

TIPS ON USING THE INTERPRETATION TRAINING PACKAGE



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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REVISED EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

Skilled observers often fault the quality of our typical interpretive program. The Cantu Report, The Assessment and Enrichment of Environmental Interpretive Services in National Park Service areas of the Pacific Northwest Region and the Everhart Report on National Park Service Interpretation, among others, identify major shortcomings in our interpretive offerings. Some of the most colorful criticism is offered in Islands of Hope.

"This descent towards oblivion will not be broken until...(we) are convinced that park and recreation resources are more, much more, than places to have a little fun or learn the names of butterflies and dead generals." (1)

"As today practiced, story-line interpretation is overwhelmingly taxonomic and passive-descriptive-names of things, narratives of no-context events. Most interpretive facilities date from the McGuffey era of interpretive-educational theory. And many interpreters function as walking textbooks whose microscopic erudition and canned lectures intimidate and turn off visitors." (2)

The need is clear. What is the solution? What should be the goals of your interpretive program?

Freeman Tilden writes, "the chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation". (3) Webster defines provocation as "the action of challenging, stimulating, arousing or calling to action".

"Provokes" visit NPS areas for a variety of reasons, but each visit contains the potential for a life-enriching experience. Clearly an interpretive program which stimulates the visitor by introducing new ways of thinking and perceiving will have a greater impact than a program emphasizing "the names of butterflies and dead generals".

But, how do we as interpreters transcend mere informational and instructional levels to achieve provocation? The first step must be a reorientation of our perspective towards visitors. Audience centered communication should be our watchword and the primary developmental principle for our interpretive programs. We need greater emphasis on formal and informal ongoing audience analysis. Too often "the manager's conception of the visitor, who he is and what he seeks in recreation places,

differs from what the visitor assumes himself to be and what he seeks in Teisure places". (4)

Given an accurate picture of our audience and a desire to adapt to their needs, what techniques are most effective for encouraging visitor involvement, creating a "special" experience, causing visitors to perceive familiar things in different ways, revealing the unfamiliar, or stimulate visitors to look further on their own? How are these techniques best used? How can an individual know which ones are most effective for her or his own personality and style?

This Interpretive Training Package was developed to help you address this challenge. It provides twenty-five examples of actual interpretive programs taped during 1973. Some are complete programs, some are edited versions. Each tape is accompanied by an analysis of the interpretive effort and suggestions for use as a training aid.

THE TAPES AND THIS MANUAL, CONTAINING THE INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR EACH PROGRAM, ARE KEYED TO ONE ANOTHER BY VOLUME AND SIDE NUMBER AND SHOULD BE USED TOGETHER!

Neither the taped programs, nor the critiques should be considered the final word in interpretive techniques. None should be considered "perfect examples" to be initiated and duplicated. And, obviously, no single tape or analysis provides a "complete picture" of interpretive principles. True to the first law of NPS interpretation, this package is designed to provoke, rather than force feed.

Of the many uses one could make of this kit, there are two that we recommend. One is for those involved in training interpreters, whether seasonal or permanent. It can be used to provide concrete examples of techniques or concepts. A certain program, or segment of a program, could be used by the trainer to illustrate a point, initiate a discussion, or conduct a critique.

The second recommended use applies to all interpreters. The kit can serve as a self development tool for interpreters, particularly seasonal interpreters, to use individually. For instance, an individual may be looking for examples of the use of a theme, of involving visitors, or relating park environment to a visitor's home environment, or of building conceptual thinking in a group of visitors, etc. Through the use of this kit, individuals can study techniques used to accomplish the particular goal and then apply them to enrich her or his individual program or style.

Whichever way you decide to use this kit, remember that it is only one of many resources available to assist you in increasing your skills as an interpreter. Take advantage of the NPS Training Series Booklets, especially the one entitled Talks which covers the basic communication skills; read Freeman Tilden's Interpreting Our Heritage and William Brown's Islands of Hope for a better understanding of interpretive principles; observe how television and publications in general provoke through communication; and above all, don't be afraid to be innovative and provocative.

1. William Brown, Islands of Hope (National Recreation and Park Association, 1971.), p. 40.
2. Ibid., p. 84.
3. Freeman Tilden, Interpreting Our Heritage (University of North Carolina Press, 1967.), p. 9.
4. R. N. Clark, John C. Hendee, and Frederick L. Campbell, "Values, Behavior and Conflict in Modern Camping Culture", Journal of Leisure Research (Summer, 1971.), p. 21.

HISTORICAL TALKS
Minute Man National Historical Park
*Greg Stiles, Park Technician

NORTH BRIDGE TALK

21 Minutes

Techniques To Note

In his North Bridge talk, Greg verbally leads his group through the historical incident, rather than telling them about it. He hooks their interest and curiosity, helps them share the feelings of the people involved in that historical event, puts the whole event in perspective and provokes them to thought.

The introductory remarks provide a brief (perhaps too brief) introduction of the interpreter and gracefully draw attention to other points of interest in the park.

The presentation is clear and easily understood. Facts and dates are used as tools to develop concepts. Emphasis is placed on the conditions giving rise to the Revolutionary War. The Stamp Act is made relevant to the audience through the analogy with the present day cigarette tax. Notice the clarification at the point of probable misunderstanding ("rowed not rode"). The slow rate of delivery, appropriate pauses and good vocal variety enhance audience understanding and interest.

A creative summary reveals the essence of the message. The closing line "who was a revolutionary?" is left unanswered and stimulates the audience to further thought.

Points To Ponder

Did the opening lines of the talk dealing with the problems of timing a previous noontime talk by the fire whistle add anything to the program?

