

**Evaluation Report:
The Language of Conservation: Central Park Zoo Poetry
Project**

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I. Executive Summary

This evaluation of the poetry installation at the Central Park Zoo found:

1) The poetry installation was well-received by a clear majority of visitors:

- **Poetry excerpts were read and liked by 70% of those interviewed.**
- **Visitors reported responding to wide variety of specific poetry excerpts.**
- **Four Factors seemed to increase visitor receptivity to the excerpts on display: familiarity; brevity and memorability; placement and design; and fit with other Zoo learning experiences at specific locations.**

2) The poetry installation increased awareness of conservation issues during Zoo visits.

- **Visitors talked about conservation issues more frequently during exit interviews and commented on these issues earlier.**
 - Those visiting the Zoo after the poetry installation made 21% more comments reflecting conservation issues during their interviews.
 - Many of these comments were made earlier in the interviews, indicating that visitors began the interviews with conservation issues more top-of-mind.
- **Many visitors reported that the poetry had served to foreground or to remind them of conservation ideas during their visit.**
 - Visitors commented that the poetry “brought it out,” expressed what zoo is trying to do, made them think, think differently, or see things from a different perspective, or was humbling because it made them think about man’s place in the world.

3) *The greatest increases were in awareness that humans share habitats with and co-exist with animals—in “globally-centered” conservation thinking rather than in “human-centered” conservation thinking.*

- **Visitor comments reflecting an awareness of humans taking a place alongside other animals on this planet increased significantly.**
 - Of the five categories of conservation thinking measured, the three categories of more “globally-centered” conservation thinking increased most significantly: “Humans as Part of Ecosystems” “Human Impact on/Threats to Nature” and “Humans as Wildlife Custodians.”
 - Comments reflecting more human-centered conservation thinking— affective thinking related to caring about animals or ego-centered thinking about wildlife’s benefits to humans—were not as much changed.
- **Comments reflecting an awareness of humans as part of ecosystems increased most dramatically, and these increases were less due to repetition.**

II. Introduction, Goals and Methods

A. Brief Description of Project

The idea behind this project is that poetry, through its unique capacity, can be a tool to help Zoo visitors connect more readily with the conservation story. With support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Wildlife Conservation Society/Poets House partnership contracted with a poet/curator to identify 100 poems and establish the groundwork toward a canon of poetry that addresses conservation issues appropriate to the mission of Wildlife Conservation from which 28 poems can be selected for installation and display at the Central Park Zoo. The main expected outcome of this poetry display was “increased visitor awareness of conservation issues as part of the zoo experience.”¹

B. Goals of Evaluation

This project’s evaluation objectives were clearly stated:

- determine interest in poetry, readability and reaction to poetry.
- determine if the presence of poetry increases awareness of conservation issues (with the aim of demonstrating significant change in the majority of visitors).
- identify which poetry tactics are most effective and striking.

The project evaluator worked with project staff from both institutions to clarify the types of conservation thinking to be measured by the study. The conservation thinking categories which were measured by this study along the corresponding conservation messages from which they were abstracted² These messages were chosen by project staff as those most relevant to the anticipated outcomes of the Poetry Project. The evaluation did not initially plan to measure thinking in the last category listed— “Humans as Wildlife Stewards”—because it was assumed that this more action-oriented thinking category would be less likely to be affected by the poetry installation than the four others, which cover more affective and cognitive aspects of conservation thinking. However, because an initial reading of the interview transcripts seemed to show an increase in this area, “Humans as Wildlife Stewards” was added as a fifth coding category for content analysis.

Conservation Thinking Categories Measured in this Study	Corresponding Conservation Thinking Messages
Human Benefit from Wildlife (Quality of Life, Survival)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy wildlife improves our quality of life: Close-up encounters with the beauty and variety of living wildlife can inspire our respect and wonder, can help us to better understand ourselves and our place in the world, can refresh and renew our spirit, and provide memorable experience. • Healthy wildlife is essential to human survival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy ecosystems are essential to our physical survival. • Biological diversity, which includes wildlife, provides materials for many life necessities, such as shelter, clothing and medicine.
Zoo Staff Cares About Animals and Wants Everyone To	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoos and Wildlife Conservationists Care Passionately, and Want Visitors to Care as Well
Humans as Part of Nature/ Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humans are part of interdependent systems (ecosystems) that depend on other living things and a healthy physical environment.
Human Impact on/Threats to Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human actions affect ecosystems; human actions have threatened wildlife/wilderness • Human population growth and consumption of resources have major impacts. • This threat has increased at an unprecedented rate in recent years. • Human threats to wildlife include global warming, habitat destruction, invasive species, and overuse of individual species.
Humans as Wildlife Stewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humans must act as stewards for wildlife by maintaining healthy ecosystems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCS and many other zoos are acting to save wildlife and wild lands. • Everyone can/must take action to conserve nature and protect the environment.

C: Evaluation Methods

Research Design and Data Collection:

Two data collection strategies were employed to accomplish the evaluation goals described above:

- 101 longer, uncued, open-ended exit interviews with groups visiting the Zoo together. Two sets of these interviews were conducted; 56 just before and 45 just after the poetry was installed at the Zoo. In all, these group interviews included 185 people.
- 38 shorter, cued interviews with individuals who were part of groups visiting the Zoo, in which more delimited information was collected both before and after the individual's Zoo visit.

The interviews conducted before the poetry was installed were designed to explore how the Central Park Zoo was helping visitors connect with the conservation story (by gaining new information and by re-thinking pre-existing knowledge, and by having emotional experiences related to the conservation story). The two other sets of interviews aimed to ascertain ways in which the poetry installation helped visitors connect more readily with conservation issues or altered what they thought and felt about conservation issues during their Zoo visit.

Study data was collected in the summer and fall of 2004. Interviewers were comprised of both graduate students in education and zoo volunteers. All were trained in interviewing techniques and subsequently evaluated through observation by the project evaluator. The evaluation questionnaires and protocol instructions given to all interviewers are included in Appendices C and D of this report.

Many of the groups interviewed were families, but only children 12 and over in those groups were interviewed. Younger children in these groups (who were given the opportunity to draw their Zoo experiences with crayons and paper during the interviews) were not included because, generally-speaking, children under 12 are less able to:

- conceptualize themselves as part of a larger world,
- understand poetic expression and apply the ideas expressed in the poetic excerpts to their broader thinking on conservation, and
- answer the interviewers' meta-cognitive questions (which asked visitors to make observations about their own thinking).

Adapting the study to also collect younger children's thoughts on poetry and conservation at the Zoo might have yielded interesting results. However, this would not have been a realistic step given the scope of the evaluation and the fact that interviewers had not been trained to interview children. Additionally, including younger children in the extended group interviews might have further complicated the group interview dynamics, which were already challenging, even seasoned interviewers.

The group interview setting proved to be an excellent one in which to gather meta-cognitive observations from visitors. Reporting on one's own thinking usually requires a moment of reflection, and many people are not comfortable just sitting, thinking, in front of an interviewer. Perhaps they think they should know the answer without thinking about it, or that by taking the time to think they are wasting an interviewer's time? The group interview situation allowed individuals the luxury of thinking about their thinking while others were taking their turns answering. In addition, the group interview situation allowed individuals answering the same question in succession to "scaffold" their thoughts on the thoughts just expressed by others. This dynamic sometimes helped visitors to move what might be thought of as expected answers, while in addition helping them to lay aside any perceptions that the interviewers were looking for "one right answer."

While the comments visitors made in the shorter interviews were more perfunctory on the whole, the pre-visit component, in which individuals were asked to write down words associated with conservation, helped to establish that visitors—at least adult visitors—to the Zoo are already familiar with many conservation messages when they arrive. This, coupled with the fact that relatively few individuals chose to add conservation-related words to their lists after their Zoo visits and none of those tied these additions with the poetry installation, helped to establish that neither the Zoo nor the poetry installation changed visitors' conservation attitudes. This somewhat expected finding (given the long-term nature of attitude change) is nevertheless important in that it pushes us towards a more constructivist theory of learning, which asks how visitors are using the Zoo to hone their conservation thinking rather than what new attitudes or ideas they pick up there.

Data Analysis:

"It's hard to code these.... With all these different answers, how can you cross-reference or collate, or get any useful information?"

"Because there's somebody that's a professional that's doing that."

"I know, but those kinds of professionals...I'm a professional, too, but with such subjective answers it all depends on who's coding it, then."

—Exchange, midway through an interview conducted for this study, between an interviewee and interviewer.

The visitor quoted above quite rightly predicted that subjectivity would present the greatest challenge to analyzing the incredibly rich qualitative data gathered for this evaluation. Subjective answers could hardly be avoided in an evaluation attempting to understand two visitor activities—thinking about conservation and reading poetry—that are subjective by nature. This visitor's comment also pinpointed the greatest challenge, which was maintaining objectivity while analyzing conceptually complex data that can be

interpreted in many different ways. To overcome this, the evaluator took great care to apply the same reasoning while coding and interpreting all the data sets.

Preliminary analysis focused on the visitor receptivity to poetry. Those interviewees who had liked or not liked the poetry, as well as those who had read or not read the poetry, were tallied. All comments visitors made about the poetry were analyzed, with particular attention to the specific poems mentioned as well as to any comments made reflecting the poetry's impact on thinking in general. One chart used to facilitate this analysis is included in Appendix B for the benefit of those interested in reading visitors' statements in the context of the specific poems they cite. Factors affecting accessibility of particular excerpts were established by noting visitor comments on this and also by analyzing most frequently mentioned poems for similarities. The direct comments visitors made about the poetry's impact on conservation thinking were then analyzed and synopsized. Words added by visitors during exit interviews for the cued study were scrutinized for evidence that any of these additions might be due to the poetry. An overall analysis was made of the words visitors associated with conservation before and after their visit.

Up until this point, analysis had centered on transcripts from interviews—both cued and uncued—conducted after the poetry installation. The last aspect of analysis compared the two sets of uncued interviews, which asked visitors the same questions related to conservation before and after the poetry was installed. This content analysis flagged all visitor comments expressing specific, previously-determined conservation messages and coded these messages into one of the five conservation thinking categories corresponding to the messages. This coded data was then analyzed for any differences between the interviews conducted before and after the poetry was installed.

Method of Reporting:

Demographic information on the age and sex of interviewees was collected from interviewees and is presented in tables in Appendix A along with other statistical details such as the size of interview groups, the gender balance of interviewers, and refusal rates. This section also includes tables presenting the numbers underlying the findings on visitor receptivity to the poetry.

The evaluation's findings are presented in the narrative immediately following. Several charts are also used here to better illustrate the changes in conservation thinking.

II. Results and Analysis

A. Visitor Receptivity to the Poetry Display:

The poetry excerpts were read and liked by the majority of those interviewed.

70% of those interviewed had read at least some of the poetry on display at the zoo. The same percentage reported liking the poetry installation³ (whether they had read it or not).⁴ Only 7% didn't like the poetry installation.⁵

Visitors reported responding to a wide variety of specific poetry excerpts.

The number of different poems that visitors reported reading suggests that the excerpts successfully provided visitors with a broad variety of opportunities for thought and contemplation. About half of those interviewed were able to cite specific poems they had read, and these citations spanned 20 different poetry excerpts,⁶ a relatively high proportion of the poetry on display during the evaluation period.⁷ In addition, a number of people reported reading most, all or a lot of poems, whether or not they could recall specific poems.

Four factors seemed to increase visitor receptivity to the excerpts on display:

1) Familiarity:

Most important here was familiarity with individual poets and/or excerpted texts.⁸ Secondly, past exposure to poetry in general seemed to increase the receptivity for some to the overall display.⁹ (This finding is in keeping with what is known about adult learners, who are less likely than children to pursue knowledge in those areas of which they know little.¹⁰) However, there were clear exceptions here; cases in which those who had seemingly little past experience with poetry were drawn in and read numerous excerpts. One might conjecture that the exceptions here may be "lifelong learners," a category of adult learners with a continuing openness to knowledge in new areas. Before the interviewer identified the installation as "poetry" in the last question, visitors referring to it were mostly likely to use the word "quotes" to describe it. One might argue, and several interviews specifically bear this out, that some had read the installation without thinking of it as poetry.¹¹

2) Brevity and memorability:

Excerpts that were brief or that had highly memorable lines were the ones most frequently cited by visitors. The Merwin excerpt was probably often mentioned because of its brevity, its simplicity, and its directness. In fact, Merwin addresses the reader directly in this excerpt; this same literary technique, referred to as "authorial intrusion," was employed in over two-thirds of the poems specifically mentioned by visitors, and may have created a more personal connection between these poets and the visitors. The often-cited Sendak excerpt is brief; the repetition of the word "grew" as well as the straightforward imagery in this excerpt probably added to its memorability. The Lawless poem's heavy use of repetition (as when evoking the last bear, last caribou and last wolf) as well as its starkness of words and imagery probably made it easier for visitors to absorb while walking by. The segmented design of this already pithy poem's installation

probably also helped visitors digest it in smaller pieces.” The Nye poem frequently repeated the word “famous” and the poem was written in brief, self-contained, and similarly structured segments. One visitor noted that these segments, which were highlighted in the installation by their placement on individual placards hung sequentially in a row, made this poem more accessible, stating, “They were simple, plain, and it was not like you had to read a continuous line. And you need something simple so it grabs you.”¹²

3) Placement and Design

Visitors appreciated novel or clever placement of the excerpts. Some locations seemed just as popular—in certain instances even more popular¹³—than the excerpts placed in them. The three locations seemed most appealing to visitors—around the rafters in the panda bear area¹⁴, up the stairs in the rainforest,¹⁵ and across the benches—were cited in part because of their novelty, but each of these locations also forces the breaking up of blocks of text into individual lines. The idea that the segmentation of the excerpts added to readability is supported by related visitor comments regarding brevity above and by at least one visitor who observed of the poetry in general, “I think if it was laid out in one big long line, you tended to read it, instead of just one long block.”

