

# Historic Southern Indiana

*Interpretation Workshop, March 2-4, 1998*

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## Here They Come, There They Go

Presented By Virginia Terpening

I. You are in the middle

- A. Your historic site is only the middle part of a learning process that includes a beginning, middle and end.
- B. Pre tour and post tour activities help facilitate the learning necessary in the beginning, middle and end learning process.

II. No Surprises

- A. Pre and post tour activities will not "over prepare" students but will rather help them get ready for the learning.
- B. Surprises are good for parties and the end of mystery novels not learning situations. Prepare students for what they'll see and do at your site. Send pictures and activities before hand.

III. Find the right match

- A. Determine what you want students to know about your site.
- B. Find out what students have to know(according to their school corporation)
- C. The best site visit combines what you want them to know with what the school corporation says they need to know.

IV. What makes a good pre and post activity?

- A. Offer a limited number of activities - teachers don't have time to do everything
- B. On the attached list of suggested activities, select a few that "speak" to your site.
- C. Title your handout "Pre and Post Tour Activities" and let the teacher decide which he/she wants to do before the trip.
- D. Make sure the activities you recommend provide learning opportunities and are challenging. Some puzzles and games waste time and paper.

Some suggestions for Pre and Post Tour Activities

1. Writing for Young Readers--students write stories, myths, cartoons, poetry or textbook entries which could be comprehended by a much younger child. Should be

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informative, should not cause fear. Can use illustrations. Textbook entry is good strategy--can learn a concept more fully by "teaching" a younger learner.

2. News item for television news--give students time limits (30 or 45 seconds) to describe the site for a TV story. Students should specify details about film, graphics and text to include.
3. Five W's--students in groups write brief reports about historical or current events by answering the five "W" questions: what, when, why, where & who?
4. Letters--compose letters expressing feelings about an issue, ideas to resolve problems. Persuasive and expository writing techniques are appropriate here. Specific person, group or agency should be addressed (corporation, editor, board, officer, etc.)
5. Biography of a Product--creative writing assignment that forces students to analyze components of an object. Could also be an autobiography if product told how it was created, component parts, how parts function within the whole, etc.
6. Designing Gameboards--using such games as "Monopoly", "Candyland", "Chutes & Ladders", have students design games which illustrate important aspects of concepts, units, time periods studied. Have specific requirements as to board, "game pieces", "chance" cards and instructions to play.
7. Skits--use role strategies in real or hypothetical cases. Sometimes it is helpful to give students fixed characters: in other situations, allow them to make their own character. Make requirements/objectives clear. Good way to have students demonstrate mastery of important terms, vocabulary if they are required to use such terms in their dialogue.
8. Museum Project--if students are divided into six groups, have two groups focus on an important person, two an important event, and two an important idea from a specific unit of study. Depending upon the subject matters, other "important" focus points might be used (inventions, discoveries, terms, examples of concepts, etc. ) Groups may select person, event, idea, inventions, etc. that they feel is most significant in the study. They are to develop a museum exhibit to showcase their selection. Money is no object! Emphasize the selection of details as important to justify their exhibit.
9. Audiotapes--if equipment is available in the classroom, tapes may be used again and again. This is often a good choice activity (allow a group the option of presenting their findings or their "report" on tape rather than in another form such as poetry or letters)

