

INTERPRETIVE SKILLS I

LESSON PLAN: 11

SESSION TITLE: APPLICATION OF INTERPRETIVE TECHNIQUES

SESSION LENGTH: 2 Hours **ORIG. PREPARED BY:** G. Price, NAR
REVISED BY: W. Morris 1/92

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session, participants will be able to do the following:

1. Name at least three objects and explain how they would be used to their best interpretive potential in at least two of the following settings: a natural, an historical, a recreational park site;
2. List and describe at least five of the presentation techniques shared in the class;
3. Demonstrate at least three of these techniques in an interpretive program.

TRAINING AIDS: Necessary props, necessary objects, flip chart.

Content	Method	Time
<p>I. INTRODUCTION--[Two key considerations for the instructor to keep in mind throughout this session:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All examples, discussions, exercises should contain a balanced combination of natural, historical, and recreational park sites. Emphasize the similarities, not the differences. 2. These interpretive techniques should be chosen and used only because they are the most appropriate method of presentation. These are NOT an end in themselves.] <p>A. Set scene--We all present Interpretive programs to the public on a variety of topics- some natural, some historical, some recreational. This week we have been discussing communication skills, program preparation, creativity, etc. Soon you will be preparing an outline and presenting a program. But our talks are not just a collection of facts, data, outlines and themes; they have to touch the visitor in a way which will allow the message to strike home. If it does not, your efforts are wasted and the visitor will not receive the best possible experience at your site.</p> <p>One way to achieve a lasting impression on the visitor is to draw from our Interpretive "bag of tricks" as it is often described. An interpretive "bag of tricks", these important techniques, mean both tangible objects or props, and the more intangible program and communication techniques. Either pull out "bag or have it sitting there to pique curiosity.</p>	Lecture	5 Min

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<p>II.First we will look at the use of an object in an interpretive presentation (Sometimes we think in terms of magic. An actual magic trick may be used.)</p>	<p>Lecture Demonstrate</p>	<p>15 Min.</p>
<p>A.At many historical sites, the use of objects can reinforce life conditions in a rather dramatic way. By having a haversack for example, with personal items that a soldier would have used, allows us to glimpse into the lives of historical people who were involved with your site.</p>		
<p>Have haversack (or your bag). Take out some items and describe how they might be used.</p>	<p>Pass around object</p>	
<p>If just an historical object is used -for example, a reproduction item which you can pass around - then change emphasis.</p>		
<p>1.This process personalizes the relationship of the historical site to the people - which today's visitors can relate to. 2.Also, it allows the visitors to utilize other senses of touch and smell.</p>	<p>Question Discussion</p>	
<p>B.The use of resource artifacts (statues, furniture, reproduction buildings, etc.) is a way we can personalize the situation rather than just lecture about it as might be done in a boring house tour.</p>		
<p>Examples:</p>		
<p>1.Personal furniture pieces which are original and cannot be touched but put into human terms - kitchen items, bedroom items, and specialty items might give us a view of the person/people. i.e., The Wayside House in Concord, MA has the stand up desk used by Nathaniel Hawthorne in front of the window that he looked out from the tower of his house to inspire his writing.</p>	<p>Lecture Discussion</p>	
<p>2.Or, other rooms or furnishings which had a special meaning to the historical individual which might be shared with the visitor. i.e., (a) a room in a home might have had special meaning to the family or individual for positive/negative reasons: FDR read to his children in one room; H.W. Longfellow's daughter was fatally burned in one room of their house when her hair caught fire from a lamp, etc.</p>		
<p>(b) These examples could strike a personal chord with visitors, allowing them to empathize with these individuals.</p>		

Content	Method	Time
<p>C.Natural Site</p> <p>Actually have a bag or backpack with some items in it which one could use at a program - moss, field guides, hand lenses, etc.</p> <p>1.Use of natural object - pass around one - helps to better understand the resource. - give example</p> <p>2.Use of manmade objects or aids, helps us support that understanding. - pass around - use example</p>	<p>Lecture Demonstration</p>	10 Min.
<p>D.Caution in selection and use</p> <p>1.Some historic, prehistoric and real natural items may not be appropriate to use for curatorial or ethical reasons. Use a reproduction and let audience know.</p> <p>2.Do not fall into trap of using items as an end in itself, i.e., fire gun just to hear a bang and do it again.</p>	<p>Lecture Demonstration</p>	10 Min.
<p>E.Group Exercise. Divide into groups, with flip chart paper. Each member has to describe a program that they witnessed or performed which used objects and was memorable. List in a few words the program and the objects. Concentrate on the selection of the object for its use: why was this object the best way of illustrating the message?</p>	<p>Group Exercise</p>	15 in.
<p>Tape flip chart papers on walls, have each person quickly describe their experience and possible show the object to the group. Relate quickly the type of sense or emotion it used or achieved. Discuss the choice of the object.</p>		30 Min.
<p>BREAK</p>		5 Min.
<p>III.Besides physical objects, we also have a variety of presentation techniques which we may draw upon. These intangible techniques can be consciously incorporated into your program either as a continuous method or selectively used at a specific stop.</p>	<p>Lecture</p>	5 Min.

Content	Method	Time
<p>A. Brainstorm methods which could be used. (As list develops, tape up paper around the room.) You should have a prepared list of methods that you feel are important:</p> <p>magic lecture questioning role playing discussion experiential forecasting surprise story telling anecdotes quotesmusic guided imagery demos sensing</p> <p>(Think of many more.)</p>	Brainstorming	10 Min.
<p>B. After completed, focus discussion on defining the terms, by different participants. Do several people feel that one term means a variety of things?</p> <p>1. How would you use some of these techniques and when? 2. How could you use these ideas to keep interest and provide a change of pace if your flow is not working with your group?</p>	Discussion	15 Min.
<p>C. Have participants write down one example of an interpretive program that they attended which could have been vastly improved by the use of one of the listed techniques.</p> <p>1. Have trainees mention a program. 2. Have a few describe one of the situations; what they would have changed and how it would have improved the program. 3. (Follow up with specific references where techniques may be found, or hand outs, or Bill Lewis book.)</p>	Individual Exercise	15 Min.
<p>IV. Conclusion</p> <p>The effort here is to become aware of the variety of techniques which are available to enhance the Interpretive experience.</p> <p>A. Review - Objects - We can use items like _____ (ask for response).</p> <p>Quick discussion of the reason for its use. Three or four examples as time allows.</p>	Questioning Discussion	5 Min.

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<p>B.Presentation techniques such as _____ (ask for response).</p> <p>Quick discussion of the reason for its use.</p> <p>Three or four examples as time allows.</p> <p>C.Review session objectives.</p> <p>D.Conclude with a creative use of an object and a technique.</p>		