

Workshop: Better guiding for great visitor experiences

Presented by Interpretation Network New Zealand

www.INNZ.net.nz

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Workshop follow-up

Questions:

Workshop participants developed “productive” questions to engage visitors during a guided program.

Two main types of questions:

1. Unproductive

- Require visitor to have prior knowledge
- Not everyone can answer correctly
- Do not encourage visitors to engage with the resource
- Can turn off those with little knowledge

2. Productive

- Do not require prior knowledge
- Everyone can answer correctly
- Encourage visitors to engage with the resource
- Involve active participation

The following are the productive questions generated by workshop participants. I've tried to organise them into groups based on the sort of visitor interaction they encourage or elicit.

Questions that encourage or focus visitor observation:

- When you look at these two horses, which one looks the most happy? How do you know?
- Look at that hillside we are about to walk into. What do you see?
- Do you think the chick's feathers are soft or hard to the touch?
- What have you noticed about Kaikoura's ocean? How does it compare to the sea near your home? (*make sure your audience has a sea near their homes before asking this question—if they've nothing to compare it to, the question is meaningless*)
- Looking at the harbour below, what shape are the hills and what do they look like?
- Look at the building, especially the corners. How does it look different to other wooden buildings you've seen?
- What do you notice about the walls of this valley around us?
- Can everybody smell that? That is the smell of a rainforest.
- What can you see in this piece of driftwood?
- Is the whale watch boat the same length as the whale?
- How many whales can you see?
- What can you tell me about the shape of this valley?

- How does this landscape differ from that where you live?
- Describe where you live. How is it different from here?

The last two questions are excellent ones—not only do they engage visitors in observation and comparison, they gets visitors comparing familiar things with what is in front of them (i.e. they begin to create their own comparisons and analogies to help them understand).

Questions that encourage visitors to express ideas or opinions:

- This is Victoria, an adult albatross. Can you see her feet, which are rather large? What do you think she uses them for?
- how did you hear about N.Z?
- Why do you think the kiwi has a long beak?
- How do you feel standing here below the glacier?
- How much food do you think the whales eat?
- What is your perception of Molesworth Station?
- What do you think a kiwi might sound like?

Questions that engage visitors in integration of or reflection on information provided in the guided experience:

- What can you do to look after the ocean from now on for future generations?
- How are you going to apply what you've learned?
- Has today been profitable and enjoyable?
- Now that you have been inside, and learned about this, what is it to you now?

Questions that let visitors think and talk about themselves and their own lives:

- Has anyone been stuck out in a storm?
- Have you heard a kiwi? (*be careful with questions like this—if most of your audience is likely to say “no”, then don't ask*)
- Have you ever collected your own eggs for breakfast?
- What in your business makes you lay awake at night?

Questions that encourage visitors to imagine themselves in a different place/time:

- In early European time here, how would you travel around? Why would you explore, and what would you be looking for?
- What would you do with this land as first settlers?

Analogies:

Workshop participants also developed analogies to link unfamiliar concepts with familiar ones. Below are some of the analogies that were explored by participants.

Pounamu formation

- Roller coaster—uplift, erosion
- Transformed structure like car crushing
- Putting something in the oven
- Poutini/waitaiki—love, war, jealousy

Migration of godwits

- Whales—go to warm waters to give birth, come back to NZ to feed. Antarctica—24 hour feeding on krill.
- Compare this to people who make decisions on where to shift to make a living, which is similar to finding food or to find a partner, which is similar to whales breeding
- Moving for or looking for opportunities—e.g. gold miners

Albatross life cycle versus human life cycle

- Incubation for 79 days=approx. 3 mths
- Guard Stage—30-40 days—two working parents, child in daycare
7 months—school
- Chicks/Adolescents
Leave 3-5 years—Uni/Big OE
- Come back
Juveniles 2-3yrs—still like teenagers
- Keeping company—engaged, living together