These three locations may also have been popular because the act of reading the excerpts in each actually drew visitors along through space. Of the poetry in general, one visitor remarked, “I liked the way, you know, it sort of brought you along,” giving the lines placed around the panda rafters as an example; several other comments about the poems in the rafters made reference to them “going all the way around.” Of course, the Sendak poem could be read while moving up the stairs, and the longer bench excerpts while walking along paths. One person specifically reported liking the fact the Sappho poem was split up across a number of benches. The Nye and the Lawless excerpts described in the section on brevity above also share this characteristic of not being readable from one single vantage point.

Just as visitors reported liking to read simple and manageably-sized excerpts, several noted liking the fact that the individual excerpts were spread throughout the zoo and were thus read one at a time. Of the overall design of the installation, one visitor commented, “I was drawn to them, not only because of what they said, but because of how they’re displayed. That was kind of fun.” Another, echoing sentiments of being drawn along by the poetry described above, noted that she “really enjoyed finding it” as she made her way through the Zoo.¹⁶

4) Fit With Other Zoo Learning Experiences at Specific Locations

Not surprisingly, specific pairings of poetry content with the wildlife on display at particular locations and also affected the popularity of individual excerpts. Visitors commented on the appropriateness of placing poems about foliage (Sendak, Merwin) in the rainforest setting. One person noted that the Merwin poem, along with other nearby poems about foliage, had enhanced her family’s awareness of plants as well as animals while in the rainforest area.¹⁷ Visitors also noted that they liked associating the Lawless poem, which involved bears, with the polar bear nearby. One said this poem made her

think of the polar bear in its “natural setting rather than here at the zoo,” perhaps because the poem also makes reference to evidence of wildlife in nature (scat, deer trails). The Richards’ poem, placed in the penguin area, offers information about penguin behavior and therefore is easily incorporated into the learning discussions that groups are often already having at the Zoo. In fact, interviewees reported that at least one Zoo staff person had incorporated an explanation of the behavior described in the poem into her periodic announcements.¹⁸

Ties to the learning activities taking place in a particular poem’s location (i.e., the extent to which specific poems were related to or compatible with what visitors might likely also be thinking, doing or feeling in that area) were perhaps even more important than ties to specific content. For example, the frequently cited Richards poem in the penguin area complemented a pre-existing activity taking place in that space—observing penguin behavior—by adding an additional and remarkable detail about that species’ behavior.¹⁹

The Richards’ poem also encouraged another very common, if sometimes controversial, Zoo-going activity—empathizing with or taking the perspective of animals at the Zoo and attempting to understand animal behavior by comparing it to that of humans. While one visitor noted appreciating the analogy she felt the Richards poem made between penguin and human courtship²⁰, another reported not liking this poem specifically because she thought this “anthropomorphizing” was problematic.²¹ Similarly, Nye’s poem “Famous” might have resonated because perspective-taking, an activity which is central to the poem’s theme, is an activity which is key to zoo-going experiences for many; one visitor summed up this specific poem by saying, “There was a lot of ‘what was important’ to specific animals.” Two other poems mentioned by visitors—those by Diop and Sappho—also made use of the literary technique of personification.

Perspective-taking, Habitat Awareness, and Conservation Thinking:

One can certainly argue that in the instances immediately cited above, poetry is influencing conservation thinking indirectly by encouraging Zoo visitors to empathize with animals. In fact, the visitor cited above as liking the Richards poem’s penguin-perspective-taking argued such activity helps break people out of what has elsewhere been called species-centric or humano-centric thinking:

“And it certainly—what’s the word—anthropomorphizes ..., and that’s got to help a lot of people who perhaps don’t feel the way we do, don’t see that connection. You know, I think any time you can make people think that it’s not all about people.”

Similarly, one can make the case that the poetry is laying important groundwork for conservation thinking, when, as noted above, it helps to focus visitor attention on animal habitats. Whether by encouraging visitors to notice the plant life in the Zoo’s constructed habitats, by evoking animals’ presence in wild habitats, or, as I will argue later in this report, *particularly by foregrounding the idea that humans share habitats with animals*, the poetry amplifies and emphasizes conservation messages which the Zoo is already endeavoring to make by other means.

B. Poetry's Affect on Visitor Thinking about Conservation

To raise the points made immediately above is to beg the question of how to distinguish between those influences on conservation thinking arising from the poetry and those influences arising from other parts of the Zoo experience. Making such distinctions is especially difficult because the experience of the poetry and animals together was designed to be synergistic. This section attempts to tackle this difficult task, first by examining what visitors actually said about poetry's influence on their conservation thinking, and second by measuring changes in frequency and the type of conservation comments made by visitors before and after the poetry was installed.

1. Visitor Reports on Poetry's Influence on Conservation Thinking

A number of visitors reported that the poetry had served to foreground conservation ideas during their visit. One, in responding to the question about what the Zoo was trying to get across, noted, "I was struck by the poetry throughout the Zoo, and I think it tries to tell you in poetic form the relationship between people and animals." He noted that the poetry in general:

"just made me more, more aware...[about] the whole general subject of environmental change, habitat change, ecosystem change..."

Another, who had commented on the Auden excerpt, echoed these sentiments, saying:

"Well, I think it just brought it out... I think it hits it on ... you know. It expresses what we're doing here. I think it's very nice, because I think it's good for young people too, to associate...to put the literature with the ... you know ... that young people can see them, that maybe they can do the same thing."

In response to the question about what zoo is trying to show, one visitor noted that while the message about the "importance of ... conservation—you know, it's all connected, and if we screw it up, the whole circle will be broken" was "all over" the Zoo, she found that "the quotes particularly, really" communicated this.

A number of comments tied individual poems specifically to thoughts about conservation. One visitor noted that the Auden poem was "the one I noticed the most..., because it talked about how ... the way society treats its forests is kind of a measure of the society," adding, "So it's really very related to what the zoo is kind of about."

One, who commented that she thought the poetry had influenced her answers, noted that the Hogan poem had made her think about "just about how closely connected we are to animals, about a human turning into a deer." She had, in fact, made an earlier comment related to human/animal interdependence, noting that the visit had reminded her:

“Just how we’re all here on one planet and we’re not any better than the animals. We’re all just...gets you philosophical, a little bit. Makes you feel a little bit insignificant.”

Another, who referred to a poem he identified as “up by the red panda” as “quite inspiring, in a way,” noted that the poetry “does make you think,” and added,

“I can’t remember, but [reading the poem] was quite humbling if you know what I mean. You don’t feel as important. It makes you feel like these animals are quite important and we are not the only people here, that there are other creatures.”

When the interviewer asked this person if being with the animals made him feel that way as well, he said, “A combination of both, really.”

Another noted a conservation theme in describing an unidentified poem, saying: “There was one that I specifically...I don’t remember the words, but it is how we all live here and how we all have to get along, regardless of whether we’re animals or human beings.” When asked about her reaction to this poem, she said, “It made me feel great. Reminds you.”

A number of people associated the poetry with ideas about “endangered species”—“that sort of thinking.” The Lawless poem in particular was cited in this way; of it one visitor commented, “The inference was that things will die if we don’t look after them.” To the extent that this poem’s theme was more clearly about species extinction and the need for conservation, I think it resonated with those who shared that belief, especially, as one noted, in the awe-inspiring presence of an actual polar bear: “you have the added feeling that you have to respect what you’re seeing. You know, it’s not just here for amusement.”

Visitors reported little or no change in their general attitudes about conservation, which is not surprising, given the slow, incremental nature of attitudinal change. Perhaps the strongest evidence the data provided for the *lack* of attitude change effected by the poetry is the fact only 24% (9) of the cued survey respondents, when given the opportunity after their zoo visit, added to or changed the words related to conservation that they had listed before their visit.²² None of these 9 related their changes directly to the poetry,²³ and in the case of all but one respondent, such connections were unlikely.²⁴

A number reported specifically liking the fact that poetry was being brought to bear on the subject of nature, and in doing so indirectly stated an understanding of some of the basic goals of the installation. One, in answering the question about signs at the Zoo, noted:

“...there were several quotes that were interpreted from other languages that had to do with the serenity ... not specific animals ... I’m sure you know what I’m talking about. Everywhere you’d go, you’d see on a bench or on a sign, some pretty neat ... I thought those were wonderful. So you’re mixing animals and

plant life and, especially since I think I saw a Socrates interpretation, some literary culture as well. It's kind of fun."²⁵

Some visitors said they didn't think the poetry had influenced their answers to interview questions because they already held the conservation sentiments that the poetry expressed. Many of those, however, went on to volunteer that they had nevertheless enjoyed being reminded of these sentiments or that they thought these ideas were appropriate to share with the public. For instance, one who liked the poetry said it didn't influence her answers because "I appreciate animals anyways.... So it's a nice addition to it.... I appreciate people making an effort [with the poetry installation]." Other similar comments included:

"I thought it was quite beautiful, and appropriate. I think it reflected it more than anything, how I feel.... I happen to be as green as you get....conservation-minded. I work at a wild bird rehabilitation center. Yeah, the feelings that I have about nature and conserving nature and preserving it, conservation of this Earth.... I read it all as I went through.... I just thought they were all quite beautiful."

"I don't think so. I enjoyed the poetry, but I agreed...I mean I agreed with a lot of it.... It didn't influence my thinking. I just enjoyed it."

"Can't say it affected the way we thought, but it was nice."

"[Poetry in general] didn't make me feel differently about what I saw.... I appreciated it."

"We're pretty aware, very very aware, of the condition of things.... Yes, I saw the poetry. But it didn't really influence me, no. I noted it, and it's appropriate."

"I didn't really need it [the poetry] to stimulate, to trigger my thoughts.... I'm sure for the overall majority, it can't hurt."

Others concluded that because they couldn't recall individual poems they had read, the poetry must not have influenced their answers to the other interview questions. For example, two separate visitors who reported liking and reading the poetry, and whose answers clearly indicated that the poetry influenced their thinking while they were there, when asked if the poetry had influenced their answers, concluded that it hadn't because they couldn't remember specific poems. Both concluded that had they spent more time with the poetry, it would have influenced them more:

"I think it's a good idea, but whether it's thought provoking ... It's a bit confusing, because it all sort of goes into one [ear and out the other]."

"I think that as you're walking past..., your eye catches something and you stop and you read it, but you don't really have time to digest all of it. I mean you go

from one and then suddenly you're on to the next. But I think that if you had a lot of time, you could slowly go around and digest all the poetry, etc. And at the time, you're walking around and I read something, and I'd go, 'Gee, that says something, and that makes sense and everything.' And on to the next one, and what you said before is forgotten."

On the other hand, two others, friends who also couldn't remember many individual poems, still reported that their answers had been influenced by the poetry, and only wished they had been able to write them down:

First: "You sort of read them and they tend to blend in with what you ...
Unless you have photographic memory, you sort of..."
Second: "I wished I'd had a notebook with me."
First: "Yeah, because some of them were quite beautiful."
Second: "I would like to have copied some of them down."

Another, who attributed the fact that he couldn't recall specific instances of how poetry affecting his thinking to the large number of excerpts, qualified his answer about the poetry's influence by concluding that the poetry only influenced him while he was reading it:

"...as I was going around and reading them, they made me think differently. There were a few that I thought, 'Oh yeah, that's really good.' But there's just so many around that I couldn't pick any one particular one out."

Quite a number, however, noted that the poetry specifically influenced their thinking, including those who mentioned the poetry in response to the question asking what in their Zoo visit had made them stop and think. For example, one answered this question by saying, "We're pretty big animal and nature lovers, and we loved reading the quotes." Another answered this question by saying, "Oh, yes. We were reading some of the signs on the floor and some of the signs on the benches as well. Very interesting, and it makes you really think about nature." This person had recalled the Diop poem as saying, "Hear the nature instead of the human beings, when you stop and you listen to the fire." When asked later about the effect of the poetry, she said that it was "very important. It makes you think. Makes you really think.... Oh, I love them [the poems]. I love them."

