Park Visitors' Interests

iSWOOP

iSWOOP Instrument Development and Piloting
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Understanding and responding to visitor interests is a critical part of ensuring that national parks remain a relevant and trusted educational resource. As part of the National Science Foundation-funded iSWOOP project, TERC and the Institute for Learning Innovation partnered to develop and pilot two interview instruments for eliciting the interests visitors bring with them to national park experiences. Many visitors' interests have the potential to influence their interactions with park interpreters. This report describes the piloting process and the interview tools. Revisions to the tools shared below are based on 47 interviews with families at five parks and natural areas across the country (Table 1). The process suggested that both tools (a card sort activity and voting activity with stickers (Figure 1), both presenting a mix of icons and illustrations with labels in English) are promising for engaging multi-generational groups. Both elicited useful information about visitor interests, which can provide input for interpreters who develop and lead programs. Data collectors reported that the voting activity with stickers was particularly successful at both engaging families and eliciting information about family interests in a relatively short amount of time.
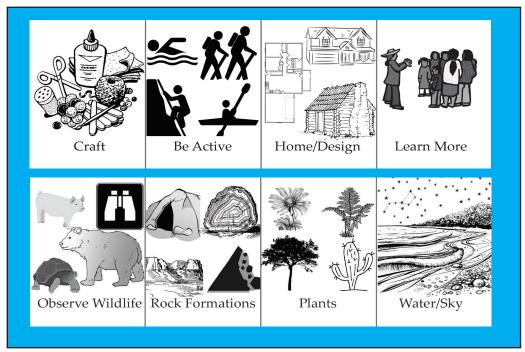

Figure 1: The images above are part of the poster to which visitors added stickers reflecting their interests.

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Introduction

Adults and children who visit a national park or engage with a park interpreter bring with them their own priorities and motivations. For example, visitors are interested in seeing new things, spending time with their families, learning more about the natural world, having a unique experience, getting exercise, and more. They may also have more specific topics of interest, like rocks, prairie dogs, climate change impacts, photography, history of ranching, or wildflowers. These interests, in turn, play a role in shaping what visitors do, how they engage, and what they take away from the experience. Research on education and learning, in and outside of school, has demonstrated that interest is a central component of learning, motivating individuals to attend to experiences in the moment and to continue to seek out new learning experiences as their interests grow. Interpreters strive to make their programs engaging and relevant—*What if they had a better way of supporting and extending the interests that visitors bring with them to the park?*

Gathering information from park visitors about their interests is not always straightforward. Individuals and groups come to parks to have a fun, satisfying, and inspirational experience, not to participate in research or evaluation. Some visitors are on the move and have little time to share their perspectives about their own interests. Since visitors often come in social groups, stopping for 10 to 15 minutes for an individual interview or survey may be perceived as conflicting with the goal of spending quality time with family and friends. Furthermore, the concept of interest can be abstract and academic. Visitors may have trouble talking about their interests. Put on the spot, they may struggle to summon a list, or they may have trouble explaining how their interests connect with parks and natural areas. The opposite can also be a problem: an enthusiastic hobbyist sensing an interested listener might give too much detail, making it hard for the interpreter to break away.

Given these challenges, park-based informal and environmental educators and researchers could use multiple, research-based strategies for gathering information on visitor interests that support positive experiences for visitors and provide useful information for anyone designing and delivering programming. For park interpreters dedicated to making and solidifying emotional and intellectual connections to natural resources, the team wanted to pilot and refine an efficient way to elicit and be responsive to visitor interests that fits within the constraints of the setting and feels appropriate to the social interactions visitors expect to have in parks with each other and with interpreters.

Table 1. Overview of data collection by site and instrument

Site	Poster Vote	Card Sort
Drumlin Farm	5	5
Elephant Butte Lake Park	1	6
Acadia	7	6
Sandy Creek Nature Center	5	3
Indiana Dunes	5	4
Total	**23**	**24**

Project Goals

During the summer of 2018, TERC and the Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI) partnered to develop and pilot two interview instruments. The goal of the instruments was to help answer the question: "What prior interests, and in particular those related to science, nature, and place, do visitors bring with them?"

Additionally, the team identified the following priorities for the development and piloting process:

- Data from the instruments should potentially help national park interpreters and program staff make stronger connections between their content delivery and visitors' prior interests during conversations or programs.
- The pilot instruments should be suitable for adults (18 years or older) visiting as part of multi-generation groups (i.e., individuals both older and younger than 18 years). The instruments should also be flexible for use with other visitor groups (e.g., adult-only groups).
- The pilot instruments and protocol should be engaging and interactive in order to support an overall positive experience of visitors, including their goals related to engaging with each other.

