The ‘ABC’ Approach for Successful Geotourism Interpretation

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Theme 4 - Education, Interpretation & Communication
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Geotourism Interpretation - the ‘ABC’ approach

ABC – abiotic, biotic, culture
Big Picture – big to small
Content – FPT, B&C, connection
Display – the rule of thirds

Geotourism is more Tourism then Geology
['Geo' = 3 letters, 'Tourism' = 7 letters]

1. Starts with the Abiotic (geological environment) in order to explain a place’s Biological and Cultural elements
2. It is driven by tourism’s sustainability focus meaning it has environmental, social and economic goals
3. It can be a major driver of regional economic development

A = The ‘ABC’ of Geotourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Environment ‘ABC’ elements</th>
<th>Tourism Type</th>
<th>Geotourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abiotic</td>
<td>Climate Landforms</td>
<td>Earth Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biotic</td>
<td>Animals (Fauna) Plants (Flora)</td>
<td>Ecotourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>People Past &amp; Present</td>
<td>Cultural Tourism</td>
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Comprises all three ‘ABC’ elements of the environment and all three tourism types - Earth, Eco & Cultural

Galapagos
Abiotic
Biotic
Cultural
B = The Big Picture

Interpretation begins with the ‘big picture’ [Landscape] and moves to smaller aspects [e.g. landforms & rocks etc]

Big

Small

Begins here

Moves down through the various levels

C = Content

Interpretation separates geotourism from geology. The key content of geotourism’s interpretation includes:

1. The ABC - how the Abiotic features have shaped the Biotic and Cultural elements
2. Geology’s - Form, Process & Time
3. Connection – stories which connect the reader to the landscape

1. Linking the ‘ABC’

1. Geotourism’s interpretation starts with the Abiotic features (climate and landforms) and then describes how they have shaped the Biotic and Cultural elements

2. Geological information provides the base for understanding the landscape and how animals, plants and people live there

3. A comes first, B second, and C third
2. Geology’s Form, Process & Time

Interpretation separates geotourism from geology. The key elements of geotourism’s interpretation include form, process & time

1. **Form** – an understanding of the landforms and other geological features

2. **Process** – a description of the ways in which the geological features were formed

3. **Time** – a description of the geological era and length of time the features were formed – always related to human time

The Geological Context

**LANDSCAPE**

**LANDFORMS**

**ROCK OUTCROPS**

**ROCK TYPES**

**SEDIMENTS**

**SOILS**

**CRYSTALS**

**Form**

**Process**

**Time**

Wave Rock
Western Australia

**Form**

**Geology’s Features**

**Process**

**Tourism’s Features**

**Time**

Eyjafjallajökull

Eyjafjallajökull Erupts Visitor Centre

Form, Process & Time – Eyjafjallajökull, Iceland

**Form, Process & Time**

**– Eyjafjallajökull, Iceland**
Excellent geotourism interpretation includes aspects of the head, heart and hand. That is:

1. **Head** – learning about the geology of an area through its form, process and time

2. **Heart** – connecting the visitor to the landscape in a way that captures their heart

3. **Hand** – stimulates the visitor to want to do something for the environment through their new-found understanding and connection to the geological environment
Connection begins in the carpark

Australia’s Aboriginals call this ‘Connecting to Country’

Display - The Rule of Thirds
1. One third text – written in simple language
2. One third illustrations – maps, diagrams, photos
3. One third space – keep it simple

Display – Jeju Island, South Korea

World Map
Rock Pillars, Jeju Island Global Geopark, Korea

Grand Teton Range - Idaho, USA

Excellent Interpretation

Case Study: Teton Geotourism Center
Welcome Sign

Welcome to the Teton Geotourism Center

Reception

Regional Resources

The ‘A’ – Geology & Landscape

Geology
The ‘B’ – Wildlife

Wildlife

In Winter, the Animals Are...

The ‘C’ – Culture (past)

Wildlife

In Summer, the Animals Are...

Culture - present

Tourism
Successful Geotourism Interpretation
Context, FPT, and The Rule of Thirds

1. Presentation of the Geological Context from the ‘Big Picture’ of the Landscape, down to the Landforms and Rocks etc

2. It includes information about the landscape’s - form, processes and time

3. Interpretive Information is presented as one third each of – text, illustrations, and space

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Geotourism

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THE END

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