

1. Title / Content Area:	Denver Zoo
2. Historic Site:	Denver Zoo and Denver Parks
3. Episode	Denver Zoo LINK
3. Developed by:	Sally Purath, Retired Educator, Poudre School District Michelle Pearson, Adams 12 Five Star Schools
4. Grade Level and Standards:	<p>Grade Level: 6th- HS</p> <p>Content in this Document Based Question (DBQ) link to Prepared Graduate Competencies in the Colorado Academic Standards Prepared Graduate Competencies: Understand the nature of historical knowledge as a process of inquiry that examines and analyzes how history is viewed, constructed, and interpreted.</p> <p><i>Colorado Standards:</i> 6th: History Standard 1 8th: History Standard 1 HS: History Standard 1</p> <p>C3 Standards in Social Studies: D2.His.1.6-8 D3.1.6-8. D2.His.2.6-8 D3.3.6-8 D2.His.3.6-8 D2.His.3.9-12. D2.His.2.9-12. D2.His.1.9-12.</p>
5. Assessment Question:	Why is it important to preserve and protect an architectural feature in a zoo and list it as part of a historic survey or landmark nomination?

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6. Contextual Paragraph

The Denver Zoo began with the donation of an orphaned black bear cub to Denver's mayor in 1896. It was joined by bison, elk, wolves, prairie dogs, birds, and more bears living in cages in City Park. In 1907 German animal trainer Carl Hagenbeck created nature-based habitats in Europe, and that idea was brought to Denver by zoo superintendent Victor Borchardt and landscape architect Saco Rink DeBoer with the creation of Bear Mountain in 1918. It was the first naturalistic zoo habitat at eye level with no bars or fences in America. It was also the first in the world to make plaster casts of local cliffs near Denver instead of the usual fashioning them free form in concrete. A moat at the base of a steep viewing wall kept the bears inside. This naturalistic way of exhibiting animals has since been copied by zoos all over the country.

The Denver Zoo was a big hit and expanded over the years. In 1937 during the Depression, the zoo used Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds to build Monkey Island so that various monkeys and primates could be seen swinging freely through trees. In 1950 the first elephant named Cookie came to stay. In 1964 the Feline House was built to hold big cats such as leopards, jaguars, lions, tigers, and cheetahs. In 1966 Giraffe House was opened followed in 1975 by Bird World, an open-air aviary with walkways among flying birds that is now closed.

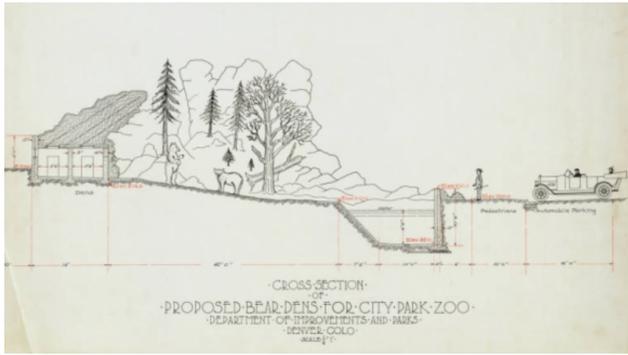
The effort to replace barred cages with more naturalistic pens also expanded. The 1975 Mountain Sheep Habitat was built with two rugged mountains for Dall sheep, Rocky Mountain sheep and goats to climb about with no fencing. In 1987 Northern Shores opened with pools and streams of water for seals, sea lions, and polar bears and stairs leading down to windows so they could be seen underwater. In 1996 and 2002, Primate Panorama habitat for large apes gave them seven acres and open-air mesh tents four stories up to play on. It also included a Forest Aviary, a 7,500-square-foot landscaped area enclosed by a net so visitors can walk around with flying birds. Since 2017 the Edge, modeled after the pine forests of Russia for Amur Tigers, rotates with other Asian predators to give them room to move.

