

THE BUSH SPEECH *for children and their guardians*

The Bush Speech was formerly known as "safety speech" but as this might sound scary, I changed the name

Have you been to a zoo? - yes

What have you noticed there? - *the animals are very close to look at, but mostly behind a fence or in a large cage.*

Where do the animals in the zoo get their food from? -*from the caretakers, sometimes at specific times for visitors to watch, like in the aquarium when they feed the dolphins.*

What is a Wildlife Reserve or Game Reserve? - *a huge amount of land left exactly as nature made it for the animals to live in freely. There are no cities, no trains, no factories, no schools, no shops, no houses, no streets and no permanently living people inside.*

Why can we go inside? and why are there showers and toilets? - *We are welcome visitors because with our entry fees we contribute in the conservation of the park and everybody, children and adults, can make wonderful experiences while living in the true african nature.*

What is a game drive? -*it means to drive around very slow while trying to spot animals and take pictures or just to observe what the animals are doing. The best time to see animals is early in the morning when the sun comes out. Then there is a lot of activity.*

Where do the animals in the Game Reserve get their food from? -*they must find it themselves. Some animals eat grass and bushes like the girafe, the antelope, the hippo and the zebra. Some even eat trees like the elephants. Other animals only eat meat, and they must hunt it themselves.*

We might be seeing the remains of dead animals or bones sometimes along the track, is this bad? - *no, this is normal in nature, all living creatures must find their food, and nature balances this out, there are way more antilopes than lions for example.*

Can we feed the animals, like the squirrels, birds or small monkeys who visit the campsite? - *no we can never give any food to any animal. We would harm them with our food, they need to find and eat their own food in nature to be healthy.*

What if a big animal comes close to our campsite? - *that's normal, because we are in his territory, the animals always have their right to be there, even next to our camping spot. And if we are lucky we can take great pictures.*

Why is it so loud at night? -*a lot of activity among the animals takes place at night, and they "talk" between them calling eachother in all possible ways and sounds. A fun thing will be to learn which voice belongs to whom.*

Is it dangerous when an elephant, hippo, baboon or hyena comes into camp? - *it is not dangerous as long as we all follow the bush-rules. It is dangerous if we forget to follow the bush-rules.*

What are the bush rules?

-we don't speak loud when an animal is close to our camp or when we are close to animals during a game drive with the car, we don't speak at all or only whisper.

- if an animal gets close to the campsite we stop walking around and we never run away. Just stand still or sit on a camp chair or inside the car and stay quiet! If you are standing alone then cluster by moving real slow, we don't want to scare the animal!

- children cannot walk away from the campsite on their own, they must be with an adult at all times. For example you cannot go to the bathroom-house by yourself.

- Is it dangerous to sleep in the tent with all the animals around? you are safe in your tents, animals are not interested in tents nor in us sleeping inside them.

Car doors and the tent zippers should be closed since monkeys are very curious and can make a mess going thru your things. Do not leave food in your tent.

One special bush rule is the sunset rule *-what is the sunset rule about? It is a rule that says that children must be inside the tent when the sun sets. The sunset rule also says that everybody, including adults must have showered and used the ablutions (toilet and shower) before sunset. Any visit to the ablutions after dark must be done with a vehicle.*

Do these rules apply for the whole trip? *-no they only apply in the unfenced camp sites and we will tell you when it is a bush-rule-day*

bush-rule-days:

2 days Xakanaxa camp, 1 day Mankwe Camp, 1 day Savuti camp, 1 day Ihaha camp, 2 days Senyati tented camp, 1 day Nokalodi camp

Eli, 08/2011