



**Washington Square Park Conservancy
Greeter-Guide Program
"Create" Your Tour**

What's your theme? How will you circle back to your theme at your various "stations."

Write your theme here: _____.

Tour Elements

Introduction: (pick a location to start – how does it relate to all your tour stations?)

1. Greet your group. Be personable, friendly.
 - Introduce yourself
 - Introduce the Washington Square Park Conservancy – please make sure they know who we are and what we do, and that the tour program is made possible through the Conservancy
 - Loosen everyone up with an icebreaker
 - Raise your hand if you are from out of town
 - Who has never visited the park before
 - Create your own!
 - Lay the ground rules: this tour will be about an hour, with each stop, please remember to gather round and not block park pedestrians. Ask questions!!!

2. Describe what they will learn on your tour. What do you plan to them for them to learn during the course of the tour. How do these relate to your theme? Please list three learning goals/topics to cover below.
 - Tour learning goal 1

 - Tour learning goal 2

 - Tour learning goal 3

3. Introduce the story/theme. This is not everything at once. Remember, you will have the opportunity to revisit this with every tour station to build on your story.
4. Mix and match the following stations. A few are required. The others are up to you.
 - The Arch (required)
 - The Fountain (required)
 - Garibaldi Plaza (required)
 - Chess Plaza
 - Holley Plaza
 - The Park House
 - Elm Tree
 - The mounds
 - Small playground
 - Large playground
 - Pétanque court
 - Large Dog Run
 - Small Dog Run
 - East Parterre
 - West Parterres
 - Cherry Grove
 - A Perennial Bed
 - Consider pointing out some surrounding park buildings
5. **Make connections and transitions.** Your narrative makes sense and flows between the stations. You link different concepts.
6. **Bring your narrative to a completion.** Circle back around to your theme. Treat them for staying to the end by saving one cool piece of info for the end.
7. **Thank and invite to stay engaged.** Thank them for their attention. Give away a goodie (WSPC will provide small giveaways for tour goers.) Invite to sign up for the Conservancy e-newsletter, connect on social media, volunteer, make a donation.
8. **You may not take tips!** As much as we appreciate all the work you are doing for us as volunteers, you are here to promote the organization. Encourage tippers to make a donation. (They can even do it by credit card!)



Preparing Your Tour

- 1. Map out your tour stops.** Prepare cards for each tour station. Write down the pertinent information you want to cover at each stop. Consider writing down dates or other information you are likely to forget. Don't write in complete sentences – this is a guide for you – don't read unless it is a quote. Be sure to think about where you'll start and where you will end and the best route to take around.
- 2. Now, take that tour for a spin.** Start in the comfort of your home. Practice how the words sound out loud. Use a timer to see how long that each station takes. Reflect on what is easy for you to remember and what isn't.
- 3. Take it into the park.** Time it. See how long it takes to get from one area to the next. Walk slowly – navigating with groups takes more time than when you are alone. Add that to the total time.
- 4. Redraft as necessary.** Consider how logical the route is, if there seems to be obstacles, if you might want to move around your stations and/or content.
- 5. Tour your first group of friends.** Consider a group of 1-2. Distribute the evaluation sheets for feedback.
- 6. Redraft as necessary.**
- 7. Tour a second group of friends.** This time, bring a larger group, suggested 2-5. Distribute the evaluation sheets for feedback.
- 8. Redraft as necessary.**
- 9. Tour a third group of friends.** This time, bring a larger group. Distribute the evaluation sheets for feedback.
- 10. Redraft as necessary.**
- 11. Complete your final test tour.** Schedule with Sheryl or Sarah and as many other people as you would like. We'll complete the evaluation sheet as your final "certification."



Tips for conducting the best tour ever.

1. **Mix it up!** You don't have to do everything in an exact order. Think of a cold open for a tv talk show with teasers, or a movie that starts you in a different time period than the main time period of the narrative.
2. **Make Yourself Seen!** Do be sure to position yourself in a way that allows your group to see what you are talking about. Talking about the Arch? Stand with your back to it facing the group!
3. **Be visual.** If you want to point out Judson Church while standing at the Arch, tell them to turn around and look. Give them visual clues.
4. **Be vocal.** Check in about whether they can hear you (remind them to come close as you move stations). Change your voice level/tone. Asking a question? Tilt your voice up at the end. Stage whisper if you are talking about something controversial. Talk louder if you are saying something exclamatory.
5. **Integrate your factoids!** Work to weave in some of the more dry factoids about the park as part of your narrative.
6. **Don't Compete.** If a loud truck is going by or there is a loud performer, you may need to change up your position. Or, wait for the noise to pass and start up.
7. **Engage.** Ask questions, even if they are rhetorical. If possible, connect to information they told you at the beginning.
8. **Embrace teachable moments.** If someone brings up a legend, such as the hanging elm, spend some time talking why this idea persists, why we are pretty certain it isn't likely, and delve into the extended stories of these types of myths, stories, legends, or controversies.



**Washington Square Park Conservancy
Tour Evaluation Form**

Docent Name: _____

Witness Name: _____

Instructions

Please rate your docent based on the following scale: 5 excellent, 4 very good, 3 good, 2 fair, 1 poor. There is space provided at the end for additional comments. Your docent will see this form and use it to make improvements on their performance. Please be constructive.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Tour planning and Organization
Introduction is clear, succinct, and descriptive
Themes and goals of the tour clearly stated
Effective, logical transitions between ideas
Connects information to themes and goals
Tour sums up, reinforces themes</p> | <p>5---4---3---2---1
Comments:</p> |
| <p>2. Time/Space Management
Completes the tour within about an hour (+/-10 minutes)
Chooses good vantage points for viewing
Positions tour away from heavy pedestrian traffic (to best of ability)</p> | <p>5---4---3---2---1
Comments:</p> |
| <p>3. Holding audience attention
Varies voice modulation
Uses hand gestures, varies facial expression
Makes eye contact</p> | <p>5---4---3---2---1
Comments:</p> |
| <p>4. Creativity
Varies voice modulation
Tells interesting stories, anecdotes
Uses effective comparisons, no jargon</p> | <p>5---4---3---2---1
Comments:</p> |
| <p>5. Presents Accurate Information
Names and general dates are accurate
Clearly explains historical concepts</p> | <p>5---4---3---2---1
Comments:</p> |
| <p>6. Voice Projection
Clearly articulates
Can be heard over street noise
Faces audience when speaking, doesn't talk to the ether</p> | <p>5---4---3---2---1
Comments:</p> |

- 7. Exhibits Pleasant Demeanor
 - Appears comfortable and confident
 - Represents WSPC in a professional manner
 - Embraces questions and finesses not having an answer

5----4----3----2----1

Comments:

- 8. Willingness to learn
 - Open to receiving feedback from tour participants

5----4----3----2----1

Comments:

Additional Comments: