Information Night for Parents and Students

-GROUP LEADER NOTES-

Why hold an information meeting for parents and students? *Because it is the most effective way to share the Amazon experience, answer questions, reassure parents, and set expectations. All key ingredients to a successful program!*

Prepare for the Meeting

- ✓ Set a Registration and Deposit Deadline!

- ✓ Do your homework so you can answer questions!
  - *Review the "Travel Guide" provided by EcoTeach/Amazon Rainforest Workshops*
  - *Review your group webpage*
  - *Review (and edit) Powerpoint provided by EcoTeach/Amazon Rainforest Workshops*

- ✓ Make copies of handouts
  - *Agenda*
  - *Flyer*
  - *Physician Letter*
  - *Clinic and Library Wishlists*

- ✓ Make sure you have necessary AV equipment and an internet connection

- ✓ Prepare a sign in sheet so you have a record of who attended along with email contact information

Meeting Agenda

Upon arrival

- ✓ Show the "Are you ready for the Amazon? YouTube video as parents and students are settling into their seats. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e97bAnt-68
- ✓ Distribute Handouts
- ✓ Remind about sign-in sheet

Welcome and Introductions

- ✓ Introduce yourself
- ✓ Direct participants to the Agenda and explain that in the next hour (or so) you will share the Amazon experience and answer any questions they may have.

Amazon Workshop Program Overview

- ✓ Open the PowerPoint provided by EcoTeach/Amazon Rainforest Workshops
- ✓ Use the notes outlined on the following pages to guide your presentation

Amazon Rainforest Workshops PowerPoint Presentation

Topic	Presentation Points	Preview
Introduction	**SLIDE 1** Explain your reason/desire to offer the Amazon Workshop program to students at your school. ✓ How will students benefit from participation? ✓ If applicable, share any prior Amazon (or other international travel) experiences you have had with students. Let your passion show!	
Why the Amazon?	**SLIDE 2** As the world's largest intact tropical rainforest, the Amazon is a critically important global resource. The Amazon: ✓ makes up of 50% of the world's remaining rainforest; ✓ harbors least 10% of the word's known biodiversity; ✓ shelters 350 ethnic groups– many of which still remain largely isolated; ✓ accounts for 1/5 (20%) of the world's fresh water; ✓ and stores more than 90 billion metric tons of carbon.	
Why Peru?	**SLIDE 3** The Peruvian Amazon is equally impressive. ✓ 60% of its territory covered in Amazon rainforest, ✓ contains eleven percent of the entire Amazon basin. ✓ recognized as a global biodiversity hotspot! ✓ Over 250 species of amphibians, 800 species of birds, 7000 species of plants, 290 species of mammals, 2500 species of butterflies, 690 species of fish, and 180 species of reptiles call the Peruvian Amazon home. For students, the Peruvian Amazon provides: ✓ easy access to primary rainforest areas, ✓ political stability and a friendly culture, ✓ an opportunity to experience life in a developing country firsthand and without the disruptive influence of major tourist development. ✓ unparalleled learning opportunities, including a 1/3 mile canopy walkway! Our study sites are located in NE Peru, just north	

	of Iquitos. ✓ the last navigable port on the Amazon ✓ approximately 2,300 miles from the mouth of the Amazon on the Atlantic Ocean! ✓ Accessible only by boat or plane ✓ Approximately 400,000 inhabitants – 6th largest city in Peru! ✓	
What will we do? ***Explore** the Rainforest From top to bottom*	**SLIDE 4** Together we will **explore** the Amazon! We will experience one of the world's most astonishing and important ecosystems **– the tropical rainforest**. We will: ✓ Climb into the rainforest canopy and have unlimited access to one of the longest canopy walkways in the world!	
	SLIDE 5 We will also ✓ hike on rainforest trails – bring your boots! ✓ Navigate Amazon waterways in search of wildlife – bring your sunscreen! ✓ Explore the rainforest day and night! – bring your flashlight and a headlamp!	
What will we do? ***Discover** Biodiversity!*	**SLIDE 6** We will **discover** the amazing biodiversity of the Amazon! ✓ Such as this blue morpho butterfly. ✓ It has the wingspan of a dessert plate ✓ More than just beautiful, the reflective quality of the morpho's wings are the inspiration for the new "no glare" screens on e-readers!	
	SLIDE 7 This is just a snapshot of the wildlife we will see. These images are from a virtual field guide being created by Amazon Rainforest Workshop participants. ✓ Each "spotting" was actually captured by a student just like you. ✓ Project Noah (www.projectnoah.org) is where these images are collected. ✓ As a participant, you will be invited to join this group and contribute your photos to the project!	