Zoo philosophy has changed to group animals together by common habitat rather than by the traditional grouping of species. 1993 saw Tropical Discovery combine mammals, reptiles, fish, amphibians and insects from tropical environments in one building. Predator Ridge in 2004 opened with 3 rotating areas with hidden barriers to look as though it is one piece of African savanna. Lions, hyenas, and African wild dogs can rotate through and be seen together without danger of lions feasting on the

	<p>others. In 2012 Toyota Elephant Passage housed the largest Asian bull elephant habitat in the world over ten acres as well as rhinos, gibbons, otters, pythons, clouded leopards and fishing cats all from Asia.</p> <p>The Denver Zoo is also a leader in earning certificates such as LEED Platinum for excellent energy conservation and is working on a waste-to-energy gasification system to turn organic waste such as uneaten food and dung into energy to power the zoo's needs.</p> <p>Education and conservation are at the forefront as well. In 1996 the Gates Wildlife Conservation Education Center opened to educate the public on conservation issues. In 2020, Stingray Cove, an 18,000-gallon shaded open-air aquarium to house sharks and stingrays, allows guests to gently touch and feed stingrays swimming by. Throughout the day animal demonstrations are scheduled for visitors to learn about them in more detail. Many endangered species have breeding programs to perpetuate them if they die out in the wild.</p>	
<p>7. Connection to Historic Preservation</p>	<p>Bear Mountain is on the National Register of Historic Places as a part of the City Park (Denver Park and Parkway System TR) listing from 1986. The National Register of Historic Places is a listing of buildings, landscapes, and other important places, structures, and artifacts that contribute to the history of the United States in some special way. This site provides both a historic and contemporary view of the Zoo setting for visitors and contributes to the City Park listing as an important structure.</p>	

Document Based Question (DBQ)

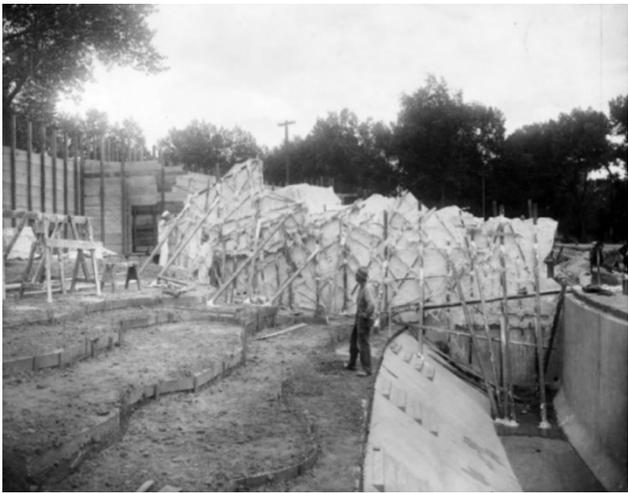
<p>Document Set</p>	
<p>Cross section of proposed bear dens for City Park zoo 1918</p>	<p>GUIDING QUESTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In what three ways was the Bear Mountain exhibition design unique in American zoos? 2. How were dangerous animals exhibited prior to the Bear Mountain exhibition and what problems did that cause?



<https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/new-kind-zoo-bear-mountain#PhotoSwipe1615676676457>

3. What newer exhibitions at the Denver Zoo have been built in the same spirit as Bear Mountain?
4. What kind of features in this exhibit help give the visitor a special view of where these bears could live?

Plaster casts of cliffs and the moat being installed at Bear Mountain 1918



<https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/new-kind-zoo-bear-mountain>

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. How is the construction of this bear habitat unique to other zoos in America?
2. How do the plaster casts tie the zoo to the Colorado environment?
3. How do the selected materials play a role in the creation of an indoor and outdoor space?

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<p>Visitors could drive up to Bear Mountain in the 1920s to view them</p>	<p>GUIDING QUESTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How did the way Bear Mountain was constructed influence habitats at other American zoos?2. What dangers were possible by allowing people to drive up to the bear exhibit?3. What would be the benefit of having plaster casts of real local cliffs as a background instead of just making some out of concrete?
	
<p>https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/new-kind-zoo-bear-mountain</p>	

<p>Orangutans naturalized habitat in Primate Panorama</p>	<p>GUIDING QUESTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Why is it especially important to the wellbeing of large primates to have lots of naturalized habitat?2. How do naturalized habitats benefit visitors who see animals in them?
	
<p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denver_Zoo</p>	

What is the National Register?



[Link to the National Register of Historic Places](#)

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. What is the National Register of Historic Places ?
2. What value does this program hold for the United States?
3. Specifically, how can historic designation of one of the designated items in the National Register of Historic Places (Landscape, building, etc) help with preserving it?

Why is it important to preserve and protect an architectural feature in a zoo and list it as part of a historic survey or landmark nomination?

Response