Glacier is like a snake

- Keep to themselves (loners)
- shape (twists and turns)
- sheds skin (can see where it's been)
- cold blooded (river)
- unusual to look at
- slow moving (but can advance quickly)
- Take time to digest what they consume

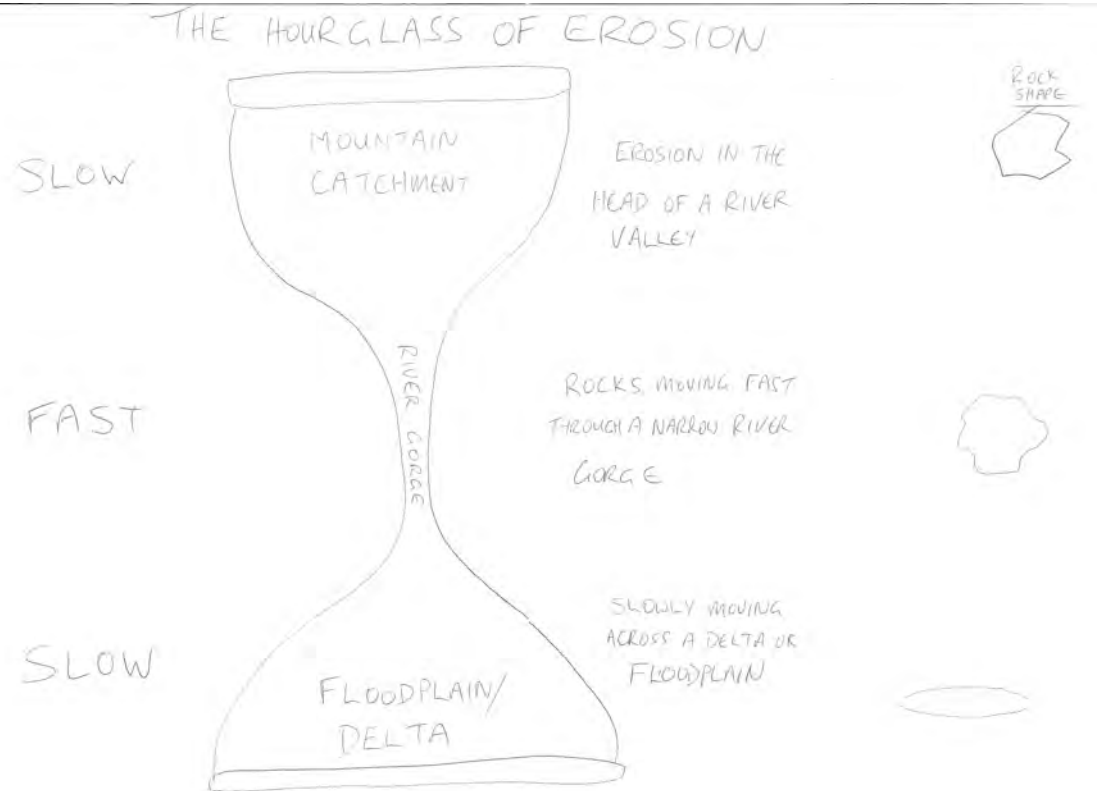
Possums in NZ like kids in a candy shop

- endlessly consuming
- multiplying—texting friends

Migration

Going from kindergarten—>primary school—>secondary school

The hourglass of erosion



Geothermal Activity → oven

- Pots without lids venting all the time (a vent/geyser/mud pool)
- pressure cooker → if you don't vent it it will blow (a volcano which erupts in violent fashion)
- Inside the oven deep down, the heat changes the form of the rocks (just like baking muffins)
- Energy source is the pressure of 2 plates (one sliding underneath) creating energy (electricity) to provide heat.

Geothermal Activity

- Cooking stew in a pot, steam, heat, smell, pressure, changing form breaking down. Blending 'ingredients'. Ingredients represent different rocks/minerals.
- Potato under heat—may explode, may break down also into a softer form