



## Liven Up Your Programs

There are many ways to liven up an interpretive program, whether indoors or outdoors, for audiences of all ages. The following strategies can make your program more interesting and effective. You may already use some of these strategies—try a new one next time you lead a program!

### Stories

Illustrate your message/theme with stories to captivate the interest of the group. Maybe even try to make the whole interpretive message a story! With children you can sometimes open a program by reading from a picture book. With all audiences, including an oral story is a way to captivate interest. Be sure to practice telling the story several times so you're familiar and comfortable with it. In all cases, and especially if it's a Native American story, be sure to credit the source.

### Anecdotes

Concise, pertinent biographical and personal stories that relate to your audience, as well as the theme of your program, can help participants relate to your topic. Participants may want to share their stories with you as well, but make sure these don't hijack your overall program. You can always say something like, "It's so great to hear these stories, but I've got a lot of great information to share with you today so let's get going."

### Quotations

Briefly quoting others can add interest and color to your presentation. Share quotes associated with local citizens, the environmental movement, or local history. Remember to give a short description of the person so audience members understand the context of the quote presented. Sometimes it's nice to end a program with a special quote. Unless a quote is very brief, you may want to read the quotation so your audience knows they are hearing the author's words, not yours.

### Examples

Examples give your audience details and specifics to help understand the broad points and context of your message. For instance, if talking about how wildlife can move back into areas where they've been missing for a while, you can share with them how river otters have moved back into Boulder County and have been spotted by several employees and local citizens. The otters have most likely followed the streams and rivers from the west side of the Rockies.

### Similes/Analogies

Similes use the words "like" or "as" to relate characteristics of two items. Whereas, analogies explain something by making a comparison to something similar that is more familiar to your audience. For example, "Elk have flat teeth to chew grass, like the teeth we have in the back of our mouths to grind up all types of food" (simile), or "The teeth of a mountain lion work like the knives in your kitchen—they slice through meat" (analogy).

### Metaphors

Give a name or quality to something when it literally does not fit—but figuratively describes it, i.e. "Birds of a Feather Flock Together," or "A blanket of stars."

### Repetition

Repeat key phrases to create powerful, memorable messages. In Martin Luther King's most famous speech he started eight sequential paragraphs with the statement, "I have a dream." Examples might be "The coyote's nose knows," "Why fly south?" or "How was this rock created and why is it here?"