

# Interpretation 101

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# Interpretation is POETRY!

P - Purposeful

O - Organized

E - Enjoyable

T - Thematic

R - Relevant

Y – YOU!

# P - Purposeful

Your purpose as a Master Naturalist is the Natural Areas Department Mission!

*To conserve and enhance lands with natural resource, scenic and agricultural values, while providing meaningful education and appropriate recreation opportunities*

You may also have a individual mission for a particular program or event.

# E - Enjoyable

Think of a program that you really enjoyed...



What made it so great?

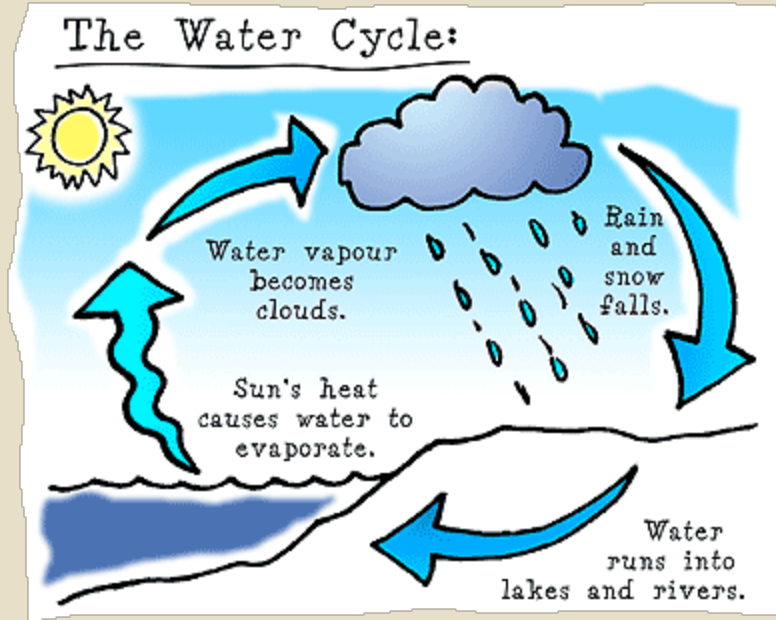
# E - Enjoyable

## Multi-sensory learning approach



Multiple techniques – games, music, movement/dance, poetry, illustration; amazing facts; props

# E - Enjoyable



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# E - Enjoyable

Non-verbal communication – how you say it, not what you say



# R - Relevant

Ways to make subject relevant:



- Universals – love, family, survival, conflict, etc.
- Metaphors – “Beavers are nature’s engineers.”
- Similes – “A volcanic eruption is like a pressure cooker.”
- Relevant examples for your audience – “Yellowstone National Park is the size of the state of Connecticut.”
- Questions – “How many of you have ever seen an owl in the wild?”





# R-Relevant

1. Rocky Mountain Geology for seniors in an assisted living facility
2. Plants for Fort Collins High School students
3. Coyotes for K-1 students from an urban Denver school
4. Watershed for audience of mixed-age families at a Saturday program
5. Homesteader history for a group of young people and mentors (think, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, etc.)

# T-Thematic

A theme is a sentence that gives the main message of your presentation. It is different from a topic.

*People remember themes...they forget facts*

Picture Challenge!

# T-Thematic

## Theme vs. Topic

### **Topic: Owls**

*Theme: Owls have amazing adaptations that help them keep our ecosystems balanced*

### **Topic: Beavers**

*Theme: Beavers are perfectly adapted for their wet environment.*

### **Topic: Trees**

*Theme: Trees are just like us.*

### **Topic: Food Chains**

*Theme: Everyone in a food chain depends on the sun.*

# T-Thematic

Topic is the thing your program is about.

Theme is what you want your audience to UNDERSTAND after the program is over.

Themes are:

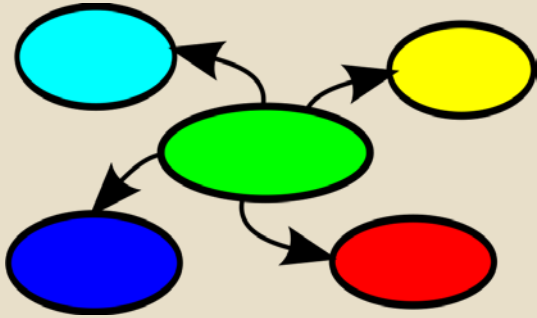
1. A complete sentence or idea
2. Answer a “so what?” question
3. Are specific and interesting



# T-Thematic

What was the theme of this morning's presentation?

How do you narrow down your theme?



One technique: Concept maps!

# O - Organized

Introduction: Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em

Body: Tell 'em

Conclusion: Tell 'em what you told 'em

# O - Organized

## Introduction:

- Introduce yourself!
- Capture your audience's attention
- Reveal the theme
- Preview main ideas



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# O - Organized

## Body:

- 3-5 main ideas (2-3 for this class)
- Each idea is separate and related to the theme
- Balance the amount of time given to each idea



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# O - Organized

## Conclusion:

- Summarize the main ideas
- Reinforce theme
- Make a concluding statement, including a stewardship message if possible.



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# O - Organized

## Steps for organizing:

1. Decide upon your theme
2. Select 3-5 main points based on your theme (this is the body of the presentation)
3. Choose the information to include based on your theme and main points.
4. Prepare your conclusion. Reinforce theme and help the audience understand why they should care.
5. Prepare the introduction
6. Work on transitions

# Interpretive Presentation Tips!

## MEMORIZE:

1. Theme
2. Opening and Closing Statements
3. Transitions

*Don't memorize or read your entire talk. Notes are OK!*

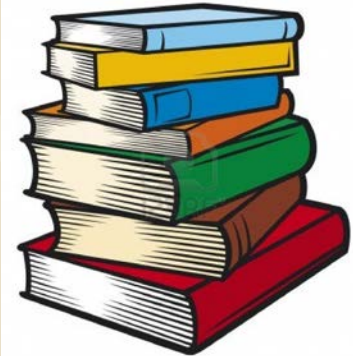
- Refer back to your theme
- Organize sequentially in a way that makes sense
- Practice! Practice! Practice!



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# Interpretive Resources

- *Interpreting Our Heritage* by Freeman Tilden
- *Making a Difference on Purpose* by Sam Ham
- *Interpretation of Natural and Cultural History* by Knudson, Cable and Beck
- *The Gifts of Interpretation* by Cable and Beck
- *Sharing Nature with Children* by Cornell
- *Interpreting for Park Visitors* by Lewis
- *Personal Interpretation* by Brochu and Merriman
- And many more.....(located in Charlotte's office)



# CIG Class

- [www.interpnet.com](http://www.interpnet.com) – National Association for Interpretation website
- Go to Certification and Training for more information
- Will offer classes for Master Naturalists for FREE! (You must pay for your own certification if you want it)
- 32-hour class
- Certification national recognized and good for 4 years
- Great opportunity to do a deeper dive into interpretation.

# Applied Practice!

**Special Presentation**

**Questions?**