This work was conducted as part of the National Science Foundation-funded iSWOOP project (iswoopparks.com). iSWOOP seeks to make park-based research an interactive part of the visitor experience. Interpreters (the rangers dedicated to education and interpretation) make connections between visitors and parks using stories about researchers as well as by showing visualizations, which are a catalyst for observation, prediction and speculation about wildlife, iconic plants, geological features, and other significant resources parks protect.

Figure 2: Sample cards. Cards marked D, E, and F represent the set of park-related interests. Cards marked Transit and Travel are from the set on personal interests

Methods

A collaborative team of ILI and TERC team members, along with two independent contractors, drafted two pilot interview instruments based on the goals above. The first instrument ("poster vote") invited individuals and families to place three stickers on a poster of images to represent the topics and activities that motivated them to visit the park that day. Similarly, the second instrument ("card sort") invited families to pick from a series of images on cards (Figure 2). These

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activities were then used to catalyze a discussion about visitor interests, both specific to the park and in general. (Final versions of the instruments are attached.)

The project team piloted the two instruments at five different parks across the country: a farm, a nature center, a state park, and two national parks. The data collectors used a systematic sampling approach and prioritized recruiting multigenerational, English-speaking families to the extent possible (see interview protocol attached). Table 1 (above) lists the number of completed interviews collected at each site for each instrument version. In total, there were 47 completed interviews across the five sites. Data collectors used the two activities with equal frequency and followed up asking visitors to comment more on their interests. Versions of questions such as the ones below were catalysts for further discussion:

- What interests you about this park? What motivated you to visit this particular park?
- Why is this a good place to explore your interests? What are ways the park could better support your interests?

After data collection was complete, all data collectors were asked to share their reflections on the usability of the two versions, the experience for families, and the depth and quality of data collected with each. The ILI and TERC teams then reviewed all of the interview notes and reflections and used these to identify lessons learned, update the interview protocols, and determine next steps for the research process.

Summary of Findings

This section includes sample data, reflections on the process, feedback, and lessons learned.

Sample of Data Collected
Data collectors heard visitors' motivation for and commitment to outdoor recreation (Figure 3). Simultaneously, visitors expressed interests in immersive activities (Figure 4). This was true for national park visitors on an extended vacation and visitors to their local farm or nature center.

While many visitor comments will be no surprise to staff, they can affirm programmatic choices and be instructive in terms of framing content about park-based science. For example, connecting stories of park-based science to hiking could increase some visitors' interest in them. Rather than leading with plant survival or climate change, interpreters could open with the story of a study that demanded

Examples of visitors' interests included hiking and exercise, which were closely connected to seeing wildlife and exploring. Visitors said:
   Hiking without worrying about venomous snakes and alligators.
   I like the wilderness hiking a lot.
   Hiking is good. Seeing wildlife.
   [I like to] Exercise. Explore.
   … Interested in getting exercise.
   Came to be active
   Wanted a place to run. Look for animals.

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Figure 3: Examples of interests from visitors and a popular card

strenuous hiking. An interpreter could develop a program with the theme: Hike in the footsteps of a scientist.

Reflections on poster vote instrument

This instrument was successful at both engaging family groups and eliciting in-depth information about visitor interests. The data collectors reported that the length of the interview felt reasonable and that the combination of one interactive section (choosing where to place the stickers) followed by several interview questions made for a simple, straightforward interview process. Participants seemed to enjoy discussing the different options and placing the stickers. A staff member at one of the participating parks had used a similar sticker activity with visitors before, suggesting the format might be useful for both researchers and park staff.

Data collectors did offer several possible improvements to the instrument, materials, and protocol, including: narrowing the number of choices (some groups took a while to make their selections); experimenting with the relative placement of words and pictures (to make sure all visitors notice the words); eliminating questions about sticker selections by other groups (since these did not elicit much discussion); and finding ways to better explore connections with science specifically (as relevant to the iSWOOP project). Although the group reflected on the trade-offs of arranging the poster sections in different ways, it seemed that having some flexibility would allow the interview to be adapted to different settings (e.g., interviews with or without a table on which to put materials). Data collectors also noted that various extensions of the protocol are possible, such as using colored stickers to signify different types of visitor choices.