Other comments about the poetry's effect on thinking included:

"...it added some contemplation and reflection to the experience.... It made it, for those of us ... it made it a little more cerebral as well as visually appreciating the animals. It was a little more cerebral activity than previously, for me.

"I thought the poetry was thought-provoking."

"It was excellent. You could reflect on what you were seeing."

“It just made you think more.”

“Maybe it made me think a little bit more.”

“Makes you think about different things you wouldn’t normally think about.”

You read those things and then you look around, and you see the polar bear, or you see the other animals, and it makes you look at them in a different way.”
[Wife interjects: “It adds a dimension.”] “Yes.”

“I think it’s just trying to get you to think. Just think about different things really, different experiences. [In the poetry there] [s]eems to be a lot of importance of the moment, of the actual moment. I think it was trying to get you to feel things how you felt at that specific time of seeing something.”

“I thought that [the poetry] was very appropriate.... I think it gave you more of a range of understanding. The exhibits, the animals, their place in nature, and it just helped.... I enjoyed reading them and then seeing the exhibit.”

“It should be there. It puts it into a different perspective. You know, it puts the place on a more ... it puts it in a cultural perspective, and it adds a lot of sophistication and depth to the meaning of having animals around.... I do like it very much.”

Some comments emphasized the poetry’s effect on visitor feelings rather than thoughts. A number of these, such as, “It doesn’t make me think any differently, but it’s just a different edge, I guess,” highlighted the fine line between feeling and thinking. One visitor observed that he thought the poetry was intended to make people “feel something else—just them seeing something, then you have a different type of experience.” Another commented, “I would say it does influence how you answer the questions, because it’s very descriptive. It creates an atmosphere.”

The idea that the poetry affected the overall atmosphere of the Zoo experience in important yet subtle ways, which indeed affected visitor thinking about conservation, is again illustrated in another visitor’s comment on the direct and personal nature of the Merwin excerpt, “It just was touching. It made it more intimate.” The Merwin quote, by starkly and poignantly stating what the writer would do on the last day, may have indirectly but compellingly encouraged people to think about what they would do as well, and it may also make the idea of the last day of the world (which is closely related to the idea of extinction, a key conservation concept), more imaginatively accessible to visitors. The poem clearly influenced at least one boy, who commented, “That’s how I feel about it. One last life to say goodbye to all your fellows...,” to think personally about what he would do. Other poems using this same technique of authorial intrusion (also discussed on page 9 above) may have had similar effects on visitors.

2. Measurable Increases in Conservation Thinking Followed the Poetry Installation

Visitor comments cited in the section above provide compelling evidence that while not changing attitudes about conservation, the poetry increased the amount of conservation thinking taking place during Zoo visits. However, relying solely on this evidence would be problematic because

- individuals are not always aware of their thought processes or able to recall them accurately,
- the emotional impact the poetry had on conservation thinking (specifically cited by some visitors) would be especially difficult for visitors to conceptualize and to report in retrospect, and
- the impact the poetry installation, which was designed to work synergistically with the overall Zoo experience, had on conservation thinking could not be captured completely through comments specific to poetry.

This section looks at another type of evidence—changes in the frequency and the type of conservation comments made by visitors before and after the poetry was installed, without reference to visitor comments about the poetry’s influence. While relying only this evidence alone would also be problematic, primarily because there is no way to prove that the change was caused by the installation and not by some other unanticipated change in the environment (such as a possible difference in audience demographics between August and September, when the pre- and post-poetry studies were done). However, this approach avoids the difficulties of the direct approach mentioned above, and solves several other methodological difficulties as well. Measuring change in the frequency of conservation comments between two sets of interviews that include the same eight questions (none of which made reference to the poetry) almost totally eliminates the skewing of results by interviewees giving answers to please interviewers. In addition, it has the potential to measure the impact of poetry (which was so “pervasive,” according to one visitor, that she didn’t realize it was poetry because it looked “advertising”) on those who said they didn’t “read it” or “think about it,” but may have none the less had their conservation thinking influenced by it.

Content analysis of transcripts for the cued interviews yielded three main findings regarding conservation thinking reported by visitors after the poetry was installed:

1. The amount of conservation thinking reported by visitors increased.

- Visitors made 21% more conservation comments per interview. This is the percentage of increase in average number of conservation comments made by each interviewee over the course of an interview—from 3.4 comments to 4.1 comments.
- Visitors were also more likely to make conservation comments in response to questions posed earlier in the interview, most probably reflecting that conservation thinking had increased and was more “top of mind.”(CHART A)

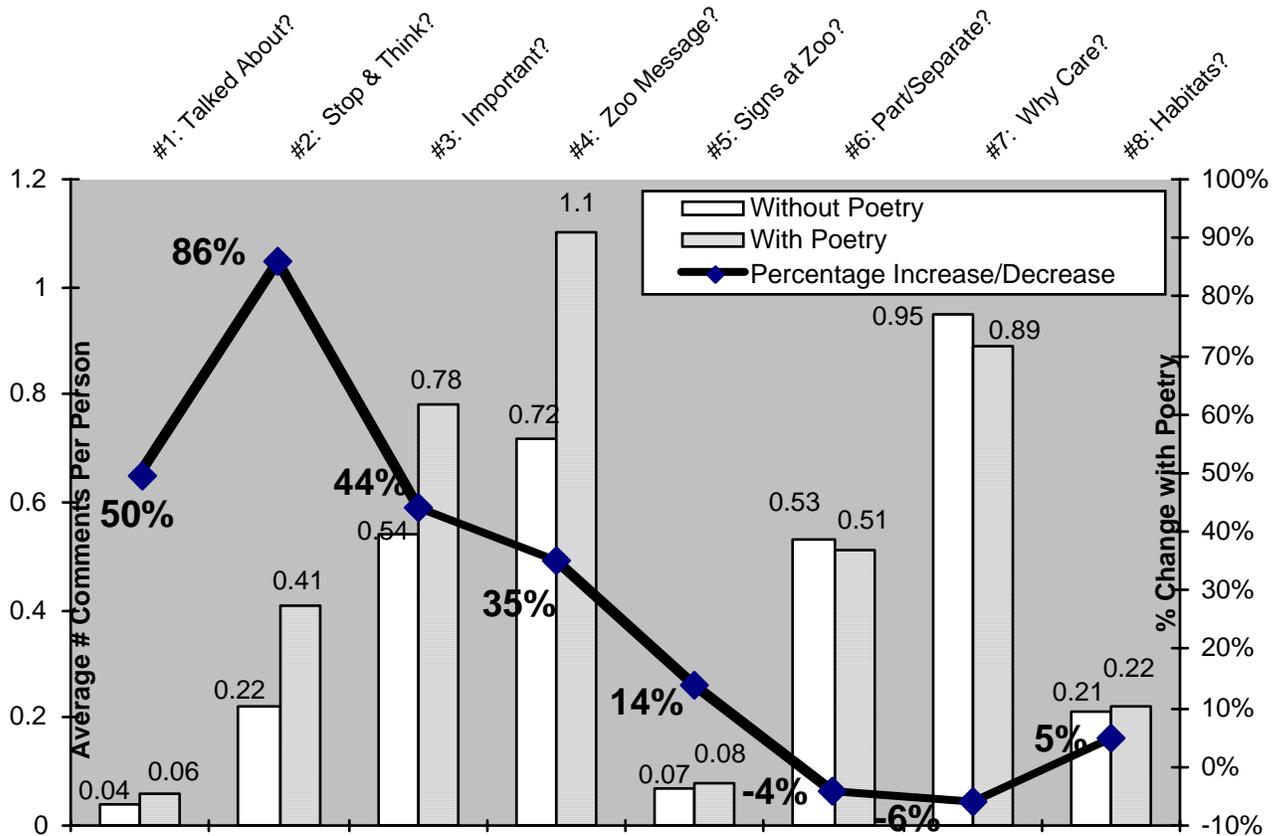
2. Globally-centered conservation thinking increased markedly.

- There were significant increases in the average number of conservation comments reflecting the globally-centered thinking categories measured by this evaluation—Humans as Part of Ecosystems (+48%), Human Impact on/Threats to Nature (+37%), and Humans as Wildlife Stewards (+36%). (CHART B)
- After the poetry installation, the category with the most conservation comments was “Humans as Wildlife Stewards”—a more globally-centered category—whereas in interviews before the poetry, conservation comments from the more people-centered category of “Human Benefit from Wildlife” were most numerous. (CHART B)
- The overall percentage of comments reflecting globally-centered conservation thinking rose by 10 percentage points, from 65% to 75%. (CHART C).

3) Thinking about “Humans as Part of Ecosystems” showed the most marked increase.

- This increase was far more likely to be in the number of individuals who made *any* comments reflecting this thinking category and far less likely to result from repetition of the same idea in answer to more than one question. In fact, despite the significant increase in comments reflecting this category of thinking, the percentage of repetitious comments for this category was actually lower in interviews conducted after the poetry installation than it was before.
 - Even when comments repeated across questions were counted, this category showed the highest increase (48%) in average number of comments reflecting a particular thinking category. When repetitions were *not* counted, however, the increase shot up to 79%, meaning that visitors were three-quarters again as likely to make *any* comments reflecting this category.
 - Conversely, repetition accounted for significant portions of the increases in the other two globally-centered thinking categories (roughly one third of the “Humans as Wildlife Stewards” category increase and roughly two-thirds of the “Human Impact on/Threats to Nature” category increase).
- Increase in the “Humans as Part of Ecosystems” category was even more significantly marked in visitor’s response to two particular interview questions. The question, “Reminded you of something important?” was twice as likely (with over a 100% increase) to elicit comments in this category. The question, “What do you think the Zoo is trying to show?” was four times as likely (with over a 300% increase) to elicit these comments. No other sets of responses to individual questions showed such significant levels of category increases.

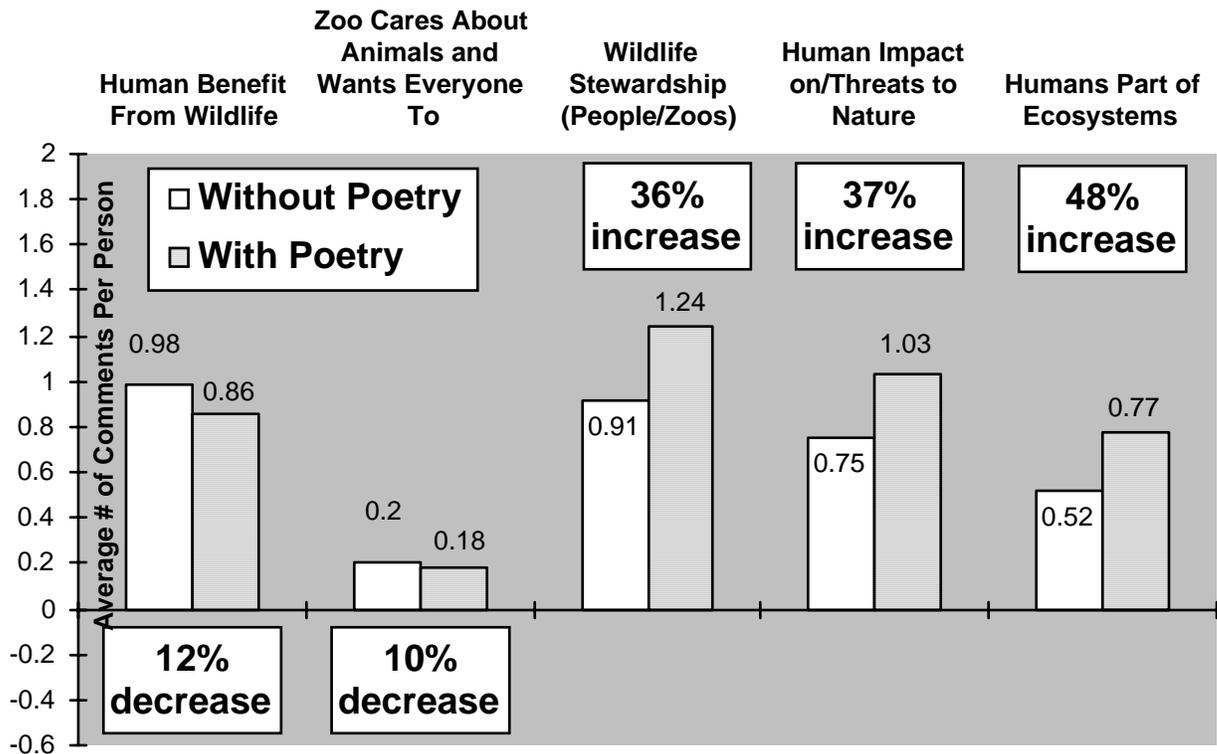
Chart A:
 Change in Average Number of Conservation Comments
 Per Person, By Question
 (Percentage Increase/Decrease)



Visitors were more likely to make conservation comments in response to questions posed earlier in the interviews, most probably reflecting that conservation thinking had increased and was more “top of mind.”

