

GLOSSARY  
of  
INTERPRETIVE TERMS

Interpretation & Extension  
Division, National Parks

Report presented to the  
Federal Provincial Parks Conference

1976

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**Amphitheatre:** A round or oval building or outdoor area with an open space surrounded by rising rows of seats or a similar configuration of hill slopes.

**Audience:** The people gathered in a place to hear or see.

**Audio-visual presentation:** A presentation which is illustrated by sound and visual aids.

**Booklet:** A small book, usually paper covered.

**Brochure:** A brief publication made up of folded sheets of paper that may be stapled or stitched together, but not resembling a booklet.

**Campfire Program:** An interpretation program employing a campfire to create a desired atmosphere.

**Communication:** The act of transmitting a message to a designated receiver.

**Communication Model:** A symbolic representation showing the ideal functional and structural relationships of all the elements in the process of communication.

**Curator:** A person in charge of a museum or library.

**Delivery Point:** A specific location where a message is delivered by a designated medium.

**Enclosed Theatre:** A theatre which has a roof and/or walls to offer audience protection.

**Evaluation:** To examine something and determine results of effort with particular reference to the objectives of the effort and based on feedback received. To make value judgements.

**Event:** An activity in an interpretive program which is usually conducted "live" by an interpreter.

**Exhibit:** An object or collection of things put on view at an exhibition or other public show, usually illustrating or explaining only one theme.

**Exhibit Centre:** A building or group of structures which is developed to house exhibits.

**Extension Program:** A program transmitted outside park boundaries.

**Feedback:** A response to a message from its recipient to its source.

**Folder:** A pamphlet or booklet folded but not stitched.

**Guided Walk:** A regularly scheduled walk which is conducted by an interpreter over a consistent route or area.

**Indoor Theatre:** A theatre situated inside a building.

**Information Centre:** A place where the park visitor can orient himself to the park and receive more detailed facts through personal contacts or passive media such as publications, displays, models, etc...

- Interpretation:**
1. An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first hand experience and/or by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information (Adapted from Tilden).
  2. Any communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public through first hand involvement with an object, artifact, landscape or site (Association of Canadian Interpreters).

**Interpretation Centre:** A building or group of structures which serves as a major area for interpretation activities (program presentations, exhibits, displays, etc.).

**Interpretation Plan:** Any plan or plan document which provides direction and a course of action for interpretation.

**Interpretation Theatre:** Any theatre used for interpretation purposes (see also indoor theatre, enclosed theatre, outdoor theatre).

**Interpretation Unit:** An area which contains a single dominant feature or a series of important features which are related by a central theme (Wyett, 1972) and are to be planned, developed and managed according to a single dominant pattern of use for interpretation purposes.

**Interpreter:** A person who conducts interpretation. A person who reveals to an audience meanings and relationships of our natural and cultural heritage through use of original objects, first hand experience, or illustrative media.

**Interpretive Planner:** A person whose responsibilities are directed to the development of interpretation plans.

**Interpretive Trail:** A path used specifically for interpretation purposes such as guided or self-guided walks.

**Interpretive Value:** Having an inherent property worthy of interpretation.

**Illustrated Talk:** A talk enhanced or amplified by graphic material and/or exhibits.

**Leaflet:** A single unfolded unstitched leaf of printed matter.

**Master Plan:** The official guideline for the resource management body which sets forth the policies concerning development, philosophy, and operation of its program. The plan is a single unified design for the integration of the interpretive program into the total management objectives (Hanna).

**Media Plan:** An outline of a procedure to implement a particular combination of media which will tell the story or carry the message.

**Media Planner:** A person who determines the medium or combination of media which will tell the story or carry the message.

**Medium, media:** Objects or processes of communication through which or by which communication may be accomplished. Ex.: Slide presentations, movies, personal contacts, radio, T.V.

**Message:** The subject of a communication.

**Museum:** A facility devoted to the procurement, care and display of those objects which best illustrate the phenomena of nature and the works of man, and the utilization of these for the increase of knowledge for the culture and enlightenment of people (adapted from Goode). There are different types of museums: natural, history, cultural, art...

**Naturalist:** A person who studies and/or interprets the natural environment.

**Non-personal Services:** Communication with the visitors in the park or with the public outside the park that does not involve the personal services of park staff. Non-personal Services include visitor centres (museums, exhibit trailers), unmanned exhibits/signs, automatic A/V presentations (audio and/or visual presentations, slide presentations, tape presentations, low power radio transmitters, tape guided tours), self-guiding trails, interpretive publications, education kits/packages/programs, radio, T.V., press.

**Outdoor Education:** An outdoor learning experience conducted in cooperation with educational institutions.

**Outdoor Theatre:** A theatre, which has no roof or walls to protect the audience.

**Pamphlet:** Same as brochure.

**Personal Services:** Personal contacts by park staff with the visitors in the park or with the public outside the park boundaries. Personal Services include theatre presentations, guided walks and other guided tours, presentations given on a public transit vehicle (boat, train...), contacts made by roving interpreters, campfire/on-site talks and demonstrations, skill development programs, public presentations and school presentations.

**Program:** An interpretive event or activity directed to a visitor or group.

**Publication:** Any printed material for distribution (see also pamphlet, folder, brochure, booklet, leaflet).

**Receiver:** The person who is the target of the message.

**Receiver Analysis:** An analytical identification of the receiver to whom you wish to communicate certain messages.

**Roving Interpreter:** An interpreter assigned to a given place for a specific period of time to contact park visitors, to answer their questions and to informally interpret the area to them.

**Scheduled Event:** An interpretation program which has been organized in advance of its happening and which is presented on a regular basis.

**Self-Guiding Trail:** A permanent trail oriented to landscape and nature interpretation which the visitor uses guided only by pamphlets, tape recordings, signs or other media.

**Shoulder Seasons:** The periods during the year immediately before and after peak-use seasons.

**Slide Show:** A presentation of photographic slides and transparencies.

**Slide Talk:** A presentation which is illustrated by projected transparencies.

**Special Event:** An organized event which is not part of the regularly scheduled interpretive program.

**Special Group:** An audience, usually organized, for which interpretation is being provided to meet their specific requirements.

**Story:** A narrative that illustrates an interpretive message and is designed for the interest of the receiver.

**Story Area:** An area characterized by a feature or a group of features which are related by a central theme.

**Story line:** The plan, scheme of the story.

**Target Group:** A designated audience, having specific characteristics, to which a message is directed.

**Theme:** A subject or topic constituting the basis for interpretation.

**User Group:** Visitors which can be characterized according to activities they participate in while in the story area.



Winter Interpretation: A program specifically designed to interpret the environment of a winter setting.