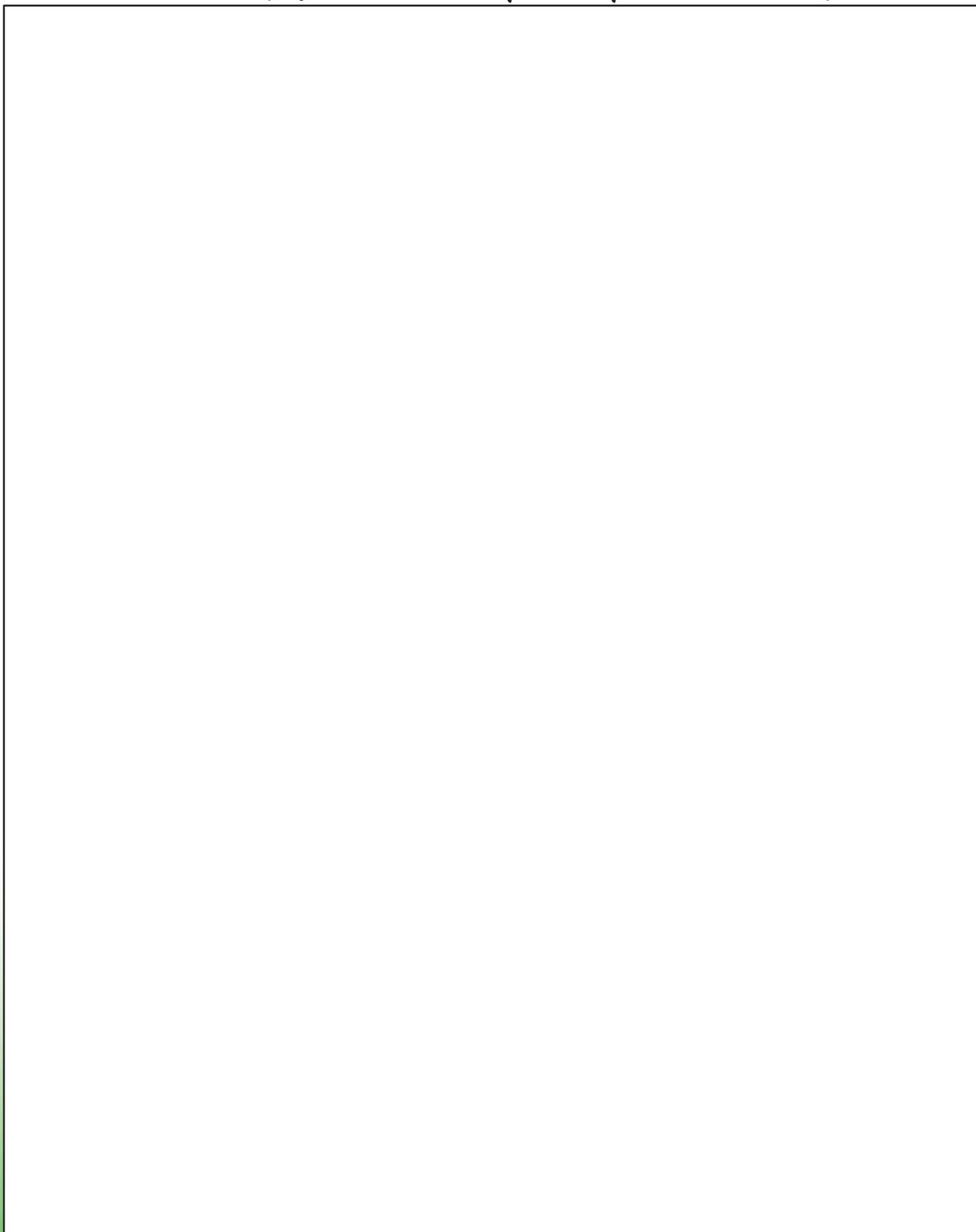
- **Wildlife Adventures** – (Movement & Games designed to reinforce the lesson.) The activities here get the kids involved with one another and with the lesson focus of the day. They also give the participants the opportunity to move around and feel the lesson in their bodies.

Supplies needed:

- Open Space



Use these pages to draw a layout of your classroom spaces.





Publicity



General Publicity Ideas

- Create a news release and submit it to your local papers.
- Create flyers and post copies in local businesses (with their permission) and around your church or center.
- Send the flyers home with parents and church members. Also include the flyer in your monthly mailing and church bulletin.
- Pitch during Sunday morning announcements using skit or other creative idea.
- Take advantage of any newspaper “Religious Notes” column to extend the invitation to community members.
- Take nothing for granted. Do church neighbors really know they are welcome even if not members? So many have been surprised to realize that membership is not a requirement for their children to participate.
- Many supermarkets or other local stores offer bulletin board space. Inexpensive posters can be created by providing church school children graphics that can be colored & mounted on colored paper.
- Word-of-mouth is still the best publicity. Encourage children to invite their friends.