- The percentage of conservation comments elicited by questions in the first half of the interviews increased by 12 percentage points (from 46% to 58%).
- Additionally, earlier interview questions showed significantly higher percentages of increase in conservation comments than those positioned later in the interview.
- While these questions may have coincidentally been more likely to measure the effect of the poetry and thus might have scored higher regardless of order, it is more likely that these increases in response to earlier questions indicate that the poetry raised the overall level of conservation thinking.

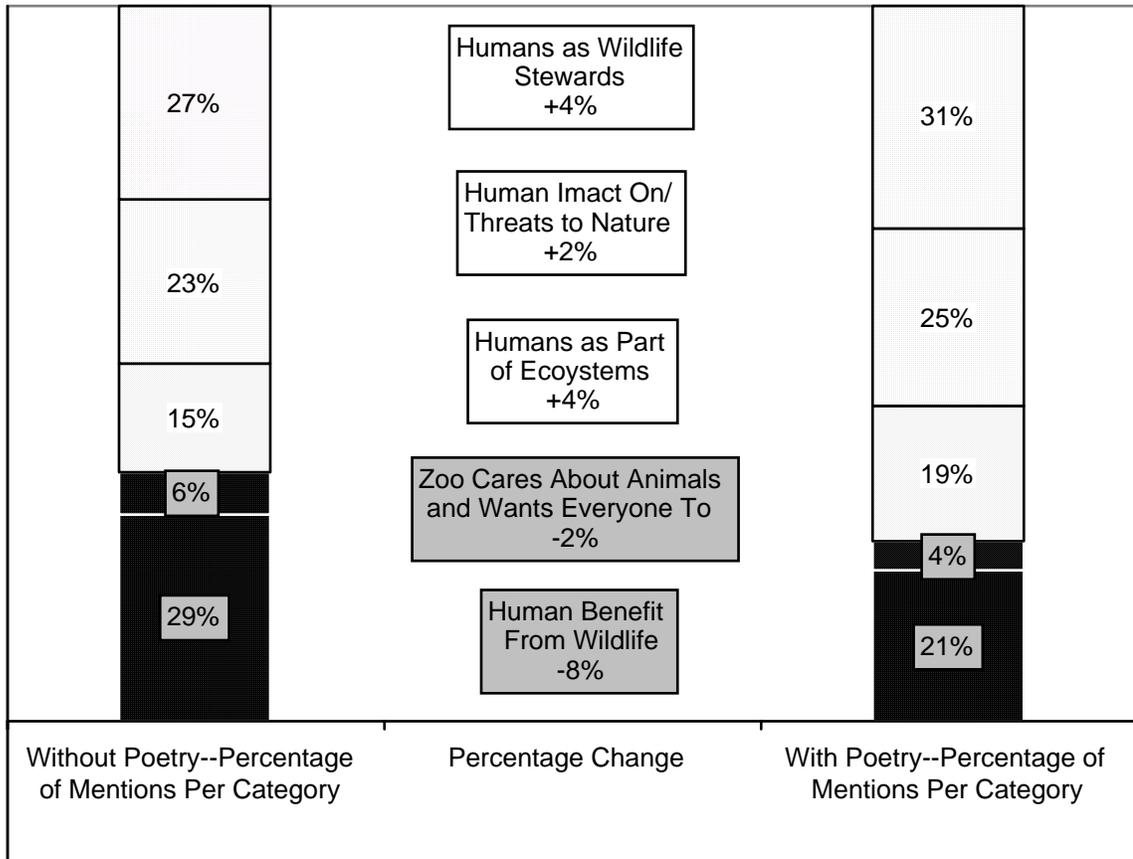
Chart B:
Change in Average Number of Conservation Comments Per Person,
By Conservation Thinking Category
(Percentage Increase/Decrease)



The globally-centered categories of conservation thinking measured by this study increased markedly after the poetry was installed, with significant increases in the average number of conservation comments per person.

- After the poetry installation, the category with the most conservation comments was “Humans as Wildlife Stewards”—a more globally-centered category; in interviews before the poetry, conservation comments from the more people-centered category of “Human Benefit from Wildlife” were most numerous.
- Comments expressing the idea that “Humans are Part of Ecosystems” increased by the largest percentage (48%).
- Smaller percentage decreases (which are closer to the margin of error) in comments emphasizing the two more people-centered thinking categories probably *don’t* indicate that less thinking was taking place in these categories. More likely, these decreases indicate that globally-centered conservation thinking was more “top of mind” during the interviews and thus more likely to displace the people-centered thinking in answers to questions.

Chart C:
Percentage Point Change
in the Proportion of Mentions from Each Category



The proportion of conservation comments reflecting globally-centered thinking categories rose by 10 percentage points, from 65% to 75%.

- *Additionally, each of the globally-centered categories showed individual percentage point increases.*
- The percentage of people-centered comments went down a corresponding 10% (from 35% from 25%).
- Comments emphasizing “Wildlife Stewardship (People/Zoos)” (a more globally-centered thinking category), rose to #1 from #2 in proportional ranking—from 27% to 31%—while comments emphasizing “Human Benefit from Wildlife” (a more people-centered thinking category) fell from #1 to #3—from 29% to 21%.

Endnotes:

¹ Quoted from a project report submitted to the IMSL in April of 2004. Three other project goals—increased awareness of how poetry can influence understanding conservation in zoos by conservation professionals; increased awareness of how the museum context can create new venues for poets; and increased awareness of poetry as a design strategy for zoo development—were evaluated through other means and are not addressed in this visitor-focused study.

² These messages were adapted from three written sources—the Wildlife Conservation Society’s mission, conservation messages listed on the American Zoo and Aquarium Association’s website, and “The Contemporary Experience of Wild Nature and Its Implications for Conservation,” a 2003 lecture by WCS President and CEO Steven Sanderson.

³ General positive comments about the poetry included:

“I thought they were wonderful, the quotes that are all around. That was a brilliant idea.” [response to Q about signs]

“Actually, well the quotes that are all around are quite incredible and very beautiful.... we liked them all.” [response to Q about what talked about]

“The poetry. I loved it, I liked it a lot. It was enjoyable to read while you were out.” [response to Q about what talked about]

“I liked it enormously. Do more.” [response to Q about poetry]

Two specified that they liked the poetry because of its calming effect:

“And I thought it was really pleasant..... It’s very calming.”

“What was the one about the starry night? I can’t remember. I like that. I think that’s a really...it’s really calming and peaceful when you read it.” [reference to Wright poem]

One reported appreciating the humor included in the excerpts:

“The Lear limerick, I really liked. I thought it was wonderfully funny.”

Another reported being appreciative of the poetry’s encouragement of literacy and reading:

“[The poetry] enhanced my experience.... I liked it quite a bit. And I think it’s good for kids. I’ve been here many, many times, and I’ve come with a young girl

I do Catholic Big Sisters with, and I always ... I don't think she reads enough. And I don't think she reads out loud enough, so I have her read all the signs to me out loud, and she's learned a lot of words, and she retains what she reads more. I know she's reading it if she reads it out loud to me. But she retains more. So if there were poetry here when I had brought her, that would have been a very good thing for us."

Visitors also appreciated the poetry on an aesthetic level, with a number describing it as "beautiful" or "lovely." One person, who had already mentioned liking the poetry during the interview, when informed in the last question that the poetry had been chosen with a conservation theme in mind, even said:

"...for some reason I was taken by what they said artistically more than conservation notices. As a matter of fact, if you hadn't of said that, I wouldn't have known. I just thought they were ... I mean, I could see the relationship between the animals, but I didn't realize that was the fundamental purpose. I thought it was a fantastic, as you heard a minute ago, addition to the zoo, as opposed to, 'Don't throw coins in the fountains.'"

All the poetry comments that were specific to conservation themes or to nature are included in the next section of this analysis, which focuses more narrowly on the evaluation's main goal, to measure how poetry affected visitor thinking about conservation.

⁴ A number specifically reported liking the poetry installation but not being able to read it because they were watching children:

"I don't have time to read it because I have my eye on my son, but I noticed Elizabeth Bishop was in there somewhere. But I definitely would read it if I had the chance... I just didn't get a chance to concentrate on them. I tried. I really did. I was sneaking peeks at them, but I just didn't get a chance... it's hard to keep your eye on a toddler and read poetry at the same time."

"I didn't really stop and read it. I thought it was a neat idea. And if I hadn't been with my niece I probably would have stopped and read them, but she was guiding our tour."

"I think if I had been alone, I would have had better time to enjoy it. I was a little stressed with two small children, so ... But I thought it was really nice, when I looked up and on the stairs, you had it.... I really didn't have a chance to concentrate on it. But the next time I come back, I want to come back alone so that I can spend more time reading the poems."

“I did notice it, but I was also chasing a two year old, so I didn’t really stop to read it, so I would have to say no. I didn’t even get a chance to read it. I did notice it though. I said, ‘Isn’t that nice?’”

However, some visited with children reported being able to read the poetry despite caretaking responsibilities, including one who said she probably couldn’t remember particular poems because, “I had my grandchildren and I was kind of tending them, but I mean I did manage to read them as I was going up to each of the exhibits.”

⁵ Only eight of those interviewed didn’t like the poetry. Several commented that they just didn’t like poetry, such as the person who said:

“I’m very sorry but I hate poetry. I tend to look and say to myself, ‘Is that information? No, it’s poetry. Carry on.’”

Another didn’t like poetry that doesn’t rhyme:

“I read them, and I just ... they went through my eyes and out my ears, or out my brain, whatever. Because I couldn’t see ... I saw it differently, I guess, than you guys. It didn’t rhyme or something. You know what I’m trying to say? I like things that rhyme, I guess.” Didn’t influence.

One found the poetry “distracting”:

“I didn’t really like the poetry. I found it distracting. And I read the first couple, and then I just ... it kind of took me out of where I was, so I stopped reading them. Sorry.”

Another found the installation “forced”:

“I thought it was kind of out of place. I don’t know I just kind of thought it was a little forced on us... the one I read that was by the monkeys, it just was weird. It seemed very ...forced, like, ‘Okay we’re at the zoo, now you have to think very intellectually about animals and mother nature and etc.’”

As noted in footnote #15 below, several visitors did not like the fact that they were not always able to draw a clear content connection between the individual excerpts and the animals they were placed beside. For example, in remarking on the Auden poem, one visitor commented:

“I remember reading the one that was facing the Snow Monkeys... and I didn’t quite understand what it had to do with the Snow Monkeys. It was ... what was it about exactly? Something about an environment falling apart or something, and I thought, “Why is it by the Snow Monkeys?” So that’s when I tuned out. Sorry.”

⁶ The 20 excerpts that were specifically mentioned more than once were those by the following poets: Sendak (13), Nye (8), Richards (7 plus one negative comment), Lawless (7), Sappho (6), Merwin/Tree (5), Nezahualcoyotl (4), Auden (3 plus one negative comment), Wright/Egrets (3), Rumi/Love (2) and Whitman/Long (2). Excerpts mentioned once were those by Diop, Hogan, Stein, Stafford, Shakespeare, Haines, Lear, Neruda, and Moore (this last reference might perhaps have been Snyder). A more detailed tally in Appendix A notes which of those mentions from the uncued study came without the interviewer's reference to poetry or prompting for specifics, in response to interview questions asking 1) for something that made the interviewee stop and *think*, 2) for something the interviewee remembered from the *signs* at the zoo, 3) for the interviewee's impression of what is the zoo trying to get across) and 4) for something they spoke about during their visit. For those interested in reading all visitor comments relating to specific poetry excerpts, a table in Appendix A lists these along with the excerpts mentioned. This table also includes a column on visitor "thinking," which attempts to capture, in reference to the specificity of individual comments, whether or not those comments indicating that visitors were thinking about conservation during their visit could be directly attributed to the poetry or to specific poems.

Of course, those poems most recalled in interviews are not necessarily those most enjoyed, and in any case, the survey sample is too small for truly representative numerical data. Therefore, poems that weren't mentioned shouldn't necessarily be seen as not working. For instance, the Shakespeare excerpt ("behold the earth has roots"), positioned near exposed roots in the rainforest area, may be effective in calling attention to plants in that setting, but in phrasing and concept it may be less memorable than other excerpts. This should be considered especially in light of the fact that a number of people talked about the difficulty of recalling specific poems after having read so many:

"I think that as you're walking past, your eye catches something and you stop and you read it.... You go from one and then suddenly you're on to the next.... I'd read something, and I'd go, 'Gee, that says something, and that makes sense and everything.' And on to the next one, and what you said before is forgotten."

"The quotes that are all around are quite incredible and very beautiful...we liked them all." [Friend: "You sort of read them and they tend to blend in with what you ... unless you have photographic memory, you sort of..."] "I wished I'd had a notebook with me." [Friend: "Yeah, because some of them were quite beautiful."] "I would like to have copied some of them down."

"... it all sort of goes into one [ear and out the other]."

