

Hospitality and Tourism

Guiding

by Keith Harding

Level: Intermediate (to Upper Intermediate)

Target age: 16+

Time needed: 90 minutes

Grammar / language objective: Describing tourist attractions, giving a commentary. (Various structures – past simple passive, present perfect continuous - and adjective/noun collocations).

Materials: Prepare and bring in some pictures of world-famous buildings (e.g. Eiffel Tower, Taj Mahal, Big Ben), paintings/sculptures (e.g. Mona Lisa, David) and famous natural features (e.g. Alps, Grand Canyon).
Worksheet 1: What makes a good guide?
Worksheet 2: Guiding language.

Pre-warm-up

- Before you start the lesson, write the following technical terms on the board:

pax, pano, TVP.

- Ask the students if they know what they mean, but don't reveal the answers. They are all terms used in guiding and will be revealed during the course of the lesson.

1 Warm-up

- Ask the students if they have ever been on a guided tour.
 - Where was it? What did they see? Was it on a coach, at a famous sight (e.g. museum or monument) or a walk or something else?
 - Did they enjoy it? What did they like / not like about it?
 - Was the guide good / bad? What made the guide good or bad?
- Build up a list on board, entitled: 'What makes a good guide?'

2 Tips for best practice

- Give out Worksheet 1 and get students to look at

the 'agree/disagree' statements in pairs. Make sure they don't refer to the text below.

- Discuss one or two of the answers in open class and then get the students to read the 'Guiding: tips for best practice' text to check their answers.
- Report back on the answers. Some of them are partially true – e.g. 1 (not on a coach), 2 (not too many jokes), and 6 (tell the tourists ten minutes, but actually wait a few minutes longer). The others have clear answers (according to the text – although students may choose to disagree):

Answers: 3 F, 4T, 5T, 7T, 8T.

- Refer students back to the technical terms (pax, pano, TVP) and ask them to explain them.
- For a further exercise you can get them to find phrasal verbs in the text. Write up the following verbs on the board and ask them to find the phrasal verb:

<i>start (a journey)</i>	<i>[set off]</i>
<i>dominate</i>	<i>[take over]</i>
<i>fasten</i>	<i>[do up]</i>
<i>take care of</i>	<i>[look after]</i>
<i>invent</i>	<i>[make up]</i>

3 Language of describing tourist attractions

- Give out Worksheet 2 and get students in pairs to match the two halves of the sentences.
- Focus on some of the language forms used in the sentences. In particular:
 - past simple passive (as in: It was designed by the architect Christopher Wren.)
 - is said to (as in: The castle is said to be haunted.)
 - one of the most (as in: It is one of the most famous works of art...)
 - present perfect continuous (as in: The stones have been standing here for over 2000 years.)
- Get students to produce two similar sentences for each of the forms.

Hospitality and Tourism

Guiding

by Keith Harding

4 Vocabulary brainstorm

- Write five headings on the board:

Natural features	[mountains, countryside]
Buildings/monuments	[cathedral, castle]
Parts of buildings	[tower, dome]
Works of art	[painting, carved stones]
Adjectives	[famous, superb, magnificent, rare, snow-capped, haunted, ancient, dramatic]

- In open class get students to find words from the sentence halves for each column (as indicated above).

1. Divide the class into teams. Give them five minutes to write down as many other items as they can in each column. The adjectives should be positive adjectives used in describing things that might be seen on a guided tour.

Note: The aim of this stage is to tap the students' passive and pre-existing vocabulary knowledge, but you may need to be ready to supply words yourself and teach others that you think could be useful – especially with weaker classes.

2. Feedback with the whole class. Put the words on the board, remembering to add stress markers to the words you write in the columns and to check pronunciation. Announce the winning team.

3. Now focus on the adjectives they have come up with. They will probably have more words in this column than the others. In open class get students to pair up one or two adjectives with one of the nouns, e.g. magnificent cathedral, fascinating painting.

4. Divide the class into two teams, ideally sitting facing each other. Team A chooses an adjective from the board and team B responds with a noun that collocates (e.g. famous architect). Team B then chooses another adjective and team A responds. Each word can only be used once (so cross them off the board as they are used up). As the game progresses it will become more difficult. Students can think of new words if they want.

- Make sure you confirm whether each collocation is correct and award a point accordingly (and perhaps bonus points for good pronunciation).

5 Describing tourist sights

- Introduce the pictures of world-famous buildings and paintings/sculptures which you have previously prepared (alternatively you can ask students the day before to collect some and bring them in – e.g. from the internet or from travel brochures). If you don't have any pictures, you can write the names down on pieces of paper.