Data collectors noted visitors' responses to the question of how the park could support their interests.
Examples included:

- Service learning or something educational.
- Short-term data collection, a science volunteer opportunity
- Demo Abenaki-style cooking
- More art to take home.
- Craft activities.
- Want to observe animals.
- Excited about scavenger hunt.
- More arts and crafts.
- Do a farm-to-table program.
- Cooking classes for kids.

Figure 4: Examples of visitors' ideas for how the park could support their interests

Reflections on card sort instrument

The card sort activity was not as popular with data collectors as the poster vote instrument. In particular, they noted that the cards were hard to manage (especially with bad weather or in windy or rainy outdoor settings) and the interview felt overly long for visitors, since it included two different interactive segments (sorting the personal interest cards and then the park-related cards). This meant that data collectors had less time and flexibility to probe visitor answers.

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However, the cards did inspire considerable discussion among visitors, and adults seemed skilled at translating or interpreting the meaning of the illustrations for children.

Data collectors noted a number of possible improvements, including: paring down the number of cards; finding different ways of managing the cards and dealing with rain and wind; adding an "annotation sheet" for data collectors in case visitors have questions about the meanings of the different images; starting with the park-specific cards (which seemed more immediately relevant); and considering ways of asking visitors to do only one card sort (to decrease the length of the interview and avoid making the process feel redundant for participants).

General reflections and recommendations
Overall, although both protocols seemed to be enjoyable for participants, data collectors recommended moving forward with the poster vote activity. The card sort protocol might have provided more information because it was longer, the poster protocol was easier to use and seemed to elicit quality information about visitor interests in a shorter amount of time.

Beyond the two protocols, the data collectors noted several aspects of the process that were helpful, including the general interview guide (attached) and having measuring tapes on hand as a useful distraction for very young children during the conversations. Data collectors also made suggestions that were applicable to both protocols: providing additional guidance in the interview guide about preparing for the interviews, setting up the materials, and working with park staff; being realistic about the length of the interview (closer to 10 or 15 minutes); narrowing the number of choices for visitors based on what was selected most frequently and which options sparked conversations; considering how the interviews are relevant for first-time visitors versus frequent visitors; and exploring options for capturing more data about visitor demographics and relationships within groups.

Upon reflection, the data collectors agreed that the conversations among visitors during the poster vote and card sort selection process were rich and that there should be some way of capturing the data, especially for evaluators and researchers studying visitor interests. Video or audio recordings which capture visitors' verbatim comments could be helpful when analyzing responses. Also, the group debated the tradeoffs of focusing on a single adult family member versus including the whole group in the interview process (Figure 5, next page, shows a group in conversation). In the end, data collectors felt that it worked well to invite the whole group to do the activity rather than being prescriptive about designating one primary participant. Thus the instrument and protocol assume the entire family or group of friends is the unit of analysis.

Data collectors sometimes found that visitors were unaware of park-sponsored programs related to their interests. Thus the interviews can be helpful in determining where promotion or advertising efforts are needed to connect interested audiences with existing offerings. Finally, the group discussed how contextual factors like the time of year or location will influence the pool of visitors, their interests, and motivation for visiting. For example, an interviewer setting up near a trailhead or a historic house during foliage season or wildflower season will likely capture responses that reflect the place and season. The data-collection setup can also influence the length and nature of the interviews. A table positioned between the data collector and visitor might result in a longer interview as the visitor has a defined space for considering the poster (or cards).

Conclusions and Next Steps

The piloting process highlighted the promise of investigating the interests of park visitors through an interactive, family-friendly interview protocol. Of the two versions piloted, both provided rich data on visitor interests and connections to the park. The team chose to move forward with the poster vote activity because the interview was shorter, the materials and structure were logistically easier for data collectors and participants, the interest data collected from visitors was rich, and the format could serve as a tool for both researchers and park staff.

Several questions were identified by the team for future research:

Figure 5: A group on a ranger-led hike discusses park-based research

- What analysis approaches are best suited to the data collected with this tool, in keeping with the different data collection goals of interpreters, evaluators, and researchers?
- How can the interview be adapted for use by park staff in different settings? How might individual interpreters or subsets of staff use the instrument and apply findings?
- What role can the interview itself play in prompting interactions to advance educational or stewardship goals, including opening conversations about park-based research?
- How can the tool best be adapted for visitors from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, especially considering how the concept of "interest" might not always translate easily?

To address this last point, the team is continuing the development process by developing a bilingual (Spanish/English) version, ensuring that the interview is culturally appropriate, inclusive, and relevant for Spanish-speaking families.