What will we do? ***Engage** with local communities!*	**SLIDE 8** We will engage with local people, including the indigenous Yagua. The yagua are fully assimilated into modern culture, but they are actively working to preserve and celebrate their traditional lifestyle. As an ecotourism project in partnership with Explorama Lodges, the yagua will share their traditional craft and culture with us during our Amazon workshop program.	
	SLIDE 9 We will spend a day working with the Yagua and learning about their traditional use of rainforest resources. You will learn how to: ✓ shoot a blow gun, ✓ make a thatch roof, ✓ use seeds and fruits as natural dyes, ✓ create a traditional bowl out of Amazon clay, ✓ Paddle a dugout canoe, ✓ and more!	
	SLIDE 10 In addition, we will visit a traditional Yagua village and learn traditional dances, barter t-shirts, fish hooks, and other items for handmade Yagua art – jewelry, baskets, carvings, and even blow guns!	
What will we do? ***Investigate** and the Amazon*	**SLIDE 11** After immersing ourselves in Amazon culture, we will dig deeper into understanding how the Amazon ecosystem works.	
	SLIDE 12 We will visit the Amazon Conservatory for Tropical Studies (ACTS) and ✓ conduct research studies ✓ and independent explorations from the rainforest floor to the canopy!	

What will we do? ***Participate*** *in Community Service*	**SLIDE 13** A highlight of our Peruvian Amazon Workshop will be our day visiting an Amazon community.	
	SLIDE 14 We will participate in community service projects sponsored by CONAPAC, a Peruvian NGO that works with Amazon Communities near our study sites. CONAPAC works with nearly 50 villages up and down the Amazon and Napo Rivers. These communities are part of CONAPAC's Adopt-A-School program. Each year CONAPAC volunteers, local guides and visiting volunteers distribute packets of school supplies to each of the villages. During our visit, we will work on community service projects in partnership with community members ✓ painting schools damaged by flooding, ✓ repairing fences for livestock, ✓ or planting community gardens.	
	SLIDE 15 At the end of the day we will celebrate with games and activities! Soccer anyone? Be prepared, Peruvians LOVE soccer and take the game seriously!	
Sample Itinerary	**SLIDE 16**	

Frequently Asked Questions	**SLIDE 17** **Frequently Asked Questions** At this point in the presentation, be prepared to field questions from students and parents. We've provided additional slides to basic lodging, food, water, and health questions on slides 15 and 16. In addition you will want to consult the "Travel Guide" pdf provided by EcoTeach & Amazon Rainforest Workshops AND your group webpage.	
Where will we stay?	**SLIDE 18** Field sessions take place at: 1) Explorama Lodge 2) ExplorNapo Lodge 3) the Amazon Conservatory of Tropical Studies (ACTS) Lodge 4) Ceiba Tops Resort **The majority of our time will be spent at the first three lodges** which are rustic, thatch-roofed, comfortable, clean, and spacious. Each lodge houses private rooms equipped simply with a wash basin, mirror, shelves, and two beds each covered with mosquito netting. The kitchen, dining area, showers, latrines, and sleeping quarters are all connected by picturesque thatch-covered walkways. Our last night will be at Ceiba Tops Resort - the only luxury lodge on the Amazon River, having well-appointed rooms with hot water and air conditioning, as well as a swimming pool and water slide! **Electricity and WiFi** Electricity is provided via generator, and often only during specific parts of the day. You will, however, be able to charge your camera battery's at each location.	

What will we eat?	**SLIDE 19** **Food and Water** Meals are served buffet-style, featuring a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, meat or fish, and delicious desserts. Drinking water is available in large dispensers located at various locations at each lodge. We DO NOT drink the water from the tap at any of our Peru locations!	
Will there be bugs?	**SLIDE 20** **Living with nature** Yes there will be bugs! And they are spectacular! In addition, you might expect to find a frog in the shower, monkeys outside the dining room, and parrots in the hammock house. It's all part of being immersed in the Amazon!	
	SLIDE 21 **Safety and Health** Safety is a number one priority! For over 20 years, Explorama Lodges has hosted student groups in the Amazon. EcoTeach works closely with Explorama to ensure proper safety guidelines are followed during all aspect of the program. Included in your handouts is a letter from our resident Amazon physician, Dr. Linnea Smith. She is a certified physician in both the US and in Peru. You will need to consult with your personal physician about travel medications. Currently nothing is required to enter Peru, but you will want to make sure that all of your regular vaccinations are up to date. You will want to discuss malaria medication and other preventative medications with your Dr. Passports are required! If you don't have one yet, you'll need to apply for one soon. More information on how to do this will be available after you register!	

Workshop Details	**SLIDE 22** **Dates & Fees** Refer participants to your agenda and/or flyer and review the costs for your program. **Fundraising** If you are considering fundraising, this would be a good time to ask for volunteer coordinators. **Registrations and Deposits** Remind participants about your registration and deposit deadline. Pass out registration forms. **More information** Provide your contact information Refer participants to your group webpage. If you have internet access you might want to pull this up as a preview!	

Meeting Wrap Up and Q & A

- ✓ Allow time for follow up questions.
- ✓ Collect names and contact info for attendees
- ✓ Distribute your group flyer
- ✓ Remind about registration and deposit deadlines
- ✓ Encourage interested participants to review your group webpage for more information
- ✓ Forward any questions you cannot answer to christa@amazonworkshops.com