

2016 Docent Training: Interactive Gallery Experience

Gallery Name: Ancient Arts of China

Docent Name(s): Martha Morrison

Activity Name: "REFRESH THE BASICS!"

Touring Techniques

Transitions, giving directions, questioning, engaging audiences

Audiences: Check all that apply

x Adults x Families x School Children: Grades all x Homeschooled Students

Essential Question(s)

How does one artfully use transitions and directions within a tour to keep guests engaged and involved?

Common Core Standards (Activities for school children and homeschooled students only)

N/A

List Touring Techniques

Building simple transitional bridges/awareness of guest movement/positioning

List Gallery and/or Interactive Learning Station Artifacts/Objects

Ancient Arts of China Gallery

Introduction/Theme/Purpose

Participants will learn the choreography of touring. This includes using clearly articulated transitions and simple directions so guests can easily move within the gallery. The purpose is to help docents keep command of guests and present a cohesive, well-crafted tour that includes not only object material but the movement and flow within the gallery proper.

Activity Description/Steps in Presenting the Activity

1. Make clear transitional phrases between two seemingly unrelated objects
2. Give clear directional phrases to bridge one object to the next
3. Awareness of positioning at each object to best present the object
4. Interactive study and participation of movement/flow within the gallery
5. Awareness of space and use of space within the gallery
6. Use of gestures/movement by the presenter to help maintain audience interest

At the end of the presentation, the participant will have a more developed sense of a gallery and will be able to use a variety of techniques to keep tours fluid and effortless.

Sample interactive questions (2-3) for the Audience

1. How does one object relate to another? What is a clear, short transitional phrase that links them both together?
2. Give a short directional statement that moves guests easily from one object in a gallery to the next.

Conclusion/Review/Reflection

The choreography of a tour is as important as the material being presented. This presentation highlights the use of positioning, movement, and direction that supplements a tour's informational base. The purpose of this workshop is to give tools to the presenter to help develop the appearance of an effortless, fluid tour.

Date approved by the Education Committee: _____

TRANSITIONS

GETTING FROM PLACE TO PLACE WITHOUT SAYING “FOLLOW ME”

Why use transitions?

- To maintain continuity of the tour
- To give the tour a sense of unity
- To help focus the visitor
- To promote interest and curiosity
- To link one object to the next illustrating the theme

Docents who make sure that each stop on a tour is relevant to the TOUR THEME will have an easy time developing interesting transitions.

Transitions are not tools for the docent’s benefit only. They work for the audience, too. Well-planned transitions create anticipation for the next stop. They offer visitors reasons to remain interested.

Transitions provide the tie between one object and the next.

Transition statements need not be complicated. Long-winded transitions risk distracting the audience, or losing them entirely.

Provocative statements, questions, summaries, directives, introductions, and contrasts all make for good transitions, if concise and to the point.

DIRECTIONS

Why be specific about the movement of a tour?

- To help visitors follow easily
- To give visitors a sense of continuity of the tour
- To move visitors without disruption
- To provide structure for visitors
- To remain in control of the tour and visitors

Directional statements should ALWAYS FOLLOW your transitional statements. Directional statements might be:

“In the case to your right”

“Across the room in the showcase facing the tapestry”

“Inside the door and near the back wall”

“Directly behind us”

“In the showcase immediately to your left”

COMBINING TRANSITIONS AND DIRECTIONS

The following are examples of transitions combined with directions:

“Life continued after death, as you will see in the case behind you.”

“There was ethnic diversity on the ranches, as you can see in the picture to your left.”

“Let us now examine one of the essential trade objects of the Silk Road, in the showcase behind us and on the back wall.”