Meanwhile, practitioners could experiment with using the interview tool to inform their work:
- Interpreters could use this type of tool in place of or in addition more typical introductory questions, such as, "Where are you all from?"
- Interpreters could integrate the questions at the beginning of the program and then use visitor responses to tailor their presentations.
- Parks or park divisions could collect data with the tool to inform annual interpretive planning.
- Parks interested in increasing local community engagement could use the tool to open conversations with local residents about how the park could be more relevant and more responsive to different communities

iSWOOP staff invite interpreters and supervisors to adapt the tool to their own goals and welcome partnerships with interpreters who want to experiment with the instrument.

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As park rangers across the country (re)commit to audience-centered experiences, having access to strategies and tools for eliciting long-term interests is practical. Meeting visitors' interests reinforces and potentially increases the value visitors find in parks, which is vital to the successful preservation and management of land set aside for preservation, protection, and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Attached Additional Resources

Excerpts from the article "Interest and Motivation Are Linked to Science Learning"

References on Interest and Science Learning

iSWOOP Pilot Interest Interview Guide

Interview and Materials for Card Sort

Interview and Materials for Poster Vote

Acknowledgments

Interest and Motivation Are Linked to Science Learning

Excerpts from the article "Interest and Motivation Are Linked to Science Learning" appear below. The full article was written collaboratively with contributions from Grace Troxel and CAISE Admin and is available online at http://www.informalscience.org/news-views/interest-and-motivation-are-linked-science-learning-and-future-career-choices

Overview

Fostering interest has long been an objective in the design of informal science education (ISE) (Bell et al., 2009). Rather than merely positive emotions or momentary attraction, interest includes stored knowledge, stored value, and feelings that influence both immediate and long-term engagement, questioning behavior, and activity of individuals or groups of individuals around a specific topic. Individual interest includes curiosity, surprise, and attraction, all of which are seen as precursors of focused action or behavior (Silvia, 2006). Fundamental to the field of ISE is the expectation that programs will shift participants' interest in the given content, among a variety of other outcomes (awareness, knowledge or understanding; engagement or interest; attitude; behavior; skills; or other project-specific outcomes) (Friedman, 2008; Kinds of learning).

With motivation, participants begin to ask curiosity questions and seek answers as they engage with content (Renninger, 2007, p. 2). Within a "learning ecology" composed of learning opportunities in the home, community, peers, work, school, books, and virtual resources (Barron, 2006), people become active in structuring and extending their own learning, using their discretionary time to engage in their interest. This is seen across all sectors of informal learning, as individuals engage in activities that are personally fulfilling. Particular areas of directed learning include text-based informational sources, the creation of new informal activity contexts, exploration of media, the pursuit of formal or structured learning opportunities, and the development of knowledge networks such as mentoring relationships (Barron, 2006).

Findings from Research and Evaluation

Early interest is linked to science learning & career choices. Childhood interest in science has been identified as a potential indicator for later career choices. Particularly, middle school has been identified as the time when the majority of youth begin to make decisions about curricular choices for continued study in high school and beyond (Akos, Lambie, Milsom, & Gilbert, 2007; Adams, Gupta, & Cutomaccio, 2014; Tai, Liu, Maltese, & Fan, 2006). In a nationally representative study, Tai and colleagues found that U.S. middle school students who expressed an interest in science careers in the 8th grade were three times more likely to earn baccalaureate degrees in the sciences than those who did not indicate interest (Tai et al., 2006). For 65% of scientists with advanced degrees who were interviewed in 2010 (Maltese & Tai, 2010), their interest in science had started before middle school. ...

ISE opportunities can develop interest and sustain motivation. Interest is often recorded as either "present" or "not present" in relation to a domain in research studies, but because interest evolves through the interaction of a person with the environment, interest can change (Renninger, 2007, p.4). Interest is topic dependent, so exposure over time to a broad variety of contents and delivery formats (such as those common across ISE) increases the odds of sparking a situational interest (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 163), which may then bloom into the desire to pursue additional experiences. Those with little or no interest in a topic may need support and structure to help them begin generating their own questions and to develop the knowledge and skills needed as they seek to answer them. Those with already well-developed interests need support that enables them to stretch their present understanding. Continued encouragement and support by parents, caregivers, peers, and educators can help mature an interest into deeper knowledge, scientific ways of thinking, and a source of personal identity (Barron et al., 2009; Bell et al., 2009) for children and adults alike.