Should the audience have been challenged to apply the perspective gained on the blunders that caused this war to other wars?

Should the audience have been encouraged to become more actively involved?

Should more effort be made to generate audience questions and interaction in the conclusion?

Techniques To Note

The audience is given a clear illustration of the conditions of a typical church in the Colonial period. The feelings of a hot, humid, packed church, where marathon sermons are poignant.

A feel for the nature of a typical sermon could only be developed through the oral interpretation of an actual sermon.

Points To Ponder

Was the specific topic-theme made clear in the introduction?

Wouldn't it be preferable to let the audience decide for themselves if the sermon was "overdone"? What did you think about the delivery of the sermon? Did it detract from the impact of the message?

Should more attention be given the importance of religion in colonial life? Could the audience be stimulated to compare and contrast the role of religion then and now in greater depth? Was the brief discussion of the opportunity to get "both sides now" too superficial?

* *Greg Stiles is presently a park technician at Minute Man. Prior to coming to Minute Man in 1973, he spent three years as a seasonal interpreter in North State University's work study program at Salem Maritime National Historic Site while earning a degree in history.*

CONDUCTED HISTORICAL TOUR
Colonial National Historical Park
*Mike Caesson, Seasonal Interpreter

TOUR OF HISTORIC JAMESTOWN

16 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Mike invites the group to join him in a "walk into a neighborhood of Jamestown". The outstanding feature of this program is the use of lively and interesting anecdotes of daily life with which the visitor can easily identify. A vivid picture of the colonists' emotional world is created by the anecdotes and illustrations. The emphasis is on feelings instead of facts.

The sense of involvement is heightened by the use of verbs, especially active verbs. Humor contributes to the atmosphere. Note the clever turn of phrase - they would "rather switch than fight". Would a pause after this phrase have given the audience more opportunity to respond?

Mike has a sincere feeling for the period he is interpreting. The love with which local color of the period is presented is infectious.

Points To Ponder

How did you feel about the vocal quality and the rapid rate of delivery?

How important is good delivery in a talk? What can you do to improve your delivery?

How could the introduction have been improved? What could be done to improve the attention step?

Do you think the group should have been more actively involved than they were? How?

How much effort was made to stimulate the audience to think and question?

What do you think the theme is in this talk? Could the point regarding "no civilization can endure forever" have been turned into a theme? How would that have affected the talk?

* *Mike Caesson, whose home is in the Jamestown, Virginia area, researched and developed this tour himself and has been presenting it to groups of from 50-500 visitors at Jamestown. This was Mike's second summer at Colonial National Historical Park. He spends his winters at Harvard working on a Ph.D. in history.*

GUIDED TOUR
Timpanogos Cave National Monument
*Norm Hersman, Seasonal Interpreter

CAVE TOUR

29 Minutes

Techniques To Note

This tape is an edited version of Norm's 45 minute tour of Timpanogos Cave. The key to the success of this walk is the creation of an informal friendly and comfortable relationship between the interpreter and the group (in fact making the interpreter part of the group!).

Notice the rate of speaking and the relaxed conversational tone and the impact this has on atmosphere. The active involvement of the audience at the outset and the desire to learn about their concerns "so I can adapt the tour to your interests" adds to the group atmosphere.

Rules and regulations are explained in a manner designed to enlist visitor cooperation and support. Understanding of audience needs is epitomized by the phrase "we have reserved one spot that you can touch if you must".

The "cave world" is related to the more familiar world of the visitor through analogies and explanation. The open-ended ecological discussion of cave lighting and algae is both informative and stimulating.

Points To Ponder

Was there a central theme to unify the tour and make it even more understandable and valuable to the audience? If so, what was it?

Could the audience have been challenged more to observe, think and relate as they experienced the cave? How?

How did you feel about the conclusion? Did it "build" or "fizzle"? Could the problems in the conclusion be related to the lack of a theme?

Should the audience have been warned before being immersed in total darkness?

Should questions be repeated to insure all hear the question?

Also, should we be even more careful not to put down a question?

Should the phrase "not the one you pointed to" have been avoided in answering the question on living formations?

* Norm Hersman has been a seasonal interpreter at Timpanogos Cave for the past two seasons while attending Brigham Young University, Orem, Utah. He usually gave his cave tour five times a day and averaged 20-25 visitors on each tour.

GUIDED HISTORICAL TOUR
Gettysburg National Military Park
*Mark Gormican, Seasonal Interpreter

CEMETERY TOUR

20 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Mark's prime concern in interpreting historic events and places is to reveal to his visitors the human side and help them identify with the situation, whatever it may be. He uses the battle, structure, person, or in this case the cemetery, as a tool to accomplish this goal, rather than as an entity in itself.

The visitors are stimulated to investigate further on their own. The suggestion to read Lincoln's Gettysburg Address on the spot where he gave it provides a fitting climax to the tour.

Notice how the audience is provoked to look at something other than battle-lines, tactics, guns and uniforms. Insights into Lincoln's role, a mother's feelings on the loss of her son, etc. stimulate the group to perceive the Civil War in new and different ways.

The conclusion is excellent. It reviews the basic facts and feelings and applies them far beyond the cemetery, to not only the Civil War but, to all wars.

Points To Ponder

Is the theme of this tour evident? Should it be evident? What is it?

Would audience participation have been enhanced if Mark had made a greater effort to stimulate questions and comments? How would that effect the mood he set?

Does this talk need a better attention step in the introduction? What would happen if the point about the suffering and tragedy of the Civil War ("...1½ million dead-few families escaped suffering...") were shifted to the introduction to aid in gaining attention?

