

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HORACE M. ALBRIGHT TRAINING CENTER
Grand Canyon, Arizona

PI-39

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES FOR HANDLING SCHOOL GROUPS

Measuring Effectiveness

1. After a tour, the interpreter may ask for drawings, poems, narrative compositions, etc., from each of the students. This creative work is to be done at home or school, without help from teacher or parents. Children use drawings as a language to express their ideas with a great deal of freedom. Drawings and poems give interesting insights and opens new avenues of thought.
2. From this request we get the following results:
 - a. Participation of the whole group.
 - b. Students' interpretation of the area.
 - c. Stimulation of creative abilities.
 - d. Enjoyment and understanding of the area.
 - e. Consciousness of conservation and safety program and MISSION 66.
 - f. An opportunity to evaluate childrens' appreciation by interpreter.
 - g. Our interpretive program benefits from the evaluation we thus receive of our effectiveness in presenting our subject.
3. The interpreter with school groups should have in mind the following objectives:
 - a. Historical or natural significance of the area.
 - b. Importance of the conservation program.
 - c. History of physical structures.
 - d. Explanation of technical vocabulary.
 - e. Stimulation of tangible creative response from each pupil in order to fix the experience in the child's mind.
4. We post examples of drawings, poems, and compositions on our bulletin board to furnish enjoyment to the visitors and inspiration to succeeding school groups.
5. Special consideration in handling school groups:

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- a. The ability to explain an area to school groups, taking into consideration their age, sex, race, background, education levels, cultural factors and past experiences, is the prime attribute of a good interpreter for children.
- b. School groups can be led only by a simple basic idea.
- c. A good talk is tailored to childrens' needs.
- d. Children are visually minded.
- e. Language has to be contemporary.
- f. We must use fewer directions in leading a big school group than in leading a small one.
- g. The interpreter as the leader sets the tone or mood for school groups.
- h. Interpretation is an Art.

Role Playing

A basic problem facing any interpreter is the establishment of communication with school groups. The area objective or objectives are the most important consideration. An important channel of communication is the technique of Role Playing by the youngsters--an action method of teaching and learning ways of behaving, ways of thinking, and ways of changing behavior. The interpreter will find role playing useful for the following purposes:

1. Help prepare school groups for a new situation like a visit to an area.
2. Adds variety and liveliness to routine activities.
3. Interpreter serves as a catalytic agent.
4. Augment good rapport between interpreter and school group.
5. School groups behave not as individuals.
6. School groups can be led only by simple basic ideas.
7. Children enter the realm of make-believe very easily and when it is shared with an understanding interpreter, tour becomes an unforgettable experience.
8. School children are very sensitive to the mood of places.
9. Role playing is a very spontaneous and creative medium.
10. Children like to be actors, not spectators. They like to participate and become part of the scene they cherish.

11. The play should take from 15 to 30 minutes.

Role playing should be a dynamic technique to create a climate of learning, appreciation, enjoyment, consciousness of conservation and safety measures and stimulation of creative potentialities.

by Julio Marrero-Nunez, Superintendent
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