



EDUCATING STUDENTS THROUGH TRAVEL



Tour: **Ozark Science**

Destination: Branson, Missouri, USA

Specialization: Physics, Geology, Animal Science, Engineering & Marine Science

Itinerary: 4-days / 3-nights

Ozarks Science - Sample Itinerary						
	Morning		Afternoon		Evening	
1	Travel to Branson; Check into Hotel; Welcome & Safety Meeting		Ride the Ducks	Golden Corral	Free Time	
2	Breakfast	Silver Dollar City - Roller Coaster Physics & Cave Geology + Theme Park		Dixie Stampede	The Track	
3	Breakfast	National Tiger Sanctuary	Core of Engineers Program at Table Rock Lake		The Branson Belle	
4	Breakfast	The Titanic	Depart Branson for Home			



Welcome to Visions Science Discovery!

As with all sample itineraries, please be aware that this is an “example” of a schedule and that the activities included may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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Day 1
Dinner

BRANSON... Known as the "Live Entertainment Capital," Branson, Missouri offers guests plenty of attractions and shows that are sure to please everyone. From Branson's humble beginning to presently being able to tout more theatre seats than Broadway's theatre district, this town has become a wonderful destination for folks of all ages.

The city of Branson was born in the early 1800's on a broad plain along the White River. Buildings and roads eventually overtook the area as the city grew westward creating what is now Branson's Historic Downtown District and then on to the famous 76 Strip. Entertainment is nonstop on the Highway 76 Strip, a seven-mile stretch of live music and comedy shows, numerous restaurants, theme parks, shopping outlets and myriad hotels. You might even catch the Oak Ridge Boys or Mel Tillis; all regulars at what some folks call the Live Music Capital of the World, where over 100 music and comedy shows run daily in more than 52 theatres.

But there's another side to this warm, hospitable town tucked into the foothills of the Ozarks. It's a paradise for outdoor recreation. The rolling hills offer 200 miles of trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking, and the three scenic lakes are havens for fishing and water sports. For less strenuous water activities, hop aboard one of the many lake cruises. The kids won't want to leave Silver Dollar City, where thrilling rides are combined with a glimpse into turn-of-the-century Ozark life. You won't be alone on a weekend visit to modern-day Branson; the natural attractions and live entertainment draw close to eight million tourists every year. Within a day's drive of almost half of the United States' population, it is no wonder that Branson has become a great retreat for those looking for rest, relaxation and also to stay within a budget.

Link to Branson Convention & Visitor's Centre: <http://www.explorebranson.com>



Did you know?

- ✓ Missouri is known as the "Show Me State". The 'Show Me State' expression is believed to have begun in 1899 when Congressman Willard Duncan Vandiver stated, "I'm from Missouri and you've got to show me."
- ✓ The "Live Music Capital of the World," Branson boasts more than 50 theatres and features more than 100 shows. With 56,797 seats, Branson has more theatre seats than New York's Broadway.
- ✓ Jesse Woodson James was born in Kearney, Missouri, the son of a Baptist minister. Some believe that cruel treatment by Union soldiers during the Civil War was what turned Jesse and his brother Frank to a life of crime after the war. Jesse was a known traveller in the Ozarks!

- ✓ Inspiration Tower has 92,064 pounds of structural steel weight in it. The 34.5 tons of rebar in the foundation would stretch 5 miles if laid out flat. It took 43 concrete trucks in convoys to full the 13-by-6 foot deep by 51-foot, 6 inch diameter foundation. The tower can easily withstand a constant wind of 172 miles per hour and gusts up to 224 miles per hour.
- ✓ "If it Ain't Fried, It Ain't Food" is a song by country star Ray Jones. Ever hear of him? He's the fictional creation of detective novelist Donald E. Westlake whose 'Baby, Would I Lie?' takes place in Branson. It's fun to check out the landmarks and places he mentions and to take in his elbow-in-the-ribs humour about Branson.
- ✓ Before tourism and during Prohibition, the making of moonshine was a profitable underground Ozarks enterprise. "Taney Country Scotch" and "Booger County Bourbon" were slang names for the product.
- ✓ Missouri ties with Tennessee as the most "neighbourly" state in the U.S., bordered by eight states.
- ✓ Missouri has 5,500 recorded caves. Nearly 20 caves are called or connected to saltpetre, which was mined in some caves in the early 1800's because nitrate was needed for the manufacture of gunpowder.