Would an introduction of the interpreter's interests, background, etc. have helped the audience relate to him?

** Mark Gormican has been a seasonal interpreter at Gettysburg for four summers. This program is one of several he has developed during the past four years in an attempt to give visitors the human side of the park story.*

HISTORICAL TALK
Gettysburg National Military Park
*Mark Gormican, Seasonal Interpreter

A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER
COMMENTS

26 Minutes
2 Minutes

Techniques To Note

This presentation is given in period clothing, at scheduled times and at a fixed location. Mark's prime concern is to emphasize the human side of history and to help park visitors place themselves into the situation. He stresses emotional experiences which he hopes will provoke his audience to look at events from a new perspective.

What do you remember most from this first person living history presentation? Is it a fact or series of facts? Is it a concept? Is it a feeling? Do you sense Mark's sincere feeling for the characters? Did you notice how this realistic characterization makes the facts come to life?

Vivid pictures are developed in this presentation. The interpreter paints pictures with words to create an emotional encounter with death and to picture the human side of war (the love, family emotions, fears, etc. of a soldier going into battle).

Notice the impact of delivery in this talk. What effect did the rate of speaking and the pacing of the presentation have on you?

Points To Ponder

What efforts must be made in first person living history to sell the visitor on the value of "projecting" themselves into the period? Was any such effort evident in this presentation?

What impact do intrusions have on creating "living history"?

Did you notice the effect of helicopters on the emotional setting?

Should some of the discussion be tailored more specifically to Gettysburg-its meaning and significance?

Would reorganization of the talk be useful? Should discussion of training and uniforms have come earlier? Would the observation that "imagination is needed to understand Gettysburg of 100 years ago" have been more effective in the introduction than in the conclusion?

How do you feel about Mark de-emphasizing detailed explanations of the uniform and weapons and stressing, instead, emotional involvement?

** Mark Gormican has developed and refined this presentation over the past four seasons at Gettysburg. It is his own creation and some of the places and people are based on his hometown and friends. The presentation is given in period clothing, at scheduled times and at a fixed spot.*

LIVING HISTORY
Antietam National Battlefield
*Chuck Anibal, Interpretive Specialist

MUSKET FIRING DEMONSTRATION

11 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Chuck uses the musket, not as an end itself, but as a vehicle to reach beyond the weapon to touch on the feelings of the soldier who used it. The visitor is involved in the soldier's daily life, his fighting tactics, fears and frustrations. All this through the windows opened by an inanimate musket and a sensitive interpreter.

Much information is transmitted yet it is easily comprehended. The use of concepts as skeletons for the factual information renders this data more meaningful. Note the interesting insights regarding the bayonet, the relationship between weapons and military tactics and the excellent analogy between the spin of a football and the spin of a projectile from the rifle-musket. The ability to relate information to visitors' experience and background insures increased understanding.

The audience is actively involved in the program. Even on something as simple as the three commands for firing, Chuck is able to get the audience to give the firing command. How does he achieve active audience involvement?

Points To Ponder

Why didn't Chuck introduce himself in more detail and include a plea in the introduction for audience questions as the program progressed?

Would a significant pause after asking for questions in the conclusion have given the audience more opportunity to respond?

Would a more provocative title enhance both attendance and audience understanding of the theme?

* *Chuck is the Interpretive Specialist at Antietam National Battlefield. This is his own personal approach to weapon demonstration, which he enjoys sharing with the visitors on a year-round schedule.*

INFORMATION TALK
Jefferson Memorial

*Liz Prior, Seasonal Interpreter and Jerry Blue, Seasonal Interpreter

TALK

16 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Two approaches to "interpreting a structure", in this case the Jefferson Memorial, are presented. Both Jerry and Liz seem to be endeavoring to reach beyond the structure itself to its meaning. Notice Jerry's major point on the three things that Jefferson wished to be remembered for.

Points To Ponder

Both introductions are filled with facts and details. Does this serve to arouse audience interest?

Can you identify a clear progression of concepts in either talk? Would a clearer theme have helped? Would better transitions have helped the audience understand the relationship of one point to another?

Would more personal touches, especially warm human anecdotes, have helped the audience picture and feel the period and the man?

What do you think about delivery and grammar in the talks? How did you react to Liz's rapid rate and limited vocal variety?

Both conclusions were abrupt and did little to tie the talk together and leave the audience with an "elevated feeling". How could the conclusions have been improved?

What did you think of Jerry's concluding remark: "If you have any answers I will be glad to listen"? Isn't it an interesting twist to shift the source of "all knowledge" from the interpreter to the audience?

** Both Liz Prior and Jerry Blue were spending their first year as seasonal interpreters in National Capital Parks West, Washington, D. C., when they gave these presentations.*

INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION
City of Refuge National Historical Park
*Katherine Domingo, Interpretive Technician

<u>TALK</u>	13 Minutes
COMMENTS	1 Minute

Techniques To Note

Can an interpreter maintain a friendly, comfortable atmosphere and an appropriate blend of feelings and facts while presenting the same talk at least six times a day to an audience of from 100 to 250 persons per program? Katherine seems to have found the formula for achieving just that.

Although her vocal inflection is a bit repetitive (sing-song) at times, the speech rate and vocal color are excellent. Note the warmth and sincerity with which "very special" is uttered.

The use of native terms enhances local color and aids in expression and communication of feelings.

The choice of a native Hawaiian to interpret this area is appropriate. Her understanding of and love for the culture makes this talk an emotional experience for all.

Points To Ponder

Should an interpreter attempt to anticipate and answer questions that are unrelated to the theme in the talk?

