Sample Student Name
PRM 346W Outdoor Recreation
9/21/2015
I chose hiking as my outdoor recreation experience and went to South Mountain Park/Reserve. South Mountain Reserve has 29 different trails to choose from with different difficulty levels ranging from easy, moderate to difficult. South Mountain Park/Reserve is managed by the City of Phoenix. I decided to take an easy to moderate trail; Telegraph Pass that continues for a mile and a half one way. The entry point is located in the Ahwatukee Foothills off of Desert Foothills Parkway and Seventh Street. (Phoenix, 2015)

I choose hiking as my activity because it is something my family and I can do together that isn’t too difficult and as a single parent it is very affordable and it doesn’t require many extra supplies that we don’t already have. My son loves to go hiking with me every Sunday morning and the trail I choose was a new one for both of us. Being that this was our first time on this trail we were pretty excited to experience the terrain and new scenery. The night before our hikes, we went to the store and loaded up on supplies for our picnic lunch and energy bars for snacks. We always enjoy packing something new, daring each other to try a new strange flavored energy treat.

The duration of the activity took four hours from start to finish. We left the house at 8 a.m. and returned noon. It took one hour, round trip, to drive to and from the South Mountain Park/Reserve. Once we found our parking and trail it took another three hours to complete the three miles of trail head round trip. To get to the fork in the trail where it split to a new trail, it probably took about two hours to hike the first mile in a half. Two hours is a long time for us, but we took many breaks to stop, catch our breath and look
at everything around us. Once we got to our ending point we had a nice twenty minute lunch break and headed back down the mountain which of course was faster and less strenuous.

This past weekend was a gorgeous weekend, and now that the temperatures have gone down a few degrees people were everywhere on the trails. My son and I started on the trail at about 8:30 a.m., it was sunny and we started a little later than we should have as the temperatures were already 90 degrees and climbing. Everyone was very friendly, courteous, a lot of good mornings and casual chatting along the trail. The first half mile of the trail was made of a concrete type material that blended into the mountain surroundings. This made for a nice easy transition into the mountain and climb. Once we reached the dirt trails it became a little more difficult as it was steeper and the rocks in some areas were rather large. There were times it felt like we were rock climbing, we had to use our hands to get up some parts of the trails. There was a resting point about one mile into the hike where you could stop and rest, and look at the Hohokam Art work petroglyphs etched into the rocks. This was a pretty exciting surprise to see on the trail, and the opportunity to explain what it was and why it was there to my son. As we ascended, we noticed a Saguaro on the edge of the trail, it was probably about 15 feet high. It didn’t have any arms yet but you tell it had been around for a while. The roots were coming up out of the trail in different direction and one of them served as a step on the way up the trail.

The total costs of this experience came out to about fifty five dollars. The picnic lunch and snacks were an astounding ten dollars, some of the supplies for food we already had at home such as sandwiches. Our water packs that we carried on our
backs were cost thirty dollars and some taxes, and gas probably cost us a total of ten dollars at most.

The benefits I derived from this activity were first a Perceived Freedom as John Neulinger (1974) describes as: “A state in which the person feels that what he is doing, he is doing by choice and because he wants to” (Cordes & Hutson, 2015) I truly felt a sense of freedom from this activity even though it was an assignment. Hiking is something I do on my free time on the weekends with my son and getting to write about it is a bonus. Getting out and teaching my son how to have a relationship with nature is amazing and watching his face and taking pictures of him when he spots wildlife, or finds a really cool rock to pose on, (his words) or to just watch him breathe in the fresh air and enjoy the view from different peaks and gaze in amazement is one of the greatest satisfactions to me. I am creating an amazing relationship with my son and he is learning to get outside and take a slower pace to life and enjoy what God and Mother Nature has given us and to respect it. The entire time that we are bonding with each other and the outdoors we are exercising. Physical fitness is very important in my life and I want my children to value and embrace physical fitness in its entirety. I want them to learn and appreciate that it doesn’t have to be boring, and so far hiking has been really exciting, finding the petroglyphs on the rocks was educational and felt like finding a little piece of treasure.
Works Cited