... ISE settings have shown a variety of positive impacts on participants' interests in and motivations toward continued learning or engagement with STEM concepts and content (see other portions of the wiki). Though rigorous longitudinal studies have not been conducted that link STEM careers with ISE experiences, numerous scientists have credited early experiences specifically with museums as influential to their choice of a career in science. In a study by the Cosmos Corporation (1998) for NSF, visits to museums were cited by surveyed scientists as

their most memorable informal science experiences as youth. They also cited these experiences as the most influential source of ideas still used in the present. In 2014, the Pew Research Center found that 8% and 7% of responding scientists attributed "childhood experiences in natural parks, science museums, star gazing, chemistry set" and "books, movies, TV on science e.g., Cosmos series, biographies of scientists, and science fiction" as being critical childhood experiences that initiated their science paths (Funk, Rainie, & Page, 2015, p. 70). ...

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iSWOOP Pilot Interest Interview Guide

Equipment checklist

☐	Activity materials	☐	TERC business card / iSWOOP website
☐	Copies of interview guides (at least 10 each)	☐	Copy of refusal sheet
☐	Clipboard	☐	Copy of permit (if applicable)
☐	Pens	☐	Incentives (if approved, see below)
☐	Phone, hat, water, and other safety items	☐	Badge with your name
☐	Activities for young children (see below)	☐	

Recruitment Guidelines

- Find a location with a consistent flow of visitors. Choose a good location for the interviews and draw an imaginary line across the main path of visitor traffic at that spot. When ready, recruit the next eligible visitor group that crosses that line. Repeat after you are ready for the next interview. (This process helps avoid sampling bias.) If you need to roam, try to use a similar system for selecting the next visitor group in your path.
- Groups are eligible to participate if they include at least one adult 18 years of age or older and one child or youth under 18 (based on your estimates). If data collection is very slow, you can recruit adult-only groups. Do not approach visitors under 18 years without an adult present (because of IRB guidelines).
- For this round of piloting, we will focus on visitor groups that can provide feedback in English. Please use your judgment about recruitment in order to avoid making visitors feel excluded.
- Use the recruitment script for the appropriate interview protocol to approach one of the adults in the group. If the group agrees to participate, check the indicated box and continue with the interview. If the group initially hesitates and it feels appropriate, try one refusal conversion (e.g., *I promise it will only take a few minutes and it should be fun for the whole group*). If the group still declines, note the time, group characteristics, and reason on the refusal sheet.
- Throughout data collection, rotate between the two interview protocols in order to gather data for both versions at the same site. We recommend four interviews with one protocol and then switching. If you switch locations within the same park, try to collect data with both protocols at each location.

Interview Tips and Guidelines

- TERC can provide incentives for participant groups if the park approves or you can purchase small incentives from the venue gift store ($2 to 5 per group). Avoid items with wrappers or other packaging that will result in litter at the site.
- Use the wording, activity instructions, and question order as provided in the pilot interview guides. Then, feel free to rephrase and probe for clarity and depth as needed. (Note when you had to rephrase or probe in the reflection section at the end of the guide.)
- Please write legibly and capture visitor responses as completely as possible. We will not be audio recording or typing the data.
- After each interview, note the ages of group members at the end of the interview guide, check your interview sheet for completeness, and add your reflections.

- For the reflection notes at the end of the interview guide, document any top-of-mind thoughts about what went well during that interview, what didn't go as well, times you had to rephrase or probe, what was happening during the interview that might have influenced the responses or process, and ideas you have for improving the current interview protocol.
- Bring something to do in case you experience a lull.
- Bring a drawing pad, markers, coloring pages, tape measures, or extra stickers for young kids who become restless during the conversation.

Safety Tips
- Make sure someone knows where you are.
- Bring water and a hat.
- Protect yourself with repellant or clothing from tick bites, insects. Beware of snakes and other hazards.