"As I was going around and reading them, they made me think differently. There were a few that I thought, 'Oh yeah, that's really good.' But there's just so many around that I couldn't pick any one particular one out." [*paraphrased for clarity*]

⁷ A number of poems, including some of those with potentially compelling conservation messages, were either not part of the pilot installation that was evaluated (such as the Berry excerpt) or fell down before or during the evaluation period (such as the Moore and the Hopkins poems). Therefore, the lack of mention of a particular poem should not necessarily be seen as evidence that they didn't work for visitors.

⁸ The Sendak excerpt was often cited because both adults and children had direct familiarity with this exact quote, and hence were able connect again with a piece of literature they had previously enjoyed:

“Where the Wild Things Are, the book.” [Says reminded him of being young.]

“The one from Where the Wild Things Grew.... It made me think about reading the book when I was a child.”

“Not a poem. There was something from Where the Wild Things Are in the rainforest.”

“I liked it [poetry in general] because there was some stuff from my childhood... It made me smile.”

Liked Sendak particularly, because “The kids recognized, so that was nice, to have things that were familiar, and to see them in this context.”

“So nice to see a quote from “Where the Wild Things Are.”

One mother observed that her daughter's appreciation of the Zoo experience overall had been enhanced when she was able to tie it to a Sendak quote she recognized: “I saw her reaction when we were going up the stairs.... [I]t just tied into the exhibit and it made the exhibit more meaningful.”

A few of the other poems were more often mentioned by author than by subject (i.e., “there was one by Sappho” and Auden)—apparently reflecting the fact that these poets are better known, relatively speaking, than the other poets featured; the larger number of mentions was probably influenced by this. One visitor commented that the only excerpt that had an affect on her was “The Neruda one...just because I'm a big fan of it.”

One person who described herself as “half Greek,” reported that the attribution “Greece” piqued her interest in the Sappho poem.

⁹ In general, those who made knowing references to specific poets or to poetry in general were more likely to report reading more than a few of the excerpts.

¹⁰ For a good introduction to this topic, see Stephen D. Brookfield, *Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging Adults to Explore Alternative Ways of Thinking and Acting* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

¹¹ Of course, the success of this program is not dependent on visitors having understood that they were reading “poetry.” The study did not address this question directly, and in any case the number of independent visitor references to the installation is too small to be able to conclude anything definitive on this. Still, these usages indicate an intriguing avenue of further study for those interested either in the public’s perception of poetry or in the ways different display formats influence visitors’ understandings of what they read.

Of the 27 mentions of the installation that came before the last question in the uncued study, 8 used the word “quotes” (or “quotations”) and 3 used the word “poetry.” Some of those using “quotes” may have meant this as a synonym for “sayings,” i.e., as a brief encapsulations of wisdom. The popularity of the word “quotes” was probably due in part to the fact that five of these usages were in response to the question about *signs* at the zoo (as were two-thirds of these initial mentions). Thus these visitors might have chosen this word to differentiate the poetry excerpts, which were clearly attributed, from the rest of the text on display, although one might argue that they could have used another word besides “quotes.” Still, even if one only counts those mentions that came before the question about signs (1 in response to the question about talking, 3 in response to the question about thinking, and 4 in response to the question about what the zoo is trying to get across), 3 of these used “quotes,” 3 used “poetry,” and 1 used “signs.” Examples of these usages in context follow:

“...the *poetry* that they had in the different exhibits.”

“...the *quotes* or just the signs?... I thought they were wonderful, the quotes that are all around.”

“...there were several *quotes* that were interpreted from other languages.”

“...the Whitman *quote*.”

“...the *quote* from the book *Where the Wild Things Are*.

“There seemed to be some *thoughts*...”

“...*things* that have been written on walls or benches...”

“...the *things* that’s all around. These type of things [*gestures to poem on the bench*].”

It is possible that at least some of those using the word “quotes” knew that they were reading poetry but used this word in reference to the fact that most of the installation texts

were excerpts rather than whole poems. However, one person, who had even seen the initial sign introducing and explaining the poetry exhibit, did not realize that the installation she had seen *was* the poetry until she was asked about it specifically:

“No, I actually just saw the sign, but I actually didn’t see ... Oh, actually I saw it, but, that’s actually interesting, I thought actually ... I didn’t know that it was poetry. I thought it was like these park benches, you know, where you have ... I don’t think it comes across as poetry. I think it comes across more as—it’s very widespread. It almost actually looks a little more like, it sounds funny, but it looks more like advertising, actually.... I actually saw a sign that you had poetry to make people more conscious and aware, and now when you ask I didn’t actually know ... I thought that I hadn’t seen anything.”

In a related instance, a person who claimed to not have read the poetry had actually quoted one of the excerpts fairly closely at another point in the interview.

¹² Without diminishing the other reasons noted for this poem’s popularity, it should be noted that the frequent mentions may have in part been due to the fact that one of the survey questions asked about “signs;” the little squares of text hanging off the metal fencing may have looked more like “signs” than some of the other poetry installations and four of the eight comments were in response to the question about signs. This theory is supported to some extent by the fact that the Nye poem was never mentioned in the cued study, which did not contain a question about signs.

¹³ While a number talked about liking the quotes in the panda pavilion rafters and several mentioned the Whitman quote there, none of these mentioned including anything about what the poems in the rafters –either Whitman or O’Hara—were saying. This may indicate that the panda rafters are good places for poetry that haven’t been matched with the right poem(s) yet. Perhaps the Whitman poem, which is about watching animals, would be more effective if it were placed in an area where some animals, such as the sea lions or the penguins, were more or less continually available to be watched at the time the excerpt is read

¹⁴ Comments included:

“I like the way you, you know, it sort of brought you along—like with the red panda you had them on the top.”

“...where the red pandas were, and they’ve got them up on the top beams, and you’ve got to read them all the way around. And I think that was very nice. I read it, and I can’t remember it, but it was very nice, the idea of it going all the way around.”

“...the one over at the red panda... It was like all around the red panda. It was going around eight or nine in the top ceiling.

¹⁵ Comments identifying this placement included:

“Like the poetry reading up the steps in the rainforest.”

“...the one Maurice Sendak, going up the stairs in the rainforest.”

“When I looked up and on the stairs, you had it.”

¹⁶ Further study involving direct visitor observation would help in understanding the effectiveness of other placements (i.e., the ground) that were not specifically mentioned. However, the total absence of any visitor comments in this study referencing the longer excerpts formatted as “books” may suggest that at least in the format used for the pilot installation, these were not much read. Given this possibility, as well as the fact that visitors indicated a specific preference for shorter pieces, one might want to reconsider how longer pieces might best be effectively used (or not) in this setting.

¹⁷ “It just made us, when we walked through the rainforest, it made me really notice all the plants around there instead of just the animals. So then we were really watching, looking at all the bark, the different trees, just all the plants that were in there. And then it started misting at the same time, because then I was thinking, ‘How do they get this to stay so green?’ And then it started misting. So it [the poetry] just started the whole plant cycle in there.”

¹⁸ A few visitors expressed frustration with not being able to draw a clear content connection between the individual excerpts and the animals they were placed beside, and several others reported trying always to understand the excerpts in relation to adjacent animals, thus implying an assumption that they were meant to do so. It is tempting to dismiss this relatively literal approach because only a small minority reported relying on it. However, others may have also done this without reporting it. One visitor even reported that he stopped reading the poetry specifically because he couldn’t find these literal connections; thus at least in his case, the lack of clear connections to adjacent animals made the poetry less accessible.

¹⁹ Because people in general reported having spent long periods of time watching the penguins, they may simply have had more time to notice the poem in this area. However, one could also say the poem supports the learning activity taking place in this space by using a common children’s museum technique—allowing children more time to explore by slowing adult visitors down with signs placed at their level. The high placement of the Richards’ poem may have meant that it was more likely noticed by adults, but the interviews show that the quote was shared in family groups. Because parents who frequent cultural institutions with their children may already be aware that zoos and other institution sometimes put “family discussion information,” which is meant to be shared, at parent height or higher, they might have seen the placement of this poem as a cue to

share it with their children. In this way, the poem could be said to further support learning conversations taking place in this area.

²⁰ “And we saw a parallel [in penguin poem] there between them and us. And the narrator, whatever she is, made that connection as she was talking. But I think one makes it automatically as you’re reading it.”

²¹ “...it seemed the person who wrote that poem was putting themselves in the place of the penguins. He was anthropomorphizing. And I just wonder whether it’s possible to do that. You know?”

²² Of the words listed before Zoo visits, about one-third of them were noun, verb, and adjective forms of words synonymous with conservation (most popular were “preserve,” “protect” and “save”). Other commonly listed words included “resources,” “animals,” “environment,” and “wildlife.” Popular clusters of words included those related to recycling or efficient use of resources and those expressing positive views (i.e., “good,” “valuable”).

²³ 6 visitors gave their reasons for adding words as: seeing the animals (2), experiencing the zoo's habitat settings (2), discussing ecosystems and reading “information cards” (1), or noticing the educational value of the overall zoo experience (1). Three additional visitors who added words did so either because of independent thoughts or because of unspecified aspects of their Zoo visits. Only 2 of the added words (“Central Park” and “harmony”) hadn’t already been mentioned (as either exact words or as words representing closely-related concepts) in the lists of words made by visitors before their visits.

²⁴ This respondent, visiting with children, said that she added “education” and “future” because “...when I was going around, I realized that the more you know about the animals, the more you can appreciate them, and the more people may want to save them and care for them.” While she did not specify the poetry’s influence on her additions, the concepts of future and education in were implicit in her comments about her discussion with her son, included on the title page of this report, about Merwin’s poetry excerpt, saying, adding that the poetry is “good for the kids. They don’t tell right away, but it goes in their brain and stays there. It’s a seed. It plants a seed. You don’t know when it’s going to sprout.” Of course, however, her comment about her additions clearly also relates to the other educational aspects of the zoo as well, so the poetry can only be said to have likely been *part* of what influenced the additional thoughts about conservation.

It’s possible but unlikely that seeing the poetry played a part in the additions of three others, although here the connections are more tenuous and the respondents offered other reasons besides poetry for their additions. One visitor added “diversity,” “Central Park,” and “legacy,” citing conversations about ecosystems and “information cards.” While his second addition could possibly have referred in part to the poetry excerpts, his use of the adjective “information” suggests that he was more likely referring to zoological texts.

However, when asked later about the poetry, he had said that he thought the poetry helped him to reflect on what he saw. A second visitor said that he had added, “support procreation of animals” because he had just seen baby animals at zoo. Because he did not say why he also added, “encourage appreciation of animals,” it is possible that this addition was in part a response to the poetry, especially as he had later commented that he thought the poetry “added some reflection and contemplation to the experience.” A third said seeing the Zoo’s naturalistic settings had led her to add “natural habitat.” While she didn’t attribute her change to the poetry, she responded very positively to it, saying “Oh, I think it hits it on...you know. It expresses what we’re doing here, and she also cited enjoying the Auden excerpt, which addresses the need for human societies to conserve natural habitats.

The additions of the other five were almost definitely not influenced by the poetry. Of these, four had read the poetry and one had not noticed the poetry. One had added, “recycle,” but noted that the Zoo displays lacked any information on this concept. A second, who said she had added “...and the animal kingdom” to the phrase “to protect wildlife for the benefit of mankind...” because of “seeing all the animals,” said poetry didn’t affect her. A third, who said he had added “rainforest” “because the climate has a lot to do with conservation and energy,” citing experiences at the Zoo with the “humidity, and the different climates for the animals,” also said poetry didn’t affected him. A fourth added “future” and “humanity,” but said, “I thought the poetry was kind of for people who read English,” implying, one might gather, that he did not read it well. The fifth, who said he had added “harmony” because, “It’s just a question of equilibrium,” hadn’t noticed the poetry.

²⁵ Other comments in this vein included:

“I think it completely adds to the cultural enrichment that the zoo offers.”

“I guess it was just nice to mix the poetry with nature and with animals.”

“I think it’s a lovely idea. Because I think that poetry and literature and all that kind of thing definitely has its part with nature. So I think it’s a wonderful idea.”

“...I think they made good choices.... I thought that it was a good idea to bring poetry...—you know, I was thinking about my classroom,...to incorporate poetry into the lesson of learning about the animals and the habitats, by using literature.”