Groups participating in Visions' 'Ozark Science' will generally arrive in Branson, Missouri in the afternoon hours. We'll get settled into our hotel, have our Welcome & Safety Meeting, then head out for our first night of fun!

Sample Hotel – The Welk Resort Branson: Nestled in the breath-taking Ozark Mountains, the Welk Resort offers our schools upscale hotel accommodations, a full service restaurant, exceptional amenities and the perfect location to provide guests with the full resort experience. All hotel rooms feature complimentary WiFi Internet access, data ports, cable television, coffee/tea maker, hair dryer, iron and ironing board, alarm clock/radio, direct dial telephone and all the expected room and bath amenities. Take in the view of the hotel's award winning gardens from the outdoor patio and also enjoy family friendly amenities such as a playground, indoor/outdoor water park with an amazing 117' water slide (Splash-a-Torium), miniature golf course and game room. Relax in the outdoor pool and cabana covered spa or stay active in the on-site fitness room. The Welk Resort also offers a gift store in addition to banquet facilities and a beautiful 2,300-seat theatre. Rooms sleep four students in two queen beds per room. Full, hot breakfasts are taken on property. <http://www.welkbranson.com>



After getting settled in we're off to discover Branson by duck!



Ride The Ducks - Everyone has fun aboard a Ride The Ducks sightseeing tour of Branson! It's the best way to enjoy Branson that combines fun and music with history and sights. Your Captain will entertain you with stories of past and present while traveling on-board a remake of a WWII amphibious vehicle. Learn about Ozark Mountain history, the lakes, its famous personalities and its impact on the state and our nation. Find out about Branson's role in film, song and sports too! <http://www.bransonducks.com>

After our Duck sightseeing tour, we'll have dinner at the Golden Corral.

The Golden Corral - Golden Corral family-style restaurants offer the biggest and best buffet and grill available anywhere. The famous buffet contains an array of food choices including hot meat options, pasta, pizza, fresh vegetables, salad bar and a selection of carved meats at dinner. Grilled chicken, pork, salmon steaks, steak burgers, sausage, and more provide a constant variety of delicious grilled products. The Brass Bell Bakery and Dessert Café serve up fresh baked goods and tempting desserts each and every day. www.goldencorral.net

After filling our plates, we'll finish our first evening in Branson. Maybe a swim in the hotel pool, a quiz night or a movie night? Let us know how we may serve you!

Day 2

Breakfast & Dinner

Rise and shine Branson and get ready for an action-packed day! Today we're on our way to Silver Dollar City!

Silver Dollar City Theme Park - Travel back in time to the simplicity of 1880s America, and enjoy the best in Branson entertainment! At Silver Dollar City, you'll discover the best attractions, shows and entertainment including toe tapping harmonies, hilarious comedy and traditional favourites! Take a turn on over 30 fun-filled rides and attractions for children of all ages; meet over 100 demonstrating craftsmen whose skills have been passed down from generations of dedicated artisans creating heirloom keepsakes right before your very eyes; sample fares from a dozen delightful restaurants showcasing the Heartland's unique style of country cooking and rated among the best theme park food in the nation by *Amusement Today Magazine!*

<http://www.bransonsilverdollarcity.com>



While at Silver Dollar City, Vision groups will participate in two science activities and still have plenty of time for rides and fun!



Spelunkin' In Marvel Cave - Have you ever wondered what it was like to be a real cave explorer? We'll gear up and hold on as we join one of Silver Dollar City's cave guides (or spelunkers) through Marvel Cave, one of Missouri's deepest treasures. Learn about Marvel Cave's beginning, its rock formations, its living creatures and other fun facts along the way.