After Data Collection
- After your data collection is complete, scan all the interview guides and send them to Scott (scott.pattison@freechoicelearning.org) and Martha (martha_merson@terc.edu).
- Also, take a picture of the sticker poster at the end of each day and include this in the email.
- If you can't scan and email the materials, you can mail them to Martha. Be sure to make photo copies before you send the originals, just in case the documents are lost in the mail!
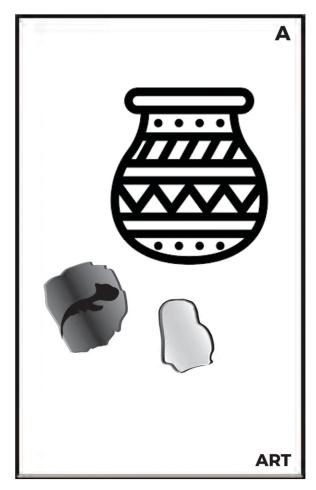 - Martha Merson, TERC, 2067 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140

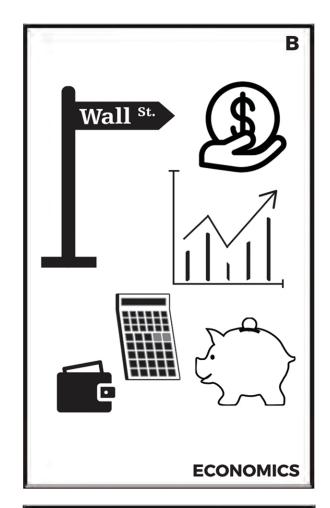# iSWOOP Pilot Interest Interview: *Interest Card Sort*

Date: _____	Time: _____	Park: _____	Initials: _____

Interview Instructions

- Follow the interview guide below, using the specified question wording and order as much as possible.
- Use provided probes if information not addressed by initial response. Probe for depth and clarity as needed. For example:
  - "Anything else?"
  - "Can you tell me more about what you mean by that?" "Can you give me some examples?"
- Capture visitor responses as verbatim as possible. Ask visitors to repeat answers or give you time to write as needed.
- Focus on gathering responses from one primary adult in the group but allow other group members to participate as appropriate.

Introduction

Hello. My name is _____ and I'm a researcher investigating why visitors come to parks like this and how the park experience connects to their interests. Do you have five to ten minutes to do a fun group activity and then answer a few questions? For each group that participates, I have a [incentive].

Thanks so much for being willing to help. Like I said, I'm gathering input on what visitors like you are interested in, why you decided to come to the park today, and how your interests connect with what the park has to offer. There are no right or wrong answers. You're free to skip any questions that you don't want to answer or end the activity at any time. All of your responses will be anonymous.

Are you willing to participate and share your thoughts?
- ☐ **Agreed to participate** (If declines, make note on interview refusal form.)

Activity #1

To start, we are going to do a quick activity about your interests. Everyone has different topics or activities they are interested in—things they enjoy doing and learning about and are motivated to keep coming back to. Here I have a stack of cards, each representing some things people are interested in. Please pick three cards that are most interesting to you and put them in order, with the most interesting on top. Then pick one to three cards that are least interesting to you. Feel free to work as a team, or you can do this yourself [indicating primary adult].

- Read the script above. Answer any questions that visitors have.
- Hand the **first stack of cards with black and white images** to the primary adult and give visitors a few minutes to sort. Note the order of the cards (starting from 1 at the top) and other general observations about how the visitors complete the task, what they say, and who is involved.

Observation notes

_____

_____

_____

Most interesting cards

1: _____   2: _____   3: _____

Least interesting cards

1: _____   2: _____   3: _____

Activity #1 Interview Questions

Great. Now let's talk a little bit about what you did.
1. **Tell me why these three were the most interesting to you?**
   a. **Probe if relevant: Were there differences across your group? If so, what cards would other group members have put on the top?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. **What about these cards that were the least interesting, why did you choose them?**
   a. **Probe if relevant: Were there differences across your group?**

_____

_____

_____

3. **Are there one or two other interests that you have that aren't represented by these cards?**

_____

_____

_____

Activity #2

Now we are going to do the same thing with a different set of cards. These cards represent some of the experiences and opportunities this park has to offer. Think about how well they represent what interests you about this particular park or motivated you to visit this particular place on this day. As before, please pick three cards that are most interesting to you and put them in order, with the most interesting on top. Then pick one to three cards that are least interesting to you. Feel free to work as a team or do this yourself [indicating primary adult].

- Read the script above. Answer any questions that visitors have.
- Hand the **second stack of cards with colored images** to the primary adult and give visitors a few minutes to sort. Note the order of the cards (starting from 1 at the top) and other general observations about how the visitors complete the task, what they say, and who is involved.