Since the wall can be seen by the audience from the amphitheater, is the detailed factual description of the wall necessary?

Would better transitions help unify the various points in the talk? Was the transition to why the people sought refuge from the rulers clear to you?

Should the audience have been provoked and involved to a greater extent?

Could the program have been better related to visitor background and experiences?

** Katherine's home is the Island of Hawaii and she speaks to her visitors from her heart. She is presently a Park Technician with responsibility for interpretive activities. She presents the above program in an amphitheater situated so that the audience faces what she is talking about.*

LIVING HISTORY
 Appomattox Courthouse National Historic Site
 *Harold Howard, Seasonal Interpreter

INTERVIEW WITH SERGEANT JOHN HOWARD, CSA
 COMMENTS

18 Minutes
 6 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Harold discusses the essentials of living history in his comments. Proper preparation is stressed including: the need for extensive reading and thorough knowledge of the period, proper setting and developing both an emotional and physical identification with the period. Suggestions for dramatization include: the need to stay in the first person, the absolute requirement of sincerity and honest straightforward response to visitors.

The interview itself emphasizes emotion through a personal interpretation of the historical facts. The entire presentation appears to evolve from the questions of the visitors. Note how Harold milks each question for all it is worth and sets up future questions in answering the immediate question. Notice the amount of historical detail that is so casually introduced.

The characterization is so realistic that Harold becomes John Howard. The dialect and total immersion in the period are infectious. The first person approach creates a climate of realism and enables the audience to feel the period.

Points To Ponder

Is an audience likely to respond well to first person living history?
 How can you help prepare them to be more accepting?

Does Harold "overkill" some of the questions? Should the length of the answer be adapted to audience involvement?

** When he's not teaching high school in Lynchburg, Virginia, Harold Howard can usually be found at Appomattox sitting on a wagon tongue whittling or working in the garden and talking with visitors. Harold researched and developed his confederate soldier's identity over the past three years as a seasonal at Appomattox.*

LIVING HISTORY
 Petersburg National Battlefield
 *Mary Godburn, Seasonal Interpreter

INTERVIEW WITH OFFICER'S WIFE

11 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Good living history illustrates and explains the process and background of the period. It provides a glimpse into the evolution and needs of the culture. The goal is to open a door to the past and step through it with the visitor. The real people of the period, "little" people as well as "big" people, are presented without myths and glorification.

Mary provides insights into military life of the period through the eyes of an officer's wife, a novel perspective. Good information on camp conditions is provided. The fears, frustrations, problems, etc. of the period are pictured from a woman's viewpoint.

Apparently the audience has been cued in regarding the goals and benefits of participating in a living history approach. What steps should be taken to enhance audience appreciation and acceptance of a role playing approach to interpretation?

Points To Ponder?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of a strict first person approach to historical interpretation?

Was Mary able to sustain the first person approach? (Notice "the dresses" versus our dresses, "a lady didn't" versus we don't, "Colonel's wives would rarely, if ever, associate" versus we rarely associate.)

How well did Mary sustain a realistic emotional identification with the period? Notice the lack of antipathy toward the military opponents and the failure to respond sharply to the insulting question, "are you a camp follower".

Could Mary have given a bit more information (teasers) with each answer to maximize the likelihood of continued audience questions?

Did Mary, inadvertently, reveal too much knowledge of present social customs through her answers to questions? When she says a lady didn't or officer's wives would rarely, doesn't she imply that conditions have changed? It is important that the character know only as much as a person of the period would be likely to know if living history is to ring true.

* Although Mary Godburn is not new to Petersburg, her summer spent as Captain Godburn's wife was her first attempt at interpretation. In the off season Mary attends Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

GUIDED WALK
Yellowstone National Park
*Jim Lenertz, Seasonal Interpreter

BLACK SAND BASIN WALK

27 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Jim believes that "if visitors understand what they see, they will enjoy the experience more and it will be of more value to them." His Black Sand Basin Walk implements this philosophy by emphasizing the whys, stressing observational skills and provoking thought, questioning and investigation. The walk can best be described as a group discovery encounter with the Black Sand Basin.

This walk provides some of the finest examples of superior interpretation in this package. Concepts rather than facts are stressed. The audience is provoked and challenged to observe in new and different ways. They are challenged to "observe what is coming." They are stimulated to think and interpret for themselves. ("Do you see any signs of life?") Discovery replaces lecture as a learning device. The introduction is relaxed, informal and attention getting. Jim utilizes his unique personal experience to explain why the tour should be more enjoyable than an unguided walk.

Excellent rapport with the audience is developed. Jim provides support for questions and stimulates the audience to participate by stressing the value of questions to the interpreter ("fun for the guide").

Superb conversational quality is evident. A relaxed, slow rate of speaking coupled with a poised, pleasant voice provide an enjoyable listening experience. Notice how Jim talks with his group and involves them both verbally and physically in the walk.

Analogies abound relating the unfamiliar to the familiar. Notice especially the parallels between larger and smaller ecosystems.

Many senses are involved.

The summary at the three geysers is an excellent review of basic concepts and provided the foundation for visitors to interpret new areas on their own. Notice that the "most beautiful pool" is reserved for the visitors to experience on their own.

Note how safety precautions are integrated into the tour at appropriate points and how reasonable and palatable the rules seem as presented by Jim.

Points To Ponder

Should the discussion of algae color have been developed even further to explore the general concept of environmental adaptation?

Can all walks utilize some or all of these techniques? Isn't it more enjoyable to discover for yourself than to be told?