- Students work in groups. In turn they choose one of the pictures and, without showing it to the rest of the group, describe it as if they were giving a guided commentary, e.g. We are now passing one of the most famous buildings in ... 'Guides' must speak for at least one minute. 'Passengers' have to guess the tourist sight and write it down when they think they know. Guides shouldn't make the description too easy at the beginning.

6 Planning guided tours

- If there is time, this activity can be done (or at least started) in class. Alternatively, it can be set as homework or as a course assignment.

- Divide into three groups, A, B and C.
 - A: Plan a walking tour of the local area (either where you are studying or of the student's home town/city).
 - B: Plan a site visit in the local area (gallery, museum, famous building).
 - C: Plan a panoramic coach tour.

- Make notes on what you would say at each point. Don't forget to identify your TVPs, and also remember practical information (and the other points made in 'Guiding: tips for best practice').

- If possible, give your tour and commentary to the rest of the class, either in reality (going out of the class) or virtually (in the class – where you will have to use your commentary and language to bring the attractions alive).

Hospitality and Tourism

Guiding

by Keith Harding

Famous monuments

What makes a good guide?

A. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

1. A guide should always smile and look at his/her passengers. Even on a coach the guide should face the passengers.
2. A guide should be entertaining and tell as many jokes as possible.
3. On a walking tour, it should be the guide's responsibility to ensure the people on the tour cross the road safely.
4. A walking tour or a gallery tour should never last more than two hours – people get bored.
5. On a coach panoramic tour, the guide shouldn't talk about places that can't be seen.
6. A guide shouldn't wait more than ten minutes if someone is late.
7. As well as giving factual information a guide should give practical information, such as how long the tour will last, when there will be a break for coffee and toilets, and so on.
8. A guide does not need to talk all the time.

B. Which of the highlighted words in A can these words replace?

Guiding: tips for best practice

When asked what they want from a guide, most tourists will say they want someone who is friendly and knows what they're talking about. Tourists want information, but they don't really want to be lectured at. After all, they're probably on holiday and they've come to have a good time. So this means you don't need to talk all the time or tell them everything that you know about a building or a monument. Silence can be valuable.

The most important thing is to smile and make eye contact. Introduce yourself by your first name. If you're on a coach panoramic tour (or 'pano'), introduce your driver too, but don't let him or her take over: it's your commentary!

Give your passengers (or 'pax') an introductory talk before you set off on the coach. This is important because you won't be able to face them as you guide – guides have to wear seat belts and it's difficult to turn round and talk. Remind your passengers to do up their seat belts as well, and give them practical information about the length of the tour and when the comfort breaks will be. Most importantly, tell them very clearly the time when they have to be back on the coach or at the meeting point. Guides do not usually wait more than

ten minutes for late-comers. Tell them this (but maybe wait just a few minutes more).

Safety is important on a walking tour too. Look after the group, but remember they have to be responsible for their own safety when, for example, they are crossing the road.

Tourists like a guide to be entertaining, and humour will make your tour more memorable. But you don't have to tell jokes all the time. You can tell little stories, but they should always be true. Don't make up stories just to get a laugh.

Of course, the last thing you want is to have tourists who are bored. So, keep your voice interesting and lively, make your information relevant and keep tours short – two hours is easily long enough for a tour of an art gallery or a museum or a walking tour. On a coach pano, make sure you point out the really important things – the TVPs (Top Visual Priorities) – and don't talk about places that the pax can't see.

Ultimately, the key question for a guide is: Would I enjoy my own commentary? If you can answer 'yes' to this, then you're probably already using 'best practice'.

Hospitality and Tourism

Guiding

by Keith Harding

Coach commentary role-play

Guiding language

Match the halves of the sentences



It was designed ...	... one of the most famous works of art in the world.
The painting in front of you is ...	... cathedral with its superb Gothic tower.
The castle is said ...	... 100 metres high.
We are now passing the magnificent ...	... home to many species of rare birds.
On your left in the distance you can see ...	... by the architect Christopher Wren.
The dome is over ...	... the snow-capped mountains.
These ancient carved stones have been standing here for over ...	... to be haunted.
The modern 42-story building on your right is ...	... agriculture and farming.
The dramatic coastline is ...	... made of steel and glass.
The countryside around here is famous for ...	... 2,000 years.

Decide if they refer to:

- a. a building or monument.
- b. a picture or object.
- c. natural features.