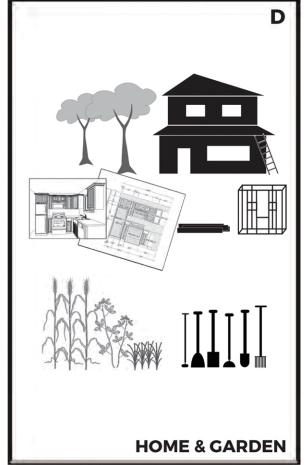| *Observation notes*	*Most interesting cards*
_____	1: _____ 2: _____ 3: _____
_____	*Least interesting cards*
_____	1: _____ 2: _____ 3: _____

Activity #2 Interview Questions

Great. Now let's talk a little bit about what you did.

4. **Tell me why these three were the most interesting to you?**
   a. *Probe if relevant: Were there differences across your group? If so, what cards would other group members have put on the top?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. **What about these cards that were the least interesting, why did you choose them?**
   a. *Probe if relevant: Were there differences across your group?*

_____

_____

_____

6. **Are there one or two other things that interest you about this particular park or reasons you visited today that aren't represented by these cards?**

_____

_____

_____

General Interview Questions

Finally, let's talk about connections between the two stacks of cards.

7. **What are some ways your interests outside the park connect with your visit today, if at all? In other words, what are some connections between what we talked about with the two different stacks of cards?**
   a. *Probe as needed: What about this card that you selected? And this card?*
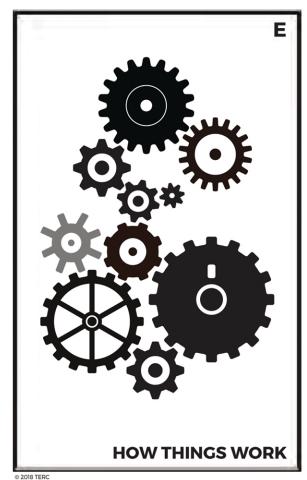   b. *Probe if relevant: What about others in the group?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. *Why is this a good place to explore your interests?*

_____

_____

_____

9. *Thinking about one or two of the cards you selected from the first stack, what are some ways the park might better support these interests, if at all?*

_____

_____

_____

10. *Have you found or do you hope to find any new interests during your visit today?*
    a. *Probe as needed: Has a past experience at this park sparked a new interest for you?*

_____

_____

_____

11. *(Optional question if time: What are some of the benefits and challenges of parks trying to better connect with visitor interests?)*

_____

_____

_____

Wrap-up

Thanks so much for your help. Have a great rest of your visit!
- Answer any final questions and provide visitors with their incentive.
- Note the group characteristics below and quickly document any top-of-mind reflection notes.
- Prepare for the next interview.

Number of group members by approximate age:

Whole group		*Involved in activity or interview*	
___ Adults (>18)	___ Youth (13–17)	___ Adults (>18)	___ Youth (13–17)
___ Children (2–12)	___ Infants (0–2)	___ Children (2–12)	___ Infants (0–2)

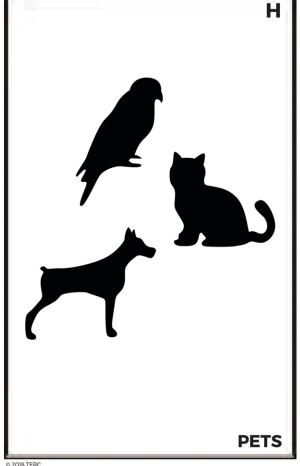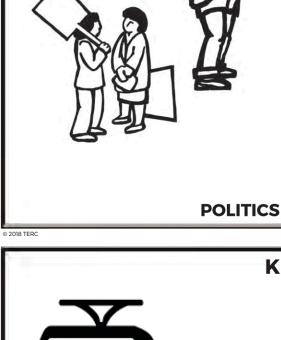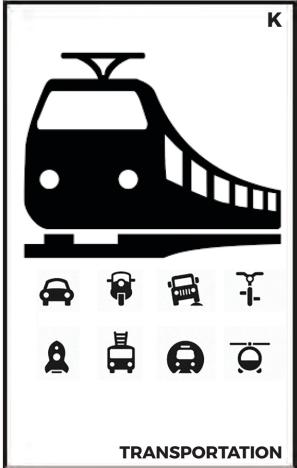Reflection notes (what went well, what didn't go well, possible changes to interview and protocol):