Time line

6 months or more before Spirit Camp Week

- Pray
- Set dates for Spirit Camp - As you are considering dates, you may want to find out about other summer programs offered by other churches and in your community so you can avoid conflicts.
- Publicize dates to congregation.

4 to 6 Months Before

- Choose a Format
 - Morning, afternoon or evening?
 - When will you meet? (Times)
 - Children only, or will families be invited?
 - Where will you meet?
- Choose a Program
 - Will you be creating your own or adapting one from another group?
- Choose a Director
 - The director is responsible for planning, recruiting staff and overseeing all details to ensure that the Spirit Camp goes smoothly.



- Set A Budget
 - Consider all the supplies needed.
 - What will you charge the participants?
- Start Collecting Supplies
 - Depending on your theme, hit the early summer sales for your supplies.
- Plan Publicity
 - Decide how you will promote your program in your church and community.

4 Months Before

- Recruit your Staff
 - How many teachers do you need?
 - What is their “job” description?
 - Educate congregation about staffing needs.
 - Publish the job descriptions in your church bulletins.
 - Hold open meetings to attract your volunteers.
- Order the books and materials you will need.
 - Order or create your teaching materials.
- Reserve the space you will need at the church.

2 to 3 Months Before

- Plan and schedule a training for lead volunteers.
 - Who will be responsible for what?
- Continue recruiting volunteers.
- Continue publicity.
- Plan your daily schedule.

4 Weeks Before

- Begin Registration.
- Schedule and hold a teacher training.

1 to 2 Weeks Before

- Continue Registration.
- Purchase final supplies.
- Continue publicity.
- Make backup plans for rainy days, absences and procedures for fire or other emergencies.
- Decorate the areas to be used.

1 Week Before

- Final adjustment of space use.
- Check of student count with materials.
- Provide teachers with current info about their classes.
- Decorations
- Prepare parent packets.



1 Day Before

- Last minute check of supplies
- Final room preparation
- Pray

1st Day of Spirit Camp

- Arrive early – take time for prayer
- Watch for rough spots that need adjustment
- After children leave, brief staff meeting to catch loose ends

During the Program

- Meet before and after to pray in and out
- Check and replenish supplies
- Help with discipline problems
- Maintain a first-aid site
- Prepare certificates for the kids and volunteers

Week after Spirit Camp

- Thank you notes to staff
- Collect evaluations & suggestions from staff
- Prepare a slide show for congregation
- Financial summary
- Follow up with kids – send them a postcard thank you. Send an evaluation form for them to fill out and return.
- Clean up the space and return supplies



Lesson Overview

Day	Title & Intention	Rain Forest Theater	Discovery Zones
1	<p>“Finding God In Me”</p> <p>The intention of this lesson to understand that God is within us all the time.</p>	<p>“A Snake in the Garden”</p> <p>Genesis 2:7-22, 3:1-19</p> <p><i>The Rhyme Bible</i> pp. 22-35</p>	<p><u>Jungle Grub Cafe</u> Juice; One-of-a-Kind Snowflakes; Garden of Eatin’ Salad</p> <p><u>Art Expressions</u> What I Like About Me</p> <p><u>Wildlife Adventures</u> Give Yourself a Hand</p>
2	<p>“Finding God In My Family and Friends”</p> <p>The intention of this lesson is to know that God is expressed through us as we love our families and friends.</p>	<p>“Four Good Friends”</p> <p>Luke 5:17-25</p> <p><i>The Rhyme Bible</i> pp. 286-297</p>	<p><u>Jungle Grub Cafe</u> Love Berry Milk shake; Heart-Strings Pizza</p> <p><u>Art Expressions</u> My Best Friend</p> <p><u>Wildlife Adventures</u> Blanket Slide</p>
3	<p>“Finding God In Nature”</p> <p>The intention of this lesson is to understand that God is in everything, including bugs, plants and animals and it is important for us to care for our world.</p>	<p>“Safe In the Boat”</p> <p>Genesis 6-9</p> <p><i>The Rhyme Bible</i> pp. 36-47</p>	<p><u>Jungle Grub Cafe</u> Juice; Garden Dip Sticks; Noah’s Rainbow Cups</p> <p><u>Art Expressions</u> Citizens of the Earth</p> <p><u>Wildlife Adventures</u> Nature Walk</p>
4	<p>“Finding God In the World”</p> <p>The intention of this lesson is to understand that no matter what our differences are, God’s light shines from each one of us. We are here to see our common ground and to serve God.</p>	<p>“Lunch to Share”</p> <p>John 6</p>	<p><u>Jungle Grub Cafe</u> Juice; Come to the Banquet</p> <p><u>Art Expressions</u> Prayers for the World</p> <p><u>Wildlife Adventures</u> World Journey</p>