** Jim Lenertz teaches biology at a junior college in Arizona during the off season and spends his summers as a seasonal interpreter at Yellowstone. He usually has about 30 people on his Black Sand Basin walk which is given once a week. He also conducts campfire programs and half-day hikes.*

EVENING HISTORY PROGRAM
Indiana Dunes National Lake Shore
*Bill Schaudt, Seasonal Interpreter

PIONEER STORY

18 Minutes

Techniques To Note

This tape is an edited version of a 45 minute evening program, "Pioneers of the Calumet Region". Bill attempts to respond to the challenge of presenting history by a first person approach, becoming the history rather than talking about it.

The audience is given a chance to share the emotions of the pioneering experience through the anecdotes and personal revelations of a "son of a pioneer".

Points To Ponder

How much real feeling is developed for the pioneer? Does Bill sometimes lapse into a first person recitation of historical facts? How does that effect his program?

Did the names of the post office, towns, postmaster and the dates add to audience understanding of the period?

Would the introduction be strengthened by an attention step, and a clear statement of theme and a plea to "join me in reliving the past"?

What did you think of the delivery? Did the frequent vocalized pauses (uh) bother you? Would a more dynamic, powerful and varied vocal pattern add to the program?

Would the use of characters in addition to the son enliven the program and give deeper insights into the feelings of a pioneer family?

How was the audience involved or challenged? What could be done to stimulate the audience to think, feel and attempt to relate this talk to their experiences?

* *Bill Schaudt is a junior high school teacher, loves to work with people and enjoys the visitor contact opportunities that a seasonal interpreter position at Indiana Dunes offers. He developed and presented this program during his second summer at the Dunes.*

GUIDED NATURE WALK
Everglades National Park
*Keith Bennett, Seasonal Interpreter

SWAMP TROMP

28 Minutes

Techniques to Note

This tape is a condensation of Keith's 1½ hour walk, an "unguided group discovery experience" emphasizing visitor involvement with a dash of serendipity thrown in. Keith views each walk as a new and exciting experience. Perhaps his "total involvement" technique is responsible for this euphoria. Keith hooks his group's interest, draws them into a personal world of discovery and stimulates them to explore new worlds on their own.

Note the quality of the introduction. Provocation clearly replaces instruction. Visitors are challenged to think about interrelationships and look at the world from new and different perspectives.

Throughout the walk many senses are involved. The audience is actually participating in a group experience. Closing their eyes while walking introduces them to unique insights. The request, on the part of the interpreter, for help in interpreting and explaining stresses sharing in group leadership.

Little or no emphasis is placed on facts as facts. Rather facts are utilized to build concepts. Note especially the analogy between the Japanese art of Bonzai and sawgrass.

This provocation of and response of questions is superior. Frequent open-ended discussions of ecological concepts encourage expanded thinking.

Reference to previous learning is utilized to facilitate comparison of soils. Keith is very sensitive in getting back to a question that was temporarily side-tracked and relating to a questioner who was cut off.

Understanding and learning are enhanced by the clear organization of the walk (plants-animals-man) and the special emphasis given to exploring similarities, parallels, interrelationships and interdependence.

Points To Ponder

Is this tour really as "unguided" as Keith claims? Is there any advantage in a leaderless group?

Could the sub-theme of saving the park have been developed further? What are the advantages and disadvantages of drawing explicit conclusions?

Should the audience have been challenged to interpret the relationship between the lichen and the stick rather than being told?

* *This was Keith's second winter as a seasonal interpreter at Everglades National Park. He developed this walk himself and gave it once a day to groups of between 15 and 30 visitors. According to Keith, each walk was a new experience for him and one he looked forward to with anticipation.*

GUIDED NATURE WALK
Everglades National Park
*Bruce McHenry, Assistant Chief Interpreter

SLOUGH SLOG

21 Minutes

Techniques to Note

This tape is a condensation of Bruce's 1½ hour walk. His enthusiasm and style are contagious and affect both park interpreters and visitors. Bruce's belief in discovery through increased use of the senses, through questioning and provocation is evident in his analysis of his interpretive style.

"My groups appear leaderless. I would rather gently prod them to the brink of discovery so that they feel more involved personally, than to lead them on a walk which is simply a moving lecture. This sort of serendipity approach is sometimes very difficult and yet, by adding a genuine dash of enthusiasm, this is the kind of interpretation I call MY STYLE".

I might be informative to compare and contrast Keith and Bruce's walks. Note the similarities and differences. Which approach do you prefer? Bruce developed exceptional audience rapport through such techniques as his superb conversational quality, his genuine concern for his audience, his support of wrong answers ("no but a good guess"), his sincere love for the area and the fun he has on the walk with his group.

Note the use of attention getting "previews of coming attractions" (the alligator hole and the bard owl) to stimulate audience interest. Bruce avoids the trap of talk at people so much that it precludes actual experience with the environment. Notice how he lets the group ex-
perience an area before they discuss it.

Points to Ponder

Does this group really "appear leaderless"? Is there a difference between being leaderless and leadershipless?

Was the summary too promotional? Did it really build on and clarify the theme? Could Bruce have done more provocative questioning than he did?

** Bruce McHenry is the Assistant Chief Interpreter at Everglades National Park. His enthusiasm and style are contagious and have helped set the tone for interpretation in Everglades.*

EVENING CAMPFIRE PROGRAM
Shenandoah National Park
*Nancy Shives, Professional Seasonal Interpreter

THE BEAT GOES ON
COMMENTS

21 Minutes
4 Minutes

Techniques to Note

Nancy's main purpose in creating this program is to assist the park visitors in understanding the web of life, its interrelationships and its meaning to them. The program strives to provide a clear theme that can be easily remembered and applied both in and outside the park environment.