Appendix A: Statistical Detail

Receptivity to Poetry:

% (# people)	All	Uncued	(Pre)	(Post)	Cued
Read ²⁵	70% (82)	68% (54)	N/A	68% (54)	74% (28)
Didn't Read ²⁵	30% (35)	32% (25)	N/A	32% (25)	26% (10)
Liked ²⁵	70% (82)	67% (53)	N/A	67% (53)	76% (29)
Neutral	23% (27)	25% (20)	N/A	25% (20)	19% (7)
Didn't Like	7% (8)	8% (6)	N/A	8% (6)	5% (2)
Total	(117)	(79)	N/A	(79)	(38)

Demographic Information:

% (# people)	All	Uncued	(Pre)	(Post)	Cued
Age 12-17	10% (23)	12% (23)	17% (18)	6% (5)	N/A
Age 18-25	14% (32)	17% (31)	18% (19)	15% (12)	3% (1)
Age 26-35	20% (45)	20% (36)	17% (18)	23% (18)	24% (9)
Age 36-45	29% (62)	26% (48)	23% (24)	31% (24)	37% (14)
Age 46-55	13% (30)	12% (23)	14% (15)	10% (8)	18% (7)
Age 55+	14% (31)	13% (24)	11% (12)	15% (12)	18% (7)
Male	32% (71)	32% (60)	31% (33)	34% (27)	29% (11)
Female	68% (152)	68% (125)	69% (73)	66% (52)	71% (27)
Total	(223)	(185)	(106)	(79)	(38)

Uncued Study: Sizes of Group Interviews:

% (# groups)	All	Uncued	(Pre)	(Post)	Cued
1-person groups	N/A	28% (28)	28% (16)	27% (12)	N/A
2-person groups	N/A	61% (62)	54% (30)	71% (32)	N/A
3-person groups	N/A	11% (11)	18% (10)	2% (1)	N/A
Total # groups	N/A	(101)	(56)	(45)	N/A

Gender Balance of interviewers (for those interviews included in analysis):

% (# interviews used)	All	Uncued	(Pre)	(Post)	Cued
Male Interviewers	60% (83)	63% (64)	(31)	(33)	50% ²⁵
Female Interviewers	40% (56)	37% (37)	(25)	(12)	50%
Total	(139)	(101)	(56)	(45)	(38)

Refusal Rates²⁵:

% (# refusals)	All	Uncued	(Pre)	(Post)	Cued
% (# refusals)	55% ²⁵ (188) ²⁵	60% (166)	45% (48)	71% (118)	31% (22)
Total # Approaches	347	275	107	168	72

Consents/ Interviews used	159/139	109/101 ²⁵	50/38 ²⁵
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Appendix B: Tally and Table of Visitor Comments on Specific Poetry Excerpts

Tally:

Listed immediately below are the twenty poetry excerpts that were specifically mentioned by interviewees, ordered from the most to the least mentions.

- Each excerpt is identified by the poet’s last name, followed by one or two words to briefly recall the excerpt text.
- Also noted are those mentions from the uncued study that came without prompting for specifics, as preliminary answers for questions before question mentioning poetry, which came last. The three questions that elicited comments about the poetry on display without using the word “poetry” asked 1) for something that made the interviewee stop and *think*, 2) for something the interviewee remembered from the *signs* at the zoo, and 3) for the interviewee’s impression of what is the *zoo* trying to get across.
- Noted also here are the two comments about particular poems that were negative; these were not included in the tallies.
- The totals from the cued study, are added into the tally below, but for the record, they were: Sendak (6), Lawless (4), Auden (3) Sappho (3), Richards (1, plus one negative comment), and (1) mention for the excerpts by the following poets:
- Merwin, Nezahualcoyotl, Haines, Lear, Neruda and Moore.
- When a person mentioned more than one poem, each of the poems they mentioned were tallied individually.

13 Sendak/Grew (2 w/out prompt, in response to signs Q)
8 Nye/Famous (5 w/out prompt—4 signs Q, 1 think Q)
7 Richards/Penguin (1 w/out prompt to signs Q) + *one negative comment*
7 Lawless /Last Bear
6 Sappho/Evening Star
5 Merwin/Tree
4 Nezahualcoyotl/Brief (3 w/out prompt—1 think Q, 1 Zoo Q., 1 signs Q)
3 Auden/Smash +*one negative comment*
3 Wright/Egrets
2 Rumi/Love (2 w/out prompt to sign Q)
2 Whitman/Long (1 w/out prompt to think Q)
1 Diop/Listen (1 w/out prompt to signs Q)
1 Hogan/Deer
1 Stein/Dog
1 Stafford/Mole
1 Shakespeare/Root
1 Haines/Owl

1 Lear/Bonnet
1 Neruda/Forest
1 Moore/Fox(might be Snyder)

Table:

Listed in the table below the tally are actual visitor comments relating to specific poetry excerpts, ordered alphabetically by poet's last name, as well as the text of each excerpt.

- Those mentions from the uncued study that came without prompting for specifics, as preliminary answers for questions before question mentioning poetry, which came last, are marked in this table with an asterisk (*).
- Comments about individual poems that were not specific enough to be identifiable are also included at the end of this table.
- The table column on visitor "thinking" attempts to capture, in reference to the specificity of individual comments, whether or not the comments indicating that visitors were thinking about conservation during their visit could be directly attributed to the poetry or to specific poems. The report's interpretation of the "yeses" and "nos" in this column were be informed by the fact that the two studies gathered this information in very different ways. The uncued study set perhaps too high a bar, in asking interviewees to say whether the poetry had affected their responses to the previous questions about conservation and about their thoughts and experiences during the zoo visit. The cued study set perhaps too low a bar, asking interviewees if the poetry excerpts had affected them in any way. This report took all these various factors into account when making conclusions about the poetry's impact on visitor conservation thinking. Of course, this analysis also took into account visitor comments about the poetry in general (included in Appendix B). In addition, the poetry's influence on conservation thinking was not judged only in reference to visitor reports on this, because, as described elsewhere in the report, several who reported not reading the poetry clearly evidenced, in comments including reference to specific words from the poetry, that they had been. The idea that visitor reports on the poetry's influence were not always reliable is also supported by the fact, discussed elsewhere in this report, that in the uncued study there was a compelling increase in all visitor comments related to conservation stewardship in the interviews after the poetry went on display, without reference to whether the poetry influenced or was even read by individual visitors.
- A few interviewees cited individual excerpts by poet name but specified that they had not read them because of time or other distractions. These mentions were not recorded in the table or the tally.
- Those quotes followed by numbers in parenthesis are from the cued study; they identify the number assigned to each interview. [Note, the gaps in this numerical sequence are due to the fact that only 38 of the 50 who began the cued interview process were included in the final data set; exclusions here were

primarily of those individuals who did not return to complete the interview after their visit.

Poem	How identified/What said	Thinking
<p>Auden/Smash (negative) A small grove massacred to the last ash. An oak with heart-rot, give away the show: This great society is going smash; They cannot fool us with how fast they go, How much they cost each other and the gods. A culture is no better than its woods.</p>	<p>1. "I remember reading the one that was facing the Snow Monkeys... and I didn't quite understand what it had to do with the Snow Monkeys. It was ... what was it about exactly? Something about an environment falling apart or something, and I thought, "Why is it by the Snow Monkeys?" So that's when I tuned out. Sorry." 2. "W.H. Auden's poem" (20) 3. "The Auden. That's the one I noticed the most..., because it talked about how ... the way society treats its forests is kind of a measure of the society. So it's really very related to what the zoo is kind of about." (24) 4. "One was by Auden or something." (Also mentions Richards) (46)</p>	<p>1. no influence 2. Thinks influenced. "I think it's a very pleasant environment. It should be there. It puts it into a different perspective. You know, it puts the place on a more ... it puts it in a cultural perspective, and it adds a lot of sophistication and depth to the meaning of having animals around.... I do like it very much." 3. "I think it completely adds to the cultural enrichment that the zoo offers. And I thought it was really pleasant.... It's very calming." 4. "Well, I think it just brought it out... I think it hits it on ... you know. It expresses what we're doing here. I think it's very nice, because I think it's good for young people too, to associate...to put the literature with the ... you know ... that young people can see them, that maybe they can do the same thing."</p>
<p>Diop/Listen (It is the breath of the ancestors) Listen more often to things than to beings Hear the fire's voice, Hear the voice of water. Hear, in the wind, the sobbing of the trees. It is the breath of the ancestors.</p>	<p>1. * "...when they were saying "Hear the nature instead of the human beings, when you stop and you listen to the fire and ..." [signs] (also mentioned Stafford)</p>	<p>1. "Yes [influenced]. Very important. It makes you think. Makes you really think.... Oh, I love them. I love them." Earlier, in answering whether anything made her "stop and think," said, "Oh, yes. We were reading some of the signs on the floor and some of the signs on the benches as well. Very interesting, and it makes you really think about nature."</p>
<p>Haines/Owl If the Owl Calls Again at dusk from the island in the river, and it's not too cold, I'll wait for the moon to rise, then take wing and glide to meet him.</p>	<p>1. The one about the owl, which I thought was lovely. (40) (also mentioned Lear)</p>	<p>1. "I liked it enormously. Do more."</p>
<p>Hogan/Deer That night, after everything human was resolved, a young man, the chosen, became the deer. In the white skin of its ancestors wearing the head of the deer above the human head with flowers in his antlers, he danced, beautiful and tireless, until he was more than human, until he, too, was deer.</p>	<p>1. "There was one about a deer that...human turning into a deer. I can't remember it specifically, but it touched on some of the themes that we've talked about already here."</p>	<p>1. Says influenced how she answered the questions because it made her think about "Just about how closely connected we are to animals, about a human turning into a deer." Her previous answers had emphasized human/animal interdependence; for example, said visit had reminded her "Just how we're all here on one planet and we're not any better than the animals. We're all just...gets you philosophical, a little bit. Makes you feel a little bit insignificant."</p>

<p>Lawless/Bears Treat each bear as the last bear. Each wolf as the last, each caribou. Each track as the last track, Gone spoor. Gone scat. There are no more deertrails, no more flyways. Treat each animal as sacred, each minute our last. Ghost hooves. Ghost skulls. Death rattles and dry bones. Each bear walking alone in warm night air.</p>	<p>1. "there was something more modern about the bears" (also mentioned Nye)</p> <p>2. There was one particular one...it was something about the end of...no more scat. It was just about ... the inference was that things will die if we don't look after them."(also mentioned Nye and Wright)</p> <p>3. Agrees with #2, liked this poem. (also mentioned Nye and Sendak)</p> <p>4. "...treat the last bear as the last bear, the last caribou as the last caribou, that sort of thinking.... I liked that." (38)</p> <p>5. "up by the polar bear exhibit, I saw the one about the...you know... sort of like an endangered species, I guess." I think I was sort of neutral on the poetry. Neutral to positive. I wouldn't put it as a...something to go out of my way for." (3)</p> <p>6. "the one about the polar bear...it was about ghost bones (16) (also mentioned Wright)</p> <p>7. "One thing I saw that said, 'treat every caribou as the last caribou, treat every...'" (18) (also mentioned Richards)</p>	<p>1. Influenced. "I thought the poetry was thought-provoking."</p> <p>2. Says poetry influenced her answers, doesn't specify, but does say that her visit reminded her "How important it is we save the creatures that are left on Earth."</p> <p>3. Thought poetry influenced answers.</p> <p>4. Says not affected, liked the poetry, "but I wasn't really flowing it because we were watching the kids mostly."</p> <p>5. Didn't seem influenced. Added word "recycle," but noted that the Zoo displays lacked any information on this concept.</p> <p>6. "It was really nice. I mean ...it was nice because it adds a reflection to what you're looking at with the animals." Said it made her feel "more reflective.". "I mean, when I read the one about the polar bear, it just made me think about, you know, the life of a polar bear, and just maybe in its own environment. Because it was about ghost bones, and I don't know the other words, but, it just made me think about the polar bear in its natural setting rather than just here at the zoo." (see more in general section)</p> <p>7. Says poetry influenced; using Lawless as example, notes, "... it shows that people... well it's, you have the added feeling that you have to respect what you're seeing. You know, it's not just here for amusement."</p>
<p>Lear/Bonnet There was a Young Lady whose bonnet, Came untied when the birds sate upon it; But she said: 'I don't care! All the birds in the air Are welcome to sit on my bonnet!</p>	<p>1. "The Lear limerick, I really liked. I thought it was wonderfully funny." (40) (also mentioned Haines)</p>	<p>1. "I liked it enormously. Do more."</p>

