

I Go on a Field Trip

The Past:

My first experience with field trips was at college when I signed up for an archaeology course that has a theoretical section and a practical section. When we were done with the theoretical section of the course our professor took us on a field trip to practice what we learned theoretically.

The archaeological site that we visited was 200 miles away from the campus of our university. The site was in the middle of the desert and there was no paved road to that area. The university provided us with 4-wheel drive vehicles, food, water, blankets, tents, and the working tools. We set off early in the morning to get there by sun set. We camped there and spent that night in the heart of the desert. In the next day we started our work by touring the area, collecting samples and doing a lot of practical things. Our professor was very good at making us apply all our theoretical information in a practical way. We spent the whole day working on that and at night we presented short seminars and discussed the information that we collected from the site. We spent another night in the desert and in the morning we drove back home to get there by sun set.

That field trip had a great impact on me because it showed me clearly the big difference between learning something theoretically and learning the same thing practically. After graduation, I worked as a teacher and even now that field trip has a great impact on the way I teach. It has made me fully believe in the practical side of doing things. Whenever it is possible to apply what I teach I will just apply it or at least connect it to real life situations. Another thing which I learned from this field trip was the importance of collaborative work.

The Present

What this was

On Friday 12/08/2006 we as a group of MIST students visited the library of Hartnell College in Salinas so as to see how they apply technology in their library. The field trip

was well organized under the supervision of two of our professors Jennifer Fellguth and Jennifer Donegan. Both of them are part of the Hartnell College staff. The day before the trip they provided us with the directions and the required information about how and where to park. On that specific day of the trip Jennifer and Jennifer waited for us at the library entrance and we started the tour.

During our tour we learned that 85% of the population is Latinos for this reason the college is given special consideration, or in other words, it receives extra help from the government. The library itself is huge and the reading area is very spacious. They also have a very quiet study area. Jennifer explained for us what they call Safari Video. It is a video delivery system, and it is used for video distribution. Let me explain for you how it works: you go to the reserving desk and reserve a video then they assign room for you and they give you a remote control. When you play your video, the screen is equipped with extra devices to make it a touch screen where you can annotate on it. There is another room in which the board is equipped with a camera that enables you to take shots of what is on the board. You are able to save it on a disc, e-mail it to yourself or send it to the printer. Reserving a room in this library is a very easy thing to do because there is a small box outside each room by using this box you can reserve a room electronically. If you do not like using that box or you are away from the campus you can reserve the room online through the web-based reservation system. We end our field trip by visiting the Video Conferencing Room where you can see all different kinds of modern technology such as digital cameras, video cameras, touch screen system, etc. It is a huge collection of technology and the users are able to use what they like about it. We also learned that the main problem is the technical assistance. They have only four technicians for over 1800 computers. If you still need more information just log onto this website.

<http://www.hartnell.edu/>

The Present

Take aways

Here are three things which I learned and they may be very useful for teachers who are interested in field trips.

* Good Planning: For any field trip to be successful you need good planning and you need to think about the very tiny details especially if the field trip will last for more than a day. In other words the success of your field trip depends on good planning. If you want to get more information about how to plan a successful field trip just log onto the following websites:

http://www.ehow.com/how_134570_field-trip.html

<http://www.mos.org/doc/1889>

You will find very good information such as where to park, if you need parking passes or parking permits, if you would pay to park, etc. This is just an example there are dozens of important questions like the previous ones about different vital issues.

* If you do not like the hassle of the traditional field trips you can plan for an electronic field trip of which a good example is the one which we had in the early weeks of this semester about using technology at Stanford University. Here is a very useful website which will show you how to organize electronic field trips.

<http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=2888>

Here is an example of an electronic field trip to the moon.

<http://fti.neep.wisc.edu/neep602/LEC1/trip.html>

* Evaluating your field trip: Whenever you have a field trip you do need to evaluate it so as to know what went right and what went wrong. In other words, as a teacher you need to make a check list or you can use the same list that you used to plan for your field trip. Your evaluation can be in a form of rating all or the most important areas of your field trip. The value of this is that it will help you in solving the problems of your upcoming field trips. Here is a very useful website which will show you how to use a checklist for evaluation or you can modify it to serve your needs.

<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/socialstd/ft/Checklist.html>

Future

What will you do with this?

One item that I learned or observed in this field trip is that technology makes learning fun. It helps the students understand or enjoy their learning. For this reason I would apply a great deal of multimedia in my project and I would not limit it to my project but also I

would apply it in my whole teaching. The type of multimedia which I will use will be video clips, recorded sounds, PowerPoint presentations, podcasting, discussion boards, etc.

Another important thing is that field trips are very important for anyone who is involved in the field of education because these trips make students retain the information they need. The strength of this is that information will stay for ever in the learners' memory. Although field trips are good things to do and they have a lot of advantages and strengths they also have a lot of weaknesses. For example, preparing them is a very time consuming process. The teacher needs to think about all the tiny details because these small things can ruin the whole trip. In other words you need to get things right from the beginning. Another thing is that field trips are expensive especially if they will last for a long time because you need to pay for transportation, food, etc. The issue of safety is also another big issue especially if the students are young kids, because you want to make sure that they are safe and secured all the time.