The title keys the theme and is frequently used throughout the talk to unify the program. The presentation is beautifully organized and flows smoothly from concept to concept toward the goal - the beat of life. Excellent transitions add to the coherence of this talk. Notice especially the transition to why the beat goes on.

Note the techniques employed in the introduction to capture visitors' attention and focus it on her topic.

The delivery and style add significantly to the impact of this talk. Note the clear articulation and the excellent vocal variety and emphasis. Nancy's use of language is superb. Verbal pictures complement the visual images ("silence hangs over Shenandoah", "Shenandoah drowns - streams chatter" and paradoxically "cemeteries - centers of life").

Examples should be developed to maximize impact. Nancy gives life to her examples through the use of names and dates. Often the most powerful examples are those selected from the interpreter's personal experiences. The deeply personal discussion of the white cotton rat and the red-shouldered hawk provide clear examples of this point.

Concepts are stressed not facts. Facts such as names of animals, flowers, etc., are used only to clarify, enrich or illustrate a particular concept. Nancy is not a lecturing oracle but rather an instigator of thought and understanding. Judicious use of internal summaries ties the loose ends together and fosters understanding. Note the reviews of the "producer-consumer-decomposer" concept and the web of life.

Points To Ponder

Could Nancy have stimulated more audience questioning by a request for questions at the end of the program?

Would the Whittier poem at the end of the program have been more effective if it were orally interpreted more powerfully?

Can the audience visualize 182,000 tons? Should Nancy have pictured these statistics for the audience through an analogy?

** Nancy Shives and her husband Jim have been year-round professional seasonal interpreters for the past three years. Their winters have been spent at Everglades. Shenandoah, Jewel Cave and Wind Cave have been their summer homes.*

EVENING CAMPFIRE PROGRAM
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks
*Harold Basey, Seasonal Interpreter

DISCOVERING SIERRA BEARS

28 Minutes

Techniques to Note

Harold Basey presents bears not as isolated animals, but as animals living in a total environment which includes the park and the visitors. He talks of the interrelationships between the bears, the park and the people; discusses what does, or could, happen if things get ecologically out of balance; shows the influence and effect of man on the bears and their environment; and then, having provided his audience with a knowledge base, leads them to an understanding of what they must do to help keep things in balance.

While communicating these concepts, Harold uses humor to create a comfortable rapport with his audience which allows him to discuss sensitive visitor problems, request cooperation, and make the whole program an experience for the visitors rather than just a talk. Perhaps the highlight of this program is humor. A reversal of roles of bears and humans generates interest through humor in the introduction. A high level of audience involvement is maintained partially through humor. Note the suggestion to "hide in a garbage can to see the bears" and the anecdote about the ranger caught in the bear trap.

Harold does a superior job of selling the park service. He explains the values of research persuasively and illustrates the progress of the N.P.S. in correcting problems in the park. The education of the public "to avoid harming the bears and yourself" is well adapted to the needs and values of the audience.

The conclusion is excellent. Note the review of major concepts and the powerful climax sentence. (Consider the California grizzly bear and "avoid the future repeating the past".)

Points to Ponder

Would an introduction of the interpreter and the theme of the program have enhanced audience involvement?

Could the link to other animals and the human environment have been developed more effectively?

What did you think of the rather rapid, loud and sometimes harsh voice?

* *Harold Basey is a veteran of 15 years as a seasonal interpreter at Sequoia and is presently Supervisory Interpreter at Giant Forest. In the off season he teaches biology at Modesto Junior College in California. This program on Sierra Bears is part of a series called, "Discovering Sierra Mammals", which Harold has developed.*

EVENING PROGRAM
Shenandoah National Park
*Gary Miller, Seasonal Interpreter

A PRIVATE KIND OF WILDERNESS

20 Minutes

Techniques to Note

One goal of interpretation is to provoke visitors to view the world from a new and different perspective. Gary approaches this goal through a variety of techniques.

Excellent questioning (i. e., "What is wilderness?" and "Why the red head on a red-headed woodpecker?") stimulates the audience to think.

A literal change in perspective is provided when Gary challenges the audience to "get down on your hands and knees" and look at the environment from a new angle.

A variety of sense experience are included to heighten visitor involvement. Note the extensive use of both the sights and sounds of nature.

An excellent literary allusion is made to enhance appreciation for wilderness. "What use are forty freedoms without a blank spot on the map?"

The relationship between the park and the urban environment is clearly developed. Ecological concepts are introduced in the National Park environment and applied through a discussion of birds, to the urban environment. Note how the discussion of birds is used to link the two environments and tie the program together.

Points to Ponder

Was there any direct link between this program and the unique aspects of Shenandoah? Could this program have been given in most parks? Should a program be tied more specifically to aspects of the "park story"?

Did the music enhance the introduction or the conclusion? Was there a clear purpose to the musical selections? Did it aid in creating the mood?

Was the political discussion ("you can't fight City Hall") a bit heavy handed?

What did you think of the vocal variety? Could the delivery have been improved by a livelier vocal performance?

Could you immediately identify the relevance of the portion of the talk dealing with how to become a naturalist? Would a better transition have helped link this discussion to the theme?

** This program is one of three different programs Gary presented during his second summer as a seasonal interpreter at Shenandoah National Park. He developed it himself, gave it once a week, and could usually expect about 200 people per program.*

EVENING CAMPFIRE PROGRAM
Shenandoah National Park
*Jim Shives, Professional Seasonal Interpreter

PATTERNS, PIECES OF UNDERSTANDING

13 Minutes

Techniques to Note

Visitors often inquire "what is there to see?", Jim attempts to create an awakened eye. He suggests taking a closer look at familiar and unfamiliar things, sitting quietly and listening to the sounds of nature and slowing down enough to experience the environment.