Staffing

Volunteers Needed



Recruit Your Staff

Finding adequate volunteers must be one of the greatest challenges facing any Spirit Camp program director -- and also one of the most important. Workers who are enthusiastic, committed and caring are essential for a successful program. Your church is filled with creative people who would love to participate in this program. All they need is to know how they can be of service.

The task can be made easier by considering the following suggestions:

- **Consider carefully the tasks/jobs necessary for Spirit Camp and subdivide them where ever possible.**
 - A complete list of jobs & tasks makes it clear who is responsible. It is much easier for people to say yes to a specific task.
 - Division of tasks allows for each person to work using their special skills. (One might not be good at crafts, but great at storytelling.)
 - Consider which tasks could be done by those whose schedules do not permit them to be present during Spirit Camp hours.
 - Photocopy the “job descriptions” included with this program and hand them out to the people in your congregation. As you talk to people, focus on the job description and what they will gain from the experience by participating in this event.

- **Be careful of attitudes as you share the opportunities for volunteers.**
 - Tones of pleading may scare off those unfamiliar with the program.
 - Describe the joy and excitement that comes from being a part of sharing with the children.
 - Display pictures and videos of last year’s success to generate enthusiasm.

- **Consider the “assistant” job description.**
 - It is a great place to place those unfamiliar with the program.
 - With no planning responsibilities, staff in these roles have the important responsibility of sharing the day with the children, keeping them on schedule, getting to know the children & providing support for the activity leader.
 - It gives new staff an overview of the program & allows them to consider what aspect they would most enjoy.

- **Supporting & Training the Staff**
 - As much as possible delegate responsibilities. Let each teacher know you value their skills and abilities and allow them flexibility in their areas.
 - Provide training and support for those moving into new areas. Provide connections with new teachers & your veterans so they can benefit from brainstorming for new ideas.



- During Spirit Camp week watch for skills being revealed by staff and make notes for the next year. Staffing is a building process; success one year makes recruitment the next year easier. If staff have a good time, they will want to return the next year.
- When members indicate that they are unavailable for tasks, ask them to be a prayer partner for a staff member.
- Remind staff that prayer support will deepen their abilities and stretch the possibilities.
- Let them know that there will be a training meeting for them to attend so that everyone will have an overview of the program.
- It is important to meet with your staff for 15 to 20 minutes before the program begins each day. Use this time for announcements, questions or concerns and to pray together. This helps to give the staff a sense of support and helps everyone work together.

Behind the Scenes Jungle Safari Staff

Jungle Safari Director

Responsible for the leadership of the program, planning, recruiting staff and overseeing all details.

Trekking Captain

Handle all aspects of the registration.

Adventure Seekers

Responsible for coordinating publicity before and during the program. Can also create the design and scenery to help the rooms look like the jungle.

Safari Outfitter

Shop for supplies, sort and assemble materials, provide pre-event assistance to Director, help decorate the rooms.

Jungle Safari Team Leaders

One person can have more than one position.

Safari Guide

Adult or teen – responsible for moving Adventurers from station to station. While moving the kids from station to station the leaders are to stay close, keep the kids in line and on task. When moving from large group into the Safari crews, dismiss them one group at a time to avoid chaos. If possible have each Safari Crew Leader carry a basket or tote bag around with them to carry the things the children create. The leader also could entertain the participants with fun African Rain Forest facts as they transition from one area to another.

Discovery Zone Leaders

Are responsible for leading the creative experience stations. This includes making sure that all supplies are in the classroom and that the Safari Crews stick to the time-line.

Congo Cooks

Are responsible for organizing and overseeing all food that needs to be prepared ahead and also assist with the completion of the snacks during the program. See *Jungle Grub Guide* for more details on the staff needed.

Story Time Trek Leader

Presents the story of the day, whether through storytelling, drama or video in the Rain Forest Theater.

Serengeti Singers

Responsible for leading the opening & closing songs/movement.

Circle Leaders

Responsible for leading the opening & closing gatherings. Need to be very enthusiastic.