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10. Videotapes--this is usually most practical if reserved for "out of class" assignments. Have objectives and requirements clearly stated. A written outline/pseudo script requirement makes students take assignments more seriously. Requiring a bibliography is also helpful. In class videotaping is effective if equipment is available.
11. T-shirts--have students design t-shirts which illustrate important aspects, significant ideas or accomplishments, persuasive messages, etc. Have blank t-shirt forms printed on paper as well as on transparencies.
12. Illustrated Obituary--write obituary entries describing lifetime achievements of a significant person. Illustrate with drawings and symbols to emphasize accomplishments.
13. Cartoons--interpret cartoons, write captions for cartoons, create original cartoons
14. Cartoon Strips--give each group one "box" of cartoon strip to complete. Each "box" is one step of a story. Out together the "boxes" to tell the complete story.
15. Illustrated Timelines--have students identify the most important events of a designated time period ( a suggested number is helpful, i.e. 7-10 events) Each group designs a timeline and illustrates with people, inventions, art, events of note.
16. Major Events Charts--like the timelines, "Major Events Charts" require groups to reach consensus as to the most important events of a specific time period. Finished product is a chart of these events in chronological order. This can also be expanded to have events categorized by labels such as "Economic", "Cultural", "Political", etc. It can also be used to identify cause and effect relationships.
17. Newspaper "Front Pages"--good closure for study of a specific time period. Each group is assigned a specific year. For that year, they design front page of a newspaper highlighting a specific event as well as other trends and movements. Specific years during wars and revolutions work well (WWI, WWII, Vietnam, Korea, Civil War, etc.)
18. Interviews--each group can design interview questions for real or hypothetical subjects. they can use source material to write questions which would have produced these pieces as responses. Can individually interview subjects, combine responses into a group product which showcases conclusions. They can put oral history interviews together into an audiotape.
19. Empty Chair Interviews--use an empty chair (literally) to have students imagine details about a significant person about whom they have read. Groups write questions to ask of the "empty chair" where this person is sitting. Students from other groups

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answer for the interview subject. Take turns using dice or playing cards to determine who will ask and who will answer questions next.

20. Making Connections--after reading about events of a certain time period, have students use other materials to illustrate events occurring at the same time but in different places (local history, or in other parts of the world, etc.)

21. Diary Entries--this a good way to make abstract concepts more easily understood with concrete examples. Have groups write a "Dear Diary" entry for real or hypothetical individuals in response to an event or a development.

22. Murals--use chalkboard section to let groups illustrate concepts, events, people studied. Colored chalk is needed here.

23. Time Capsules--give an empty coffee can to each group at the end of a unit of study. Have students put sketches, words, phrases, and "artifacts" into their time capsule to illustrate significant events, people, and ideas from the time period. Have groups decorate the outside of their capsules to illustrate the sealed contents. Use the decoration sheet as an envelope for contents at the end of the class period so that coffee cans can be used again.

24. Crossword Puzzles--have groups of students work together to solve puzzles or to create original puzzles of their own. Have a "Scrabble" set and graph paper on hand for the original ones they like to work out.

25. Maps--have groups create maps of their own to test other students understanding/ Use the "Map of Errors" idea. Have each group create a map relevant to the topic of study which has a certain number of errors as well as most items correctly identified and labelled. They should indicate and labelled. They should indicate how many items are wrong and prepare a separate key. They can also be encouraged to make up locational questions for "Geography Pursuit" review games.

26. Mobiles and Collages--the same items which may be sealed in a time capsule can be hung in mobile form from coat hangers which may be reused. This need not be limited to an historical time period, however: any concept may be represented in this way.

27. Bumper Stickers--this is a good, fast group product for closure. Like the t-shirt strategy, students are forced to reach consensus as to how best to illustrate main ideas, contributions, characteristics, desired outcome, etc.

28. Scavenger Hunts--you may use textbook materials, supplemental materials, newspapers, magazines, and the library to have teams of students find specific answers

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or specific examples of broad categories of things you are studying. The secret is to have many questions, and have a nice variety of easy and difficult tasks.

29. "Pictionary", "Win, Lose or Draw", "Charades"--these very active team games can be used effectively as focus, closure, or review game activities. The chalkboard and overhead are both effective since both are usually denied to students.

30. Update Letters--have students in small groups write to historical figures to "Bring them up to date" as to the impact their actions or inventions have had on the course of human development.

31. Songs--students in groups may write song lyrics to be sung to a familiar tune.

32. Rebus Stories--have students use pictures, symbols, and letters to design "rebus" boards for other teams to decipher. A rebus story board is most easily explained to them as the type of puzzle used on the quiz show, "Concentration". It is an excellent way to have students "image" a name or idea for longer retention.

From "So You Want Their Heads Off Their Desks?!" by Sharon Pope, National Social Studies consultant, Prentice Hall

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