Jim employs rhetorical questions and his own personal experience (wondering at the shape of an acorn) to stimulate the audience to involve themselves in a new sense experience.

The theme of patterns unites the entire discussion. Note the excellent transition from an initial discussion of the whole to the role of pieces and patterns in understanding the whole. Many clear examples are provided to illustrate the use of patterns (fawns, green snake, owl, walking stick). The payoff for the audience is explained as the value of understanding patterns to identify and understand the world around us.

The variety of sense experiences heightens visitor appreciation and understanding. Note especially the literary allusion (Thoreau quotation relating nature and art), the variety of sounds heard along Skyline Drive and the clever comparison of musical instruments and bird calls.

Points to Ponder

Would it have been desirable to actively involve the audience in describing the "small building at the base of the amphitheater at Rock Mountain"?

Would the application of "pattern analysis" beyond the park have been enhanced if music as well as birds' songs had been used to illustrate patterns?

What do you think of the use of music at the conclusion of Jim's program?

How was the music introduced? Was the duration too short to achieve the desired effect?

** Jim Shives and his wife Nancy have been professional seasonal interpreters for the past three years, working at Shenandoah, Everglades, Jewel Cave and Wind Cave. They find this professional seasonal style of life to be the most satisfactory and to best meet their needs.*

EVENING PROGRAM
 Mount McKinley National Park
 *William Rodarmor, Seasonal Interpreter

NATURE AS AN ARTIST

15 Minutes

Techniques To Note

The greatest strength (and paradoxically the primary weakness) of this program, delivered in the dining room of the park hotel, is the use of words. Note the vivid verbal pictures created by phrases like: "adolescent energy", "glaciers - shaped by and shapers of valleys" and "quite - almost serenity".

The presentation is made more understandable for the audience through frequent use of analogies linking their background to the topic.

William's vocal variety helps maintain interest by emphasizing high points of the program and avoiding monotony of rate, volume, pitch or quality. (i. e., "My God - it's raining again!")

Points To Ponder

Could the introduction have been better designed to arouse more audience attention and relate more specifically to the phenomena in Mt. McKinley under consideration?

Do you find some of the verbal description of slides counterproductive?

Does verbal "overkill" sometimes overwhelm the other sense experiences and unnecessarily channel audience perception? (i. e., "the sky so blue it looks like an unfathomed lake")

What is the theme of the talk? Does the lack of a clear coherent theme result in a rather weak conclusion to the talk? Would a climax sentence improve the impact of the conclusion?

** William is a seasonal interpreter at Mount McKinley and presents this program, which is his own creation in the dining room of the park hotel.*

EVENING PROGRAM
 Everglades National Park
 *Nancy Shives, Professional Seasonal Interpreter

FOCUSING IN

13 Minutes

Techniques To Note

This program provides an excellent example of the role of a theme in organizing a talk. All aspects of the program are clearly related to the central concept challenging the audience to look past the postcard views and become familiar with the smaller aspects of the environment-to focus in. Furthermore, a clear progression of ideas is facilitated by the theme. Notice how ideas are developed--introduction of the idea, illustration of how to focus in, summary and challenge to try focusing in on our own environment, thus closing the gap between the park and visitors' hometown.

The introduction gains audience attention through the familiar postcard views of famous parks and the novel "tall tales" regarding the parks. Notice the clear statement of topic through reference to the title in the introduction.

Nancy relates well with her audience. She has a pleasant voice with clear articulation and good vocal and verbal color. Her use of personal experience enhances audience interest by sharing a part of her life with them.

Excellent internal and final summaries enhance audience understanding. The review of "how to-through time, awareness and interest" is particularly useful.

Points To Ponder

Would audience interest be further developed if the talk were reorganized to consider "why focus in" earlier? Generally audiences respond positively to a discussion of "why should I care" early in a presentation.

Could Nancy have increased audience involvement by challenging them to identify the postcard views in the introduction rather than providing the identification herself?

Was the "work-work-work" portion of the talk a bit too close to lecturing the audience and imposing her value system on them?

* *Nancy Shives, Professional Seasonal Interpreter (has worked year-round for the Park Service-winters at Everglades-summer at Shenandoah, Jewel Cave and Wind Cave.)*

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION
Federal Hall N. H. S.
*Linda Russell, Seasonal Interpreter

COLONIAL FOLK SONGS

18 Minutes

Techniques To Note

The program represents an innovation in NPS interpretation. The folk song is used as the primary "eye" into the conditions, feelings and ways of life of the colonial period. The vignettes of song offer a different perspective to the interpretation of Federal Hall and the period it represents.

The natural attention device of novelty, in this case music, is utilized to draw the audience into the program.

Much information and emotion is presented in a most palatable fashion. We learn much of the hopes and fears of colonial soldiers, broadsides, etc. through the medium of music.

Points To Ponder

Should the interpreter introduce herself to the audience? Wouldn't it help the audience relate to the interpreter if they knew more of the position, background, etc. of the speaker?

Do the vocalized pauses (um, uh, etc.) detract from the presentation?

Can you identify any central theme within the format of colonial folk songs? Should the audience be actively encouraged to join in (if they desire) on more familiar colonial folk songs?

Can you identify any transition to either the British-Scottish ballads or the broadside song? Would some transitions help unify the presentation?

What did you think of the conclusion? Did it tie the presentation together? Did it leave the audience with some key thought or concept? Did it leave a strong impression?

