



TUTOR TIPS

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Developing literacy skills by taking learning out of the classroom.

Planning and organizing excursions.
Building lessons from brochures and websites.

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This Tutor Tip will look at taking learning out of the classroom, at selecting, planning and undertaking excursions, and will look at ways learners can become involved in all areas of decision making regarding the excursion. It will also look at the skills that can be developed or improved along the way. Additionally, this Tutor Tip will contain some ideas for lessons leading up to and after the excursion and for those working in one to one situations.



Taking students on excursions can be a beneficial experience in many ways.

- Learning can be put into real life situations.
- Learning can be fun.
- Students can experience new things.
- Students can take ownership of the learning and the excursion itself.
- Confidence can be built.
- Learning outcomes in reading, writing, numeracy and oral communication can be achieved.

As with all adult learning, but particularly that which involves adult literacy learners, the learning is more successful when it is relevant, interesting and useful to the learner. In order to achieve this, the learners need to take ownership of their learning in the classroom and, in the case of excursions, should be involved from the very beginning of the planning process.

This can be done by holding a series of class meetings or for tutors who are working with individual learners, conduct a series of discussions.



Step 1.

Hold a class meeting to initially discuss ideas for the excursion. Have a few ideas for venues ready as well as phone books, local newspapers and magazines.

At the meeting:

- Appoint a chair person. Initially it is a good idea for the tutor to conduct the first meeting in order to provide practical examples of meeting procedure. Ask all learners to take notes throughout the meeting. At the end of the meeting, review the notes taken and make suggestions on how to improve this process if necessary.
 - Gather ideas for excursion venues from students. Draw on their previous experiences and local knowledge.
 - Discuss a maximum budget to cover any entrance fees, transport costs or food and drink or look for free events.

Delegate students to investigate ideas.

- During this first meeting devise a list of venues and ask for volunteers to investigate the following:
 - opening times and accessibility.
 - directions.
 - transport cost and times.
 - facilities available at venue.
 - food – bring or buy.
- Learners can use the Internet, phone, brochures newspapers, etc., to collect information. They should be asked to take notes on the information they find and bring them back to the next meeting.
- Set a date for the next meeting.

Note: *The tutor should record the meeting (with learners' permission) or take notes on conversations and discussions during meetings for additional evidence towards Oral Communication Learning Outcomes.*

Step 2.

Hold a meeting to discuss information collected by learners since the last meeting.

At this meeting:

- Voting can take place to choose the excursion venue, and whether to bring or buy food.
 - Plan a date for the excursion.
 - A more exact budget can be determined and if necessary, a payment or saving scheme developed.
 - Set departure and meeting times and place, transport times etc.
 - Ask for volunteers to make bookings if necessary.
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Step 3.

Plan activities to be undertaken while on excursion.

Prior to the excursion the tutor should investigate the venue (in person, from the brochure or on line) and devise a list of questions or topics for discussion. These activities should be developed according to the skill level of each individual learner.

Building a lesson on an excursion to the Queensland Museum.

These suggestions can also be used when working with individual learners.

- Use the Queensland Museum web site and follow the links to 'Learning'.
- This section provides general information on booking procedures and exhibitions.
- Click on these links, eg. Muttaborrasaurus or Endangered Species, to locate further information from which questions for activity sheets can be developed.
- Numeracy tasks (map reading) can be included by asking learners to explain how to get from one section to another, what symbol identifies particular facilities?
- If taking an on site tour that is supervised ask learners to note some facts being presented.
- Some sites will have resources that can be used as is or modified to suit the individual learners.



Step 4.

The Excursion.

Once everyone arrives at the venue, discuss any rules that may be in place within the venue and explain the activities each learner will need to complete.

Enjoy.

Step 5.

Post excursion meeting or discussion.

A brainstorming activity could be used to discuss what learners liked and didn't like and their suggestions for future excursions. Incorporate into this session the grammar activities and strategies for spelling any difficult words. This can then be developed into a writing activity, as simple as a few dot points or sentences, through to a report, oral presentation or further research.

Associated Lesson Ideas

Note: *If excursions are not possible and meetings not required, discuss the various topics with the learner and use the brochures or websites as a basis for developing activities.*

Plan a lesson to discuss meeting procedures.

- Have some sample meeting agendas, and minutes prepared.
- Discuss some tips and activities for successful note taking: common words and terms, common abbreviations, signs and symbols and then conduct a brief trial meeting.
- Plan a lesson (either oral discussions or writing activities) to discover the learners prior knowledge of their local area and their experiences with museums, art galleries etc.
- Discuss budgeting for outings. A lesson could be built around planning and shopping for a picnic or party using supermarket brochures.

Reading, Writing, Numeracy and Oral Communication Skills Covered

- Follow meeting procedures or engage in discussion and use names correctly.
- Observe turn taking
- Take minutes/notes
- Ask questions for clarification
- Engage in discussions, respect others' opinions
- Read related media and timetables
- Read Maps, give and follow directions, use of scale and co ordinates.
- Negotiate with organizations
- Devise and ask questions to ensure understanding
- Take notes on answers
- Interact with appropriate technology i.e. screen activated information, Internet, Phone message services.
- Use a variety of media: magazines, newspapers, phone book, brochures and students own experiences for ideas, cost etc.
- Decision making
- Consideration for others during conversations
- Budgeting
- Preparing shopping lists and shopping for food
- Personal writing, lists, reports.

Lesson on gathering information from brochures and the Internet.

Brochures

- Ask the learners to scan the brochure, looking at symbols, maps, pictures and headings and list the main areas of information provided.
- Discuss the type of information and headings on the brochure.
- Discuss key words and alternatives eg. 'Opening Times' are sometimes found under the heading of 'Access'. Ask questions such as 'Where might I find information on places that sell food?'
- Spelling activities and strategies for understanding unfamiliar words can be developed.
- Writing tasks can be developed from lists to summaries.

- Use the venue map to build some numeracy lessons on map reading and direction. This could range from using directional words like up, down, go past, left, right to north, south, east, west, using co ordinates, scale and distance if they are included on the map or activities such as, find the shortest route, what will I find if I take this route?

Internet

- Discuss unfamiliar terminology.
- Use a search engine to locate venues, activities or areas of local interest. Eg. Historical sites.
- Provide a specific web address.
- Ask learners to look at the home page and notice differences between gathering information from a website and gathering information from a brochure. Eg. Turning pages on brochures or clicking on links on the web page.
- Allow time for learners to investigate the web site, particularly if they have not used the Internet before.
- Ask learners to click on links and make short lists of the type of information located on each.
- Once learners are comfortable with this activity, similar activities to those using brochures can be followed.

Some useful Websites

For information on current events, festivals, things to see and do as well as a few 'freebies' try the Our Brisbane Website www.ourbrisbane.com.

This site also contains information on what is happening in the suburbs of Brisbane if you are looking for more local activities. Alternatively, 'google' your local suburb for information and events.

The following websites provide information about the venue and exhibits and some additionally provide teacher resources. Just follow the links from either 'learning' or 'education'.

Art Gallery of Qld

www.qag.qld.gov.au

Museum of Brisbane at City Hall

www.museumofbrisbane.com.au

Queensland Museum and Science Centre

www.southbank.qld.gov.au

Maritime Museum at Southbank

www.maritimemuseum.com.au

State Library of Queensland

www.slq.qld.gov.au

Port of Brisbane

www.portbris.com.au

Botanic Gardens

www.brisbane.qld.gov.au