Specific concepts will be geared to age group and include stalactite and stalagmite speleothem identification; area animal identification; understanding the effect of geography and climate on cave plant and animal life, and learning how human activity impacts the ecology of the cave. 1.25-hours in duration and led by a specialist cave guide.

Ecology of Marvel Cave - Additionally, this teacher-led cave lesson may also be incorporated on Ecology. Believe it or not, Missouri is currently home to over 5,000 caves. To explore this ecology lesson, students will list the biotic and abiotic factors that they encounter.

Next, we'll explore Physics... Party Leaders may choose one or include both of these teacher-led (self-guided) lessons for participation.

The Physics of Roller Coasters - Imagine yourself rushing through the air at over 65 mph feeling weightless as you descend from a loop that made your stomach jump with excitement. You have just experienced one of Silver Dollar City's wild roller coasters! Have you ever thought about how fast you were going as you fell? Welcome to the wonderful world of physics where every inch of track and every bit of speed counts. Test out some of Silver Dollar City's coasters and learn the facts as you figure out the velocity as they fall. Who ever said learning can't be fun? This program is teacher-led (self-guided) and takes up to 3-hours. Students participating should have a good understanding of Physics terms and formulas.

Potential & Kinetic Energy - Energy...for the body it comes in all forms: drinks, chocolate, and sunlight just to name a few. When it comes to Physics in motion, energy comes in two main forms: Potential and Kinetic. Each plays a very significant role in the enjoyment and safety of a roller coaster ride. Both Potential and Kinetic energy affect a rider's emotions, adrenaline levels, and nervous system. So grab a friend or family member and go see for yourself what happens as you come across high levels of Potential and Kinetic energy. Then complete the fun activity which identifies a few of those areas. This program is teacher-led (self-guided) and takes up to 3-hours.

Next, we're off to the Dixie Stampede for dinner!



The Dixie Stampede Dinner Attraction - Amidst the fog, the sound of beating hooves begins to grow...the crowd watches in amazement and the excitement spreads throughout the grand arena...suddenly, as if by magic, a herd of wild buffalo appears. Welcome to the Dixie Stampede! A fun-filled, action-packed Dinner and Show extravaganza celebrating the Wild West! It's the only place that brings together stunning performers, amazing horse feats, fantastic stunt riders, magic and audience participation with a delicious four-course dinner extravaganza! <http://www.dixiestampede.com/branson.php>

After a night of great performance, we'll head to the Track for a little evening fun!

The Track – With 5 Track Family Fun Parks in Branson, you're sure to have a blast! Each are different but all include wooden or classic go-kart tracks, water blaster-equipped bumper boats and themed miniature golf courses plus more! The cost for this 2-hour excursion is included with your package. www.bransontracks.com



Day 3

Breakfast & Dinner

Good morning Ozarks! After breakfast in our hotel, we're off for an absolutely fascinating experience....

National Tiger Sanctuary – With a classroom nestled in the Ozark Mountains, the National Tiger Sanctuary educates all ages about the environment, the ecosystem, and even how to tell the difference between individual tigers just through observation of mannerisms. The National Tiger Sanctuary is owned by Global Resources for Environmental Education and Nature (GREEN) and is a non-profit organization established in 2000 to create a safe and protected environment to connect with the diversity of creation. It is also utilized by national zoos to assist with the Species Survival Program, a program rarely offered to sanctuaries.



The sanctuary is dedicated to providing an educational facility to teach about environmental conditions that are affecting the Earth's ecosystems. This is done by creating a safe and protected environment in which all ages can enjoy the delight of discovery. The focus is on big cats as examples of the beauty and diversity needed to preserve the survival of our planet by providing a safe, stress free, forever home for the animals. Our specialized tour will include classroom time, viewing of the big cats, and feeding (teachers will feed the cats). We'll get to watch as the cats' different personalities emerge when being fed; their distinctive behaviour fascinating to see and hear. Approximately 2-hours. <http://www.nationaltigersanctuary.org>

After our fabulous morning, we're off to learn about how the Core of Engineers built Table Rock Dam.