<p>Merwin/Tree On the last day of the world I would want to plant a tree</p>	<p>1. "I think there was one in the wildlife part...said if the world was ending, they'd plant a tree, something like that"</p> <p>2. "Yeah, on the last day of the world, I would plant a tree</p> <p>3. "Yeah, I read some of the signs. The other one was the one you would plant a tree on your last day on the Earth." (also mentioned Sendak)."</p> <p>4. "...the one that says, if it was your last day on Earth, I'd like to be a tree, or a plant."</p> <p>5. "If it was the end of the world, the last tree on Earth to survive one last minute..." [first part of quote is from son, with prompt from her about particular poem they discussed]..."you'd want to plant a tree." (45)</p>	<p>1. No comment but reported talking about it with friend</p> <p>2. No comment but talked with #1 about</p> <p>3. Yes, see quote #6 under Sendak in reference to how Merwin and Sendak enhanced her awareness of plants during visit.</p> <p>4 Didn't impact. "Didn't read a lot of them. Not into poetry."</p> <p>5. Said the poetry affected her. She and son both discussed liking end of the world poem: "It just was touching. It made it more intimate, I do think. So I loved the poetry." [The son, added, about Merwin, "That's how I feel about it. One last life to say goodbye to all your fellow..."] She added words "education" and "future" because "...when I was going around, I realized that the more you know about the animals, the more you can appreciate them, and the more people may want to save them and care for them." She tied her two additional words directly to the poetry when she said, "Yeah, and it's [the poetry] good for the kids. They don't tell right away, but it goes in their brain and stays there. It's a seed. It plants a seed. You don't know when it's going to sprout."</p>
<p>Moore, Arctic Fox To wear the arctic fox you have to kill it. Wear <i>qiviut</i>--the underwool of the arctic ox-- pulled off like a sweater; your coat is warm; your conscience, better.</p>	<p>1. "The one by the seal thing about the Arctic Fox, I think it was. (49) note: counted as Moore, but might have been Snyder.</p>	<p>1. Said, yes, "It just made you think more."</p>
<p>Neruda/Forest The saws cutting the huge logs ground out their shrill lament all day long. First you heard the deep underground thud of the felled tree. Every five or ten minutes the ground shuddered like a drum in the dark at the hard impact...giant work of nature, seeded there by the wind a thousand years before...The forest was dying. I heard its lamentation with a heavy heart, as if I had come there to listen to the oldest voices anyone had ever heard.</p>	<p>1. "The Neruda one." (42)</p>	<p>1. Said only Neruda affected" "The Neruda one did just because I'm a big fan of it. I didn't read most of it, so..." Liked the poetry.</p>

<p>Nezahualcoyotl/Brief Could it be true we live on earth? On earth forever?</p> <p>Just one brief instant here.</p> <p>Even the finest stones begin to split, Even gold is tarnished, Even precious bird-plumes shrivel like a cough.</p> <p>Just one brief instant here.</p>	<p>1* That one sign I saw made an impression on me—how fleeting life is. I forget the exact words. ‘You’re only here for a moment.’” [think]</p> <p>2. * There was that one we both liked (with #1 above) ...it was in the rainforest area. Basically to enjoy and preserve what’s here because you are only here for a very short time.... I can’t remember all of them, but I read all of them, every one of them. It just kind of made sense. Things about the environment, and about...look at something, because maybe tomorrow it won’t be here. Things like that. [signs]</p> <p>3. *[In the poetry there] [s]eems to be a lot of importance of the moment, of the actual moment. I think it was trying to get you to feel things how you felt at that specific time of seeing something.” [zoo] (Also mentioned Nye.)</p> <p>4. “One asked, you know, “can you do this forever?”(17)</p>	<p>1. Says poetry influenced her comment about being “respectful of animals.” This comment, in response to what is zoo trying to show, was “Just to respect animal life and to be aware that it is here, and we all share the same Earth together. Don’t be so destructive. Just respect life and all aspects of life.” [refers to poetry in general, says she read most as she went along]. Notes poetry was about “life—it wasn’t always pertaining to animals.”</p> <p>2. I think it [poetry] just brings it a little bit more to your attention, again, that we are all here together...</p> <p>3. Same as Nye #6 below.</p> <p>4. Said didn’t influence, because “I appreciate animals anyways.... So it’s a nice addition to it.” But said she liked the poetry, and also “I appreciate people making an effort [with the poetry installation].”</p>
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<p>Nye/Famous The river is famous to the fish.</p> <p>The loud voice is famous to silence, which knew it would inherit the earth before anybody said so.</p> <p>The cat sleeping on the fence is famous to the birds Watching him from the birdhouse.</p> <p>The tear is famous, briefly, to the cheek.</p> <p>The idea you carry close to your bosom is famous to your bosom.</p> <p>The boot is famous to the earth, more famous than the dress shoe, which is famous only to floors.</p> <p>The bent photograph is famous to the one who carries it and not at all famous to the one who is pictured.</p> <p>I want to be famous to shuffling men who smile while crossing streets, sticky children in grocery lines, famous as the one who smiled back.</p> <p>I want to be famous in the way a pulley is famous, or a buttonhole, not because it did anything spectacular, but because it never forgot what it could do.</p>	<p>1* "There were some really cute little quotes, something about birds in the sky and fish in the ocean." [signs]</p> <p>2 I liked to poetry. I liked the poem Famous." [think]</p> <p>3* "The whole row of ones, "The river is famous for fish," and what else was it? "The tear is famous on the cheek." Those two stood out, reading that along the fence there. [signs]</p> <p>4. * Agrees with #3 "Those ones [plural refers to phrases from Famous] mainly. They were simple, plain, and it was not like you had to read a continuous line. And you need something simple so it grabs you." [signs]</p> <p>5. "yeah, the top of the garden, which talked about "the boot is famous to the dirt"—that poem."</p> <p>6. * "There was like water being important to the fish, at that specific moment in time for some reason. There was a lot of "what was important" to certain animals. [Signs]</p> <p>7. "I liked the one about being famous." (also mentioned Lawless and Wright)</p> <p>8. Agrees with #7. (also mentioned Lawless and Sendak)</p>	<p>1. Not influenced. "Didn't make me feel differently about what I saw." "I appreciated it." (poetry in general)</p> <p>2. Influenced. "I thought the poetry was thought-provoking." But specifically, in saying he liked the poetry and didn't read many of the informational signs, notes, "I'm not here for a deep time, I'm just here to enjoy it.... I didn't want to think. I'm trying not to think too hard."</p> <p>3. Says wasn't influenced, didn't read much because with children.</p> <p>4. Agrees with #3, says not influenced because with a kid: "...if you walk around on your own or just the two of us, minus a family member, you'd take a second look in the more in-depth look into the quotes. But once again, looking back on it, it was really a family day, and just to get out and explore a bit of New York."</p> <p>5. didn't influence but enjoyed</p> <p>6. Strongly implies in comments that the poetry made him think, but concludes it didn't influence because he can't remember any specific poems [see full quote at # 16 in general]</p> <p>7. Says poetry influenced her answers, doesn't specify, but does say that her visit reminded her "How important it is we save the creatures that are left on Earth."</p> <p>8. Thought poetry influenced answers.</p>
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<p>Richards/Penguin ... This stone I set at your feet As my courtship gift to you At the white summer's end On Antarctica's icy shore.</p> <p>Later you lay your egg And ease it on to my feet. You turn and walk away, Black going into the blackness.</p>	<p>1. "I was looking at what was around the penguin tank... Pretty reasonable courtship—we do it with diamond rings."</p> <p>2. "The penguin house." (with #1 above) Gives this as example of poetry he remembers from throughout.</p> <p>3.*The quotes like the ones in the penguins." [signs], later refers to as "the pebble and the penguin one"</p> <p>4. Agrees with #3 above about remembering this quote.</p> <p>5. "... in the penguin section...across the glass, there was like a quote. I don't remember what it was, but, yeah."</p> <p>6. "And the penguins...about the penguin dropping the stone, oh that was wonderful." (also mentioned Whitman)</p> <p>7. "...where they met, you know the fact that they're supposed to meet. That was really cute."(46) (also mentions Auden)</p> <p>8. " in the penguin sections" (18) (also Lawless)</p>	<p>1. didn't influence (watching grandson)</p> <p>2. Says it did influence. See more in #3 general comments below.</p> <p>3. says yes, because referred to in previous answer about signs.</p> <p>4. didn't influence answers, suggests that this is perhaps because he didn't read all of them.</p> <p>5. Poetry didn't influence answers "because we didn't really pay attention" Also remembers reading, "The one that ... when we went into the rainforest, that one right there [not clear which that would be]. But I don't know what it says. I don't remember."</p> <p>6. Yes: "Totally.... And we saw a parallel there between them and us. And the narrator, whatever she is, made that connection as she was talking. But I think one makes it automatically as you're reading it. And it certainly—what's the word? Anthropomorphizes (see, I'm talking like George Bush today), and that's got to help a lot of people who perhaps don't feel the way we do, don't see that connection. You know, I think any time you can make people think that it's not all about people."</p> <p>7. "Well, I think it just brought it out... I think it hits it on ... you know. It expresses what we're doing here...." (See his full quote in Auden section)</p> <p>8. Says poetry in general influenced, but didn't like Richards because: "it seemed the person who wrote that poem was putting themselves in the place of the penguins. He was anthropomorphizing. And I just wonder whether it's possible to do that. You know?"</p>
<p>Rumi/Love Let the beauty we love be what we do.</p>	<p>1* the message was basically be one with the world where you have animals in the world, you need to appreciate what was there." [signs]</p> <p>2.* "Yeah, 'we can love nature.'" [signs]</p>	<p>1. Said didn't read poetry, therefore didn't identify what read as poetry. Also said, in response to what the Zoo was trying to get across: "Look after the animals, don't ruin the world and they are here to preserve it and look after them. Messages all around and you can't miss it really, you have to read them."</p> <p>2. says didn't influence</p>

<p>Sappho/Evening Star Evening Star who gathers everything Shining dawn scattered You bring the sheep and the goats, You bring the child back to its mother.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "They've also got it on a couple of white benches, and it's like split up into sections. That was also really nice." 2. Agrees with #1, likes that one, too. 3. "one was from ancient Greece. 4. "The one about the star on one of the seats." (31) 5. "There was Sappho." (4) 6. "There was one that was from like 6:30 [BC] regarding a mother and her child, I think. I can't recall where it was. It was up near the polar bears. That was ... that seemed like a nice translation. (14) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doesn't mention being influenced, see above under her comment on poems in panda rafters. 2. Clearly influenced thinking, see comment under general about not being able to retain thoughts, but didn't specifically say it influenced answers. 3. Thinks poetry in general influenced Thinks poetry, being descriptive, creates an atmosphere. (see #6 general). 4. Liked. It was lovely. 5. Thinks poetry influenced him. "It was excellent. You could reflect on what you were seeing. Poetry may have influenced his added words ("diversity," "Central Park," and "legacy"); he said he added these because they talked about ecosystems and because of the "information cards." 6. Poetry affected. "Yeah, absolutely. It kind of ... instead of just catching the visual, it makes you stop and think about what you're seeing may mean. And historically what it's meant, I guess. Historically, over many years, you know, some of it's older translations, and I think people have been thinking about this forever, it seems."
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<p>Sendak/Wild Things Every night in Max's room a forest grew and grew until his ceiling hung with vines and the walls became the world all around.</p>	<p>1*The one thing I remember is in the rainforest, there's some quotes from Where the Wild Things Are, the book." Says it reminded him of being young. [signs]</p> <p>2*"I do remember the quote from the book Where the wild things are."[signs] later remarked that red panda looked like characters in that book. (to #1) [signs]</p> <p>3. "The one from Where the Wild Things Grew... It made me think about reading the book when I was a child."</p> <p>4. "Same one [#4] she stated... I thought that was kind of neat."</p> <p>5. "Yeah, we did see the writing. Remember I pointed it out to you, the books...where all the forest and everything grows every night in his room?" (also noted reading Merwin)</p> <p>6. "Of course the Maurice Sendak was absolutely perfect, Where the Wild Things Are." (also mentioned Lawless and Wright)</p> <p>7. ... Like the poetry reading up the steps in the rainforest.</p> <p>8. "Not a poem. There was something from Where the Wild Things Are in the rainforest." (30)</p> <p>9. "I like the one about Max in the bird, tropical area." (41)</p> <p>10. "the Maurice Sendak part" (47)</p> <p>11. "...the one Maurice Sendak, going up the stairs in the rainforest. (32)</p> <p>12. "When I looked up and on the stairs, you had it." (48)</p> <p>13. "So nice to see a quote from "Where the Wild Things Are." (50)</p>	<p>1. Didn't influence answers: "I noticed the poetry, but I don't think it influenced how I answered the questions.</p> <p>2. didn't influence answers, but Sendak quote influenced how he subsequently viewed the red panda: "[the] one that was ... the red panda? Is that what it looked like? The one that has the ring tail. It looked similar to the characters that are in Where the Wild Things Are. I made a comment about that to Shauna."</p> <p>3. didn't influence, but didn't read most.</p> <p>4. no, didn't influence</p> <p>5. "It just made us, when we walked through the rainforest, it made me really notice all the plants around there instead of just the animals. So then we were really watching, looking at all the bark, the different trees, just all the plants that were in there. And then it started misting at the same time, because then I was thinking, 'How do they get this to stay so green?' And then it started misting. So it [the poetry] just started the whole plant cycle in there." (refers specifically to Sendak and Merwin quotes)</p> <p>6. Thinks poetry influenced answers.</p> <p>7. "...the poetry [I] read, it's nice. It's nice around. I mean it just gives a little addition to then just the basic signs about the animal and so forth." Citing the Sendak quote specifically, says "It doesn't make me think any differently, but it's just a different edge, I guess."</p> <p>8. "I liked it [poetry in general] because there was some stuff from my childhood... It made me smile."</p> <p>9. "I thought it was kind for people who read English, to make them I think feel something else. Just them seeing something, then you have a different type of experience." Liked poetry.</p> <p>10. Liked Sendak particular, because "The kids recognized, so that was nice, to have things that were familiar, and to see them in this context." About the poetry in general: I really enjoyed finding it.... I loved it. Great idea."</p> <p>11. Thought poetry affected her and her daughter: "Yes it did. I saw her reaction when we were going up the stairs.... [I]t just tied into the exhibit and it made the exhibit more meaningful. Also said some of the other poetry was memorable, but "I can't remember the names; they're—I'm not too familiar with..."</p> <p>12. "I thought it was really nice...I really didn't have chance to concentrate on it. But the next time I come back, I want to come back alone so that I can spend more time reading the poems."</p> <p>13. "I enjoyed it, yes, so I guess it did affect me positively.... I guess it was just nice to mix the poetry with nature</p>
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Shakespeare/Roots Why should you want? Behold the earth hath roots; Within this mile break forth a hundred springs:	1. * "Yeah, all the signs, a lot of Shakespeare." [signs] (also mentioned Nezahualcoyotl and Wright)	1. "I think it [poetry] just brings it a little bit more to your attention, again, that we are all here together." (same quote as for others mentioned)
Stafford/Mole Love the earth like a mole, fur-near.	1. "Love the earth." (also mentioned Diop)	1. Yes influenced, see quote under Diop.
Stein/Dog I am I because my little dog knows me.	1 "I only remember the one from Gertrude Stein about her little dog"	1. Said she "liked the new poems" in response to question about signs
Whitman/Long and Long I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contain'd; I stand and look at them long and long. [May also be mentioned in references to poems in the red panda pavilion rafters.]	1. "I knew there was a few by Walt Whitman." 2. * Really enjoyed reading the Whitman quote.... We're pretty big animal and nature lovers, and we loved reading the quotes. (also mentioned Richards) [think]	1. Said poetry in general made her stop and think (in answering that question). 2. Yes: "Totally."
Wright/Egrets Once as I traveled through a quiet evening, I saw a pool, jet-black and mirror-still. Beyond, the slender paperbarks stood crowding; each on its own white image looked its fill, and nothing moved but thirty egrets wading -- thirty egrets in a quiet evening. Once in a lifetime, lovely past believing, your lucky eyes may light on such a pool. As though for many years I had been waiting, I watched in silence, till my heart was full of clear dark water, and white trees unmoving, and, whiter yet, those thirty egrets wading.	1. "What was the one about the stary night? I can't remember. I like that. I think that's a really...it's really calming and peaceful when you read it." (also mentioned Nezahualcoyotl and Shakespeare) 2. "There was one by an Australian...it went around in a circle." (Also mentioned Lawless and Nye) 3. "I just did read the turtle one.... it's just straight back there by the turtle pond." (16) (also mentioned Lawless)	1. "I think it [poetry] just brings it a little bit more to your attention, again, that we are all here together." (same quote as for others mentioned) 2. Says poetry influenced her answers, doesn't specify, but does say that her visit reminded her "How important it is we save the creatures that are left on Earth." 3. "It was really nice. I mean ...it was nice because it adds a reflection to what you're looking at with the animals." Said it made her feel "more reflective." (see more in Lawless and general sections)
Poems on rafters in red panda area (either O'Hara or Whitman)	1) "...where the red pandas were, and they've got them up on the top beams, and you've got to read them all the way around. And I think that was very nice. I read it, and I can't remember it, but it was very nice, the idea of it going all the way around." (also mentioned Sappho) 2. "...the one over at the red panda. I don't recall what it says. It was like all around the red panda. It was going around eight or nine in the top ceiling. [signs].	1. Doesn't mention being influenced, but said, "I did notice there was poetry around.... It was really good but I didn't read everything, so I don't know if it was about nature or anything. I mean, it was nice." 2. "Maybe it made me think a little bit more." (poetry in general, says he read about 15 of them).