** Linda Russell has spent two summers as a seasonal interpreter of Federal Hall and along with her folk song presentation, she gives tours through the Hall.*

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION
Fort Point, N. H. S.
*Lee Shenk, Park Technician

BUGLE DEMONSTRATION

13 Minutes

Techniques To Note

Lee has developed an approach that changes Fort Point from a brick and mortar structure to a living, bustling place. Through the medium of bugle calls, Lee takes the visitors through a day in the life of a Fort Point soldier, a simple but effective solution to a difficult interpretive problem.

The attention device of novelty is used to generate audience interest in this program. It is fitting that a bugle call is used to gather the audience for the program.

Notice the clear organizational pattern and the excellent musical performance.

The bugle calls are not presented as an end in themselves but serve as a framework within which is woven the events and emotions that constituted the life of a Fort Point soldier.

Points To Ponder

Would we have understood even more about the life of a soldier if Lee had explained why the bugle had to serve as a major tool of communication?

Would first person living history enhance or detract from the impact of this program?

Would more development of the significance of various bugle calls with greater emphasis on human elements (i. e. soldiers' responses to the calls) help or hinder the program?

** Lee Shenk is a Park Technician and serves as an interpretive specialist for Golden Gate National Recreation Area. He is a professional musician, is attending the University of Berkley, and was totally responsible for the development of the bugle program.*

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
Big Bend National Park
*Caroline Wilson, Park Technician

THE WATER STORY

21 Minutes

Techniques To Note

The popular "story telling" approach is utilized to communicate the complicated concept of the water cycle to a select audience. The key to this presentation is personification. The water drops are pictured as human and clear characterization is developed. The flood is pictured as a monster in a graphic emotional description.

The application of the water cycle to plants, animals, geology and man as well as the methods of adaptation to desert life are educational and easily understandable. The turn of phrase "saving for a non-rainy day" heightens the impact of the discussion of adaptation.

Points To Ponder

Should more attention have been given to development of the damage that man can do to water drops?

Were there too many technical terms included (translucent, transparent, stomates, etc.) for a children's program?

Would the presentation have been enhanced by better oral interpretation? Would clearer vocal differentiation of characters help?

Does the specter of loneliness and separation of the child water drops from their parent water drops aid in understanding the water cycle? Would it be palatable for children of all ages?

* *Caroline Wilson has been a Park Technician at Big Bend National Park for two years. She planned and developed this program herself and intends to continue using it next season.*

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
Olympic National Park

PUPPET SHOW

12 Minutes

Techniques To Note

The Puppet Show has an interesting history. The original idea came from some of the park wives; ideas for a script came from a Canadian radio program; puppets were made by the park wives; narration was done by the local STEP Club members, a VIP seasonal interpreter and the Chief Park Interpreter; and the puppets were operated by teenagers. There were no professional puppeteers involved and the expenses were paid by the park cooperating association.

The puppet show provides an interesting and lively approach to the presentation of a message to children.

There is clear vocal differentiation of characters.

Points To Ponder

What is the overall theme?

What is the prospective impact on children?

What is the relationship of this program to Olympic National Park? Should the program relate in some way (at least partially) to the unique features of Olympic National Park?

What age group is this program designed for? Would it be applicable to older children?

Is the overall tone of the program too depressing? (Don't want to be a fish, a bear, or a human.) Is the phrase at the end "the world is really lovely" enough to dispel the overall tone of unhappiness?

What is the function of the classical interlude and the song about the human? ("...car falls apart and don't wear a shirt-the worst of crimes...")

Do you have trouble understanding the high pitched voice? Is it irritating?

Should we be more sensitive to overweight visitors? Is the reference to the 250 pound woman appropriate?

CHILDREN'S NATURE AWARENESS WALK
Rock Creek Nature Center, NCP
*Bill Donahue, Park Technician

PEOPLE ARE LIKE PINE TREES
COMMENTS

40 Minutes
1 Minute

Techniques to Note

A clever title keys the theme of Bill's excellent children's environmental awareness walk. The audience is able to feel and relate to the woodland ecology. Note how the following techniques facilitate identification with the environment:

The audience is stimulated to review their experiences and compare these with the park experience.

Many analogies are made between the world of the child and the world of the nature center (i. e., the use of water by children compared to the use of water by trees).

Concepts are stressed rather than names and technical jargon.

Generally good vocal variety, vocal color and relaxed conversational tone.

Many senses are involved - feeling, seeing, smelling, hearing, etc.

The audience is stimulated to think and relate various concepts. Notice the challenging question - "how do we know the trees are alive?" And the charge to discover man-made changes in the woodland. Further ecological exploration and investigation is stimulated.

Excellent visualization of statistics makes information more meaningful to the audience. "The amount of natural land converted to housing, etc., per day is greater than this whole park".

The audience is emotionally involved in the extinction of the chestnut tree and the role of humans in transmitting disease.

A good summary of the similarities between humans and the forest community furthers understanding.

Points To Ponder

Does the recurrent questioning habit (huh) become distracting?

Should a conclusion be less directive? Does Bill seem to be forcing his conclusion, "I don't like some of the changes" and "I hope you feel the same way", on his audience?

Does some of the extreme vocal inflection come too close to "talking down" to children?

Could you identify a clear organizational pattern within the theme?

Could we use more surprise, "danglers" and "grabbers" to stimulate audience interest throughout the walk?

* *Bill Donahue is a Park Technician and has been at the Rock Creek Nature Center, Washington, D. C., for several years. He describes the origin and use of this awareness walk in his comments at the beginning of the tape.*

NOTES