Tour of the Table Rock Dam & Powerhouse - Designed, constructed in 1954-1958, and operated by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Table Rock Dam and Powerhouse was created to serve as flood control for the White and Lower Mississippi Rivers and to generate hydro-electric power from Table Rock Lake. The Dam and Powerhouse have become points of interest for energy conservation fans and history buffs alike.

<http://www.tablerockdamtours.com/tours>



Vision groups will get an up close and personal view of Table Rock Lake Dam by guided walking tour. Go deep inside the Dam and see first-hand what it takes to operate the massive structure, create hydro-electric power, and maintain the pristine water for fishing, boating, and recreation on the 43,000 acre Table Rock Lake. This is a behind the scenes experience that you won't soon forget.

This 45-minute tour takes you inside one of Missouri's largest dams. **Important Note:** Guests touring Table Rock Dam must be US citizens. Guests 16 years of age and older must present a valid government-issued ID. Children under 6 are not permitted inside the Dam. You should be prepared to climb multiple flights of stairs and be comfortable in confined, damp spaces. Guests may not carry any personal items into the dam including cameras, cell phones, purses and packs.

Next, we're off to the Dewey Short Visitor's Centre and the Table Rock Fish Hatchery!

Dewey Short Visitor's Centre – No visit to the lake is complete without stopping by the Dewey Short Visitor Centre and Discovery Shop near Table Rock Dam. The Visitor Centre features nature displays and activities, movies, educational programs, walking and biking trails, as well as fish and wildlife exhibits. Come experience the story of Table Rock Lake and our Ozarks Rivers Heritage.

<http://www.tablerockdamtours.com/visitors-center>

This centre, staffed by Missouri Parks & Game Rangers, contains exhibits detailing the natural history of the area. The centre offers three films including "Taming of the Riviera Blanche" a fantastic introduction to the Table Rock Lake/White River area and details the construction and purpose of Table Rock Dam. The second, "Where Eagles Soar", depicts the story of how eagles were brought back from endangerment in the state of Missouri. The third film, "The Expedition of Lewis and Clark, 1804-1806," tells of the exploration, encounters, objectives and accomplishments during Lewis & Clark's journey.

Table Rock Fish Hatchery - Beneath the dam, the Missouri Department of Conservation operates a fish hatchery used to stock trout in adjacent Lake Taneycomo. Since trout cannot naturally reproduce in Lake Taneycomo because of the fluctuating water levels, Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery produces more than 400,000 pounds of trout every year. Not only does it supply Lake Taneycomo with trout, but also to most Missouri hatcheries and some Missouri rivers and creeks. The dams have created the ideal environment for trout, a fish that thrives at lower water temperatures.

After our full day of learning and fun, it's time to enjoy some fun with a dinner cruise on-board the Showboat Branson Belle!



The Showboat Branson Belle – Your adventure begins as soon as you step aboard the Showboat Branson Belle! Be whisked away on the authentic 1880s-style paddle-wheeler to the days when showboats reigned over the water with style and grace. Explore all 3 decks of this remarkable vessel and capture glimpses of wildlife along the pristine shoreline. Wrap yourself in the beauty of brilliant orange sunsets as light dances on the crystal clear waters of Table Rock Lake. Your 2-hour cruise features a delicious 3-course meal prepared fresh daily, served by first-class wait staff and spectacular entertainment unlike any other dinner show in Branson. Branson's Grandest Lake Experience, the 700-seat Showboat Branson Belle presents *ENCORE!* featuring two headlining acts – Janice Martin, the world's only aerial violinist, and the six-member all-male vocal group The ShowMen! The Funny Fiddle show is headlined by comedian and musician Chris Pendleton, whose unique talent has been nationally showcased on TV networks from Lifetime to A&E! <http://www.showboatbransonbelle.com>

