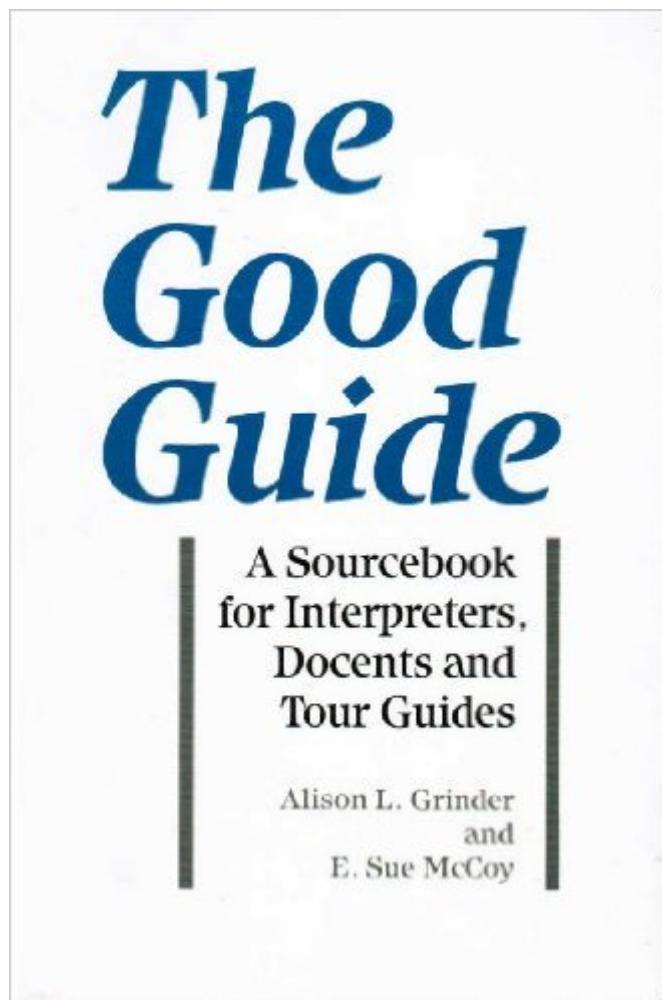


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The Good Guide: A Sourcebook For Interpreters, Docents, And Tour Guides



Synopsis

The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents, and Tour Guides

Book Information

Paperback: 147 pages

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Customer Reviews

I was given this book when I began my work as a museum interpreter ten years ago. It gives a comprehensive overview of the field. There is information on both how museums have changed and present trends. Theoretical insights about learning theory are developed into realistic applications for planning activities on the museum floor. Part Two on the interpretive process would be improved by some discussion of first person interpretation, a dynamic new way to bring history alive at house museums, outdoor sites, and more traditional history museums. Also, there's room for more discussion of the problems and pitfalls which today's visitors can offer. But I found this book so helpful that I plan to use it in training 150 volunteers and a dozen paid staff at a new museum opening in January, 2001.

Although presumably somewhat outdated, 'The Good Guide' (published in 1985) remains a useful source of ideas and suggestions especially for museum docents and interpreters, as well as (to a much lesser extent) for Tourist Guides. The authors explain what museum education is and what it should be, what are its goals and principles. Their text is focused mainly on problems of the interpretation of museum exhibits to children and school groups. This is why they point out various concepts of learning, mostly those relating to very young museum visitors. Consequently, they suggest a few corresponding techniques of interpretation suitable for such an audience. The best part of this 'sourcebook' gives us pretty clear and usable explanations of various interpretative

techniques such as Lecture-Discussion, Inquiry-Discussion and Guided Discovery including their comparative advantages. While these techniques might be applicable to the case of museum interpretation, they can hardly be used in the much more diversified field of general Tour Guiding. The last chapter is focused on communication skills - both verbal and non-verbal. Though a few observations given here sound instructive, we must bear in mind that the text was written 20 years ago. In the meantime, a lot of titles have been published on the same topic; both the overall philosophy of interpretation and communication techniques have greatly been improved.

Many tour guides or docents need good common sense advice and direction while they are perfecting their tour-giving skills. This guide is easy to read and takes the mystery out of giving tours.

A great guide for new Docents. Allows one to put thought into crafting an informative tour while paying attention to audience age levels etc.

an outstanding, well-organized course of study for museum docents. covering developmental levels and appropriate ways to relating to different age groups.

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