Other comments about identified poems:	<p>1. "There was another one, although I don't remember it now, at the time it struck me...a view down to the seals. Whatever was there, I really liked it. But now I can't remember a thing about it. And that's when I first noticed the poetry in general."</p> <p>2. "I remember reading the signs as well around by the waterfall, some nice thoughts there."</p> <p>3. "There was one that I specifically ... I don't remember the words...how we all live here and how we all have to get along, regardless of whether we're animals or human beings."</p> <p>4. "The one that ... when we went into the rainforest, that one right there [could be Issa or Neruda]. But I don't know what it says. I don't remember."</p>	<p>1. Says poetry didn't influence answers, but says enjoyed it. Notes that she didn't read the informational signage because she was with a kid, saying "...that's not what we were doing today." [read poetry but didn't read informational signs]</p> <p>2. "Can't say it affected the way we thought, but it was nice."</p> <p>3. "It made me feel great, reminds you. But to tell people that don't understand that ... well, would they even come to a zoo in the first place? But, it was good." [Didn't say specifically whether affected her thinking or not.]</p> <p>4. Poetry didn't influence answers "because we didn't really pay attention."</p>
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Appendix C: Interview Questionnaires/Scripts

A. Uncued Survey Script/Questionnaire

Introductory instructions:

Hello, my name is _____ and I am working for the Wildlife Conservation Society, which is the parent organization of this zoo. I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions about your experiences here at zoo, so that we can make things even better for future visitors. Could you spare about 10 minutes?

We're only doing taped interviews so that we can quote everyone accurately. Are you OK with being taped?

The tape recorder can only pick up one voice at a time, so please try to wait until a person has finished what they are saying before you talk, OK?

I'll be asking each of you to answer each question, younger people first, OK?

Can you please fill out a little demographic information for us, in the order of youngest to oldest?

Text from written questionnaire (filled out by oldest interviewee for each in group):

- Male or Female (M/F)
- Year born?
- Home zip code (or home country if outside U.S.)
- Is where you live primarily *rural*, *urban* or *suburban*?
- Is this group (A) family, (B) friends, or (C) a combination of both?
- If you selected (A) or (C), how are you related?

Asked verbally, with answers tape recorded (prompts in brackets):

1. *Can you tell me something you talked about here today that related to what you saw, what you did, or what you felt? [What were you saying about that?]*

2 *Did anything you saw or experienced here today really make you stop and think?*

[Can you tell me about it?]

3. *Can you complete the sentence: “Visiting here today helped remind me of something important, which is ...” [Did anything here in particular make you think or feel that?]*

4. *What do you think the zoo is trying to get across to people, to show people? [Where did you see that the zoo trying to show this?]*

5. *Do you remember anything from the signs in the zoo?*

[Anything besides signs like “Keep off the grass?” Anything else?]

6. *Do you see people as a part of the natural world or as separate from it?*

[Did being at the Zoo today make you think or feel differently about this?]

[If yes:] What did you experience that made you think or feel differently, and why?

7. *Do you think people should care about animals? [Why or why not? Can you tell me about any experiences you had with particular animals here today?]*

8. *Did anything you saw here make you think about the places animals live in the world? [Anything in particular? What did this make you think about or feel?]*

In the uncued interviews done after the poetry installation, this question was added:

9. *The WCS has recently placed poetry texts throughout the Zoo to encourage visitors to think more about conservation issues during their visit. Did any poetry you read here today influence how you just answered my questions? [Do you remember parts of any specific poems, and can you tell me what they made you talk about or think about?]*

At the conclusion of the interview:

Thank you so much; this is going to help us make the Central Park Zoo experience better!

B. Cued Survey Script/Questionnaire

Introductory instructions:

Hello, my name is _____ and I am working for the Wildlife Conservation Society, which is the parent organization of this zoo. Could you spare just a

minute now and then just a few minutes before you leave to tell us about your visit here, so that we can make things even better for future visitors?

First, please write down as many words as you like that you identify with the word "conservation." After that, please fill out a little demographic information for us.

Text from written questionnaire (filled out before Zoo visit by interviewee)

- Male or Female (M/F)
- Year born
- Home zip code (or home country if outside of U.S.)
- Is where you live primarily *rural, urban, or suburban*?
- Are you here today alone, with family, friends, or both?
- If you are here with family, how are you related?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please take a moment and write down as many words as you like that you identify with the word "**conservation.**"

After sheet is completed:

This poker chip is sort of like a "coat check" ticket. When you bring the chip back at the end of your visit, the number on it helps us find the answers you already gave us. It will also remind you to return!

Asked verbally, with answers tape recorded, after the visit:

We're only doing taped interviews so that we can quote you accurately. Are you OK with being taped?

- 1) *Are there any words you would now add, remove or change?*
- 2) *Why did you change, add or remove that word?*
- 3) *Did you notice the poetry placed around the zoo? Do you think the poetry affected you in any way? [If the answer is "yes"] How did the poetry affect what you thought about or felt while you were here?*
- 4) *Did you like the poetry, not like the poetry, or not care about the poetry? Did any of the poems stand out in your mind as memorable and/or important?*

At the conclusion of the interview:

Thank you so much for your help in making the zoo a better place. We'd like to offer you a copy of the Wildlife Conservation magazine as gratitude for you time and insight.

Appendix D: Protocol Detail

All interviewers were instructed to:

- Keep a refusal log, and to record themselves as interviewer on the log sheets along with the date, the time, and the number of the interview.
- Adhere to the above randomization protocol even if they got annoyed with it.
- Make sure interviewees were English-speaking. This was self-defined by the interviewee. If a person got occasional help translating a word or two from one of the

other interviewees, that was fine; however, interviewees were instructed to stop interviewing, or not count the interview for, individuals who were calling on others in the group to translate whole sentences for them.

- Never rush or interrupt. Allow time for silence in which thought can take place. Approach the task humbly, keeping in mind that the most useful or important thing a person may share may be something we haven't thought to ask directly.
- If finding an answer was unclear, not understandable, or could be interpreted various ways, to ask, "Can you tell me what you mean by that?" or "I don't understand, could you explain that?"
- To leave time for the person to think and struggle a little if they don't immediately answer, but if they don't answer for a while, to say, "If you don't have an answer, that's OK," or "You can say 'no' if that's your answer."
- Always ask the questions in the same order, and ask the prompts each time unless they had already been answered, and always to ask prompts if the person didn't initially specify what part of the zoo experience related to the answer.
- Where non-descript clothing.
- Not to wear official WCS docent shirts and to wear the WCS Audience Evaluation Team badge rather than their volunteer ID (so as to avoid other visitors interrupting interviews with way-finding questions).
- Maintain neutrality, leaving aside, as much as possible, all that you think or know.
- Do not volunteer or discuss your own opinions.
- Avoid appearing to judge or evaluate responses. Minimize your facial reactions to responses. Smile during questions but not during answers. Nod during answers to indicate that you understand what the person is saying, but try not to appear to be nodding in agreement. Try not to say uh-huh too much, and when you do, try not to use it to cut the person off or to indicate that you agree with the person; rather, use it only to indicate that you are listening to and understand what the person is saying.

Those conducting group (uncued) interviews were instructed to:

- Interview groups between between 2 and 6 in number, but only those in which there are between 1 and 3 people in the interview age range (12 and over).
- Ask children under 12 to draw something they saw at the zoo that day and collect the drawing if they don't want to keep it.
- Invite every eligible third group passing across the imaginary line we'd established to participate (if no, start over). Ignore individuals and groups of more than six when counting.. [Subsequently, when it was very slow, interviewers were allowed to approach every 2nd eligible group rather than every third. Also, if it was extremely slow, and no one was in sight even might cross the line, then at that point interviewers were allowed to decide, on a case by case basis, to take the very next person to cross the line.]
- When two or three interviewers are waiting at the same time, choose which one will take the third group, then the next can take the very next (i.e., 4th group), etc. (Of course, any refusal interrupts and restarts this process.)
- Have one group member fill out the demographic information on the first page on behalf of those who were be interviewed, and to check what was written to make sure

they understood what was written describing the relationships written down for families (i.e., “wife, son, cousin”).

- Ask the questions to each group member, keeping notes on who says what, from youngest to oldest) to help in transcribing relevant quotes later.
- Proceed one question at a time, beginning with the youngest. Ask all interviewees a question before proceeding to the next question.
- Ask the same questions of children and the adults. Do not rephrase, but rather repeat the question.
- Because asking people the same question in turn may get tedious for the group, don’t ask extra follow-ups and keep things moving.
- If a second or third person answering gives, “I agree with him/her,” for an answer, to ask, “But were you also thinking anything else?”
- If adults attempt to answer for kids or to correct what they see as children's mistakes in answering, to state one of the following:
 - *It's important for us to hear everybody's answer.*
 - *It's really important for him/her to say just what he/she has in his mind because that is really valuable feedback for us.*
 - *We need to hear from all ages directly to get the information we need to make the zoo experience work better for the whole family.*
- To include adult reports of what their children have experienced after the children have answered their own views, trying, when possible, to delay these comments until the children in the group had finished their answers.

Those conducting individual (cued) interviews were instructed to:

- Ask every fifth person over 18 entering the zoo to participate.
- Follow the protocol described in the cued study questionnaire (see Appendix C).
- Not mention the poetry installation in the pre-visit portion of the interview.