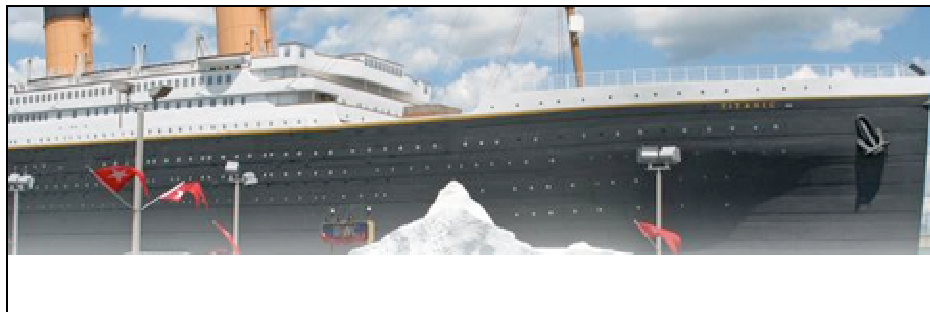
After the show, we'll disembark, travel back to the hotel and prepare for tomorrow's journey home.

Day 4

Breakfast

Rise and shine Branson! After breakfast in our hotel we will formally check-out and start to say goodbye to this fabulous Ozark town. But, before we depart the area, we'll see one last exceptional place – The Titanic!

The Titanic - As the whole world remembers the world's most famous luxury liner, *Titanic* Museum Attraction in Branson will continue to open the door to the past in its one-of-a-kind way – letting "passengers" experience what it was like to walk the hallways, parlours, cabins and Grand Staircase of the *Titanic* while surrounded by more than 400 artefacts directly from the ship and its passengers. As students touch a real iceberg, walk the Grand Staircase and third class hallways, reach their hands into 28-degree water, and try to stand on the sloping decks, they learn what it was like on the RMS *Titanic* by experiencing it first-hand.



The tragic story of *Titanic* has been with us for more than 99 years. It is more than just the account of perhaps the most memorable maritime catastrophe of the 20th century. *Titanic* is a lasting symbol of the great age of immigration that brought the hopes and dreams of many people to our shores. The *Titanic* Museum Attraction wants to promote the awareness and knowledge of the world's diverse cultures by recreating actual rooms of the *Titanic* and by displaying actual objects that bring to life individuals and events that have had a significant impact on human history. Teaching and learning opportunities abound as you and your students explore the World's Largest *Titanic* Museum Attraction. Enjoy! <http://www.titanicbranson.com>

Titanic Education Guide: <http://www.titanicattraction.com/titanic-education-guide.php>

Afterwards, we'll start to wave goodbye to our new friend as we leave for home and hopefully, take away memories that will last a lifetime!

OZARK SCIENCE

Minimum Booking Numbers:

20 students

What's Included:

Flights/Transport as per individual quote request

3-nights accommodation
Breakfasts & dinners daily
Ride the Ducks Sightseeing/History Excursion
Silver Dollar City Excursion & Master Class
Marvel Cave Master Class
Dixie Stampede Excursion
The Track (2-hours of play) Excursion
National Tiger Sanctuary Master Class
Table Rock Dam & Powerhouse Master Class
Dewey Short Visitor's Centre Excursion
Table Rock Fish Hatchery Excursion
Showboat Branson Belle Excursion
Titanic Museum Excursion
Full-time Tour Ambassador
24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

Fully comprehensive insurance (mandatory)
Transfers to/from home airport
Transportation for activities not shown in the itinerary
Lunches in resort
Sightseeing / Entertainment Options not shown in Itinerary
Hotel incidental deposits & bills – meals, mini-bar items,
recreation charges, purchases billed to room, etc
Any gratuities – coach drivers, maid service, bellman
service, area guides, tour ambassador

As always, our staff is available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming.
If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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