_____

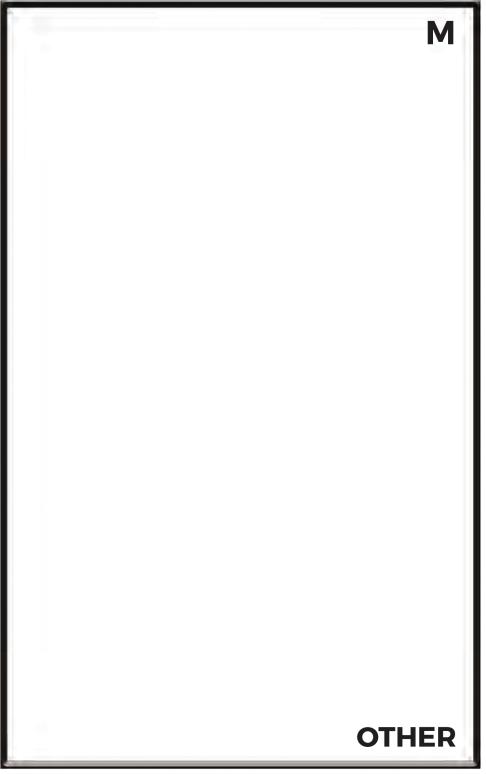_____

_____

_____

A

ART

B

ECONOMICS

C

FOOD & BEVERAGES

D

HOME & GARDEN

E

HOW THINGS WORK

F

MEDICINE/HEALTH

G

MUSIC

H

PETS

18

I

POLITICS

J

SPORTS

K

TRANSPORTATION

19

L

TRAVEL/HISTORY

M

OTHER

20

ANIMALS & WILDLIFE

A

HUMAN HISTORY

B

LEARNING TOGETHER

C

NIGHT SKY ASTRONOMY

D

OBSERVATION DATA COLLECTION

E

PHOTOGRAPHY

F

PLANTS & HABITAT

G

RELAXING RECREATION

H

22

ROCKS & FORMATIONS

I

SERVICE & VOLUNTEERING

J

TRAVEL & CULTURE

K

WEATHER SEASONAL CHANGES

L

23

OTHER

M

iSWOOP Pilot Interest Interview: *Poster Vote*

Date: _____	Time: _____	Park: _____	Initials: _____

Interview Instructions

- Follow the interview guide below.
- Use provided probes if information not addressed by initial response. Probe for <u>depth</u> and <u>clarity</u> as needed. For example:
  - o "Anything else?"
  - o "Can you tell me more about what you mean by that?" "Can you give me some examples?"
- Capture visitor responses as verbatim as possible. Ask visitors to repeat answers or give you time to write as needed.
- Focus on gathering responses from one primary adult in the group but allow other group members to participate as appropriate. You can direct the questions to the adult that seemed most engaged during the recruitment process, but also be flexible to let the group decide who should respond.

Introduction

Hello. My name is _____ and I'm a researcher investigating why visitors come to parks like this and how the park experience connects to their interests. Do you have ten minutes to do a group activity and then answer a few questions?

Thanks so much for being willing to help. Like I said, I'm gathering input on what visitors like you are interested in, why you decided to come to the park today, and how your interests connect with what the park has to offer. There are no right or wrong answers. You're free to skip any questions that you don't want to answer or end the activity at any time. All of your responses will be anonymous.

Are you willing to participate and share your thoughts?
- ☐ **Agreed to participate** (If declines, make note on interview refusal form.)

Activity

To start, we are going to do a quick activity. Here I have a board with boxes that represent some of the experiences and opportunities this park has to offer. And here are three stickers. Please place the stickers under the images that best represent what interests you about this particular park or motivated you to visit this particular place on this day. You can put several stickers in the same box, if you feel very strongly about it, or you can spread them out. Feel free to work as a team, or you can do this yourself [indicating primary adult]. If there are interests or motivations that aren't captured here, you can use the "other" box. **Other visitor groups have already made some selections, but don't worry about those for now.** Read the script above. Answer any questions that visitors have.

- Hand the three stickers to the primary adult and give visitors a few minutes to make their selections. Note the number of stickers in each box and other general observations about how the visitors complete the task, what they say, and who is involved.
- If visitors are confused by the categories, let them know that they can interpret the images and words in whatever way makes sense to them.

Observation notes

_____

_____

_____

_____

No. of stickers per box

A: ___   B: ___   C: ___   D: ___

E: ___   F: ___   G: ___   H: ___

I: ___   J: ___   K: ___   L: ___

M: __   N: ___   O: ___   P: ___

Interview Questions

Great. Now let's talk a little bit about what you did.

1. **To start, tell me more about why you made these choices.**
    a. *Probe if relevant: What did the stickers in the "other" box represent to you?*
    b. *Probe if relevant: Were there differences across your group? If so, which stickers best represent which group members?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. *Looking at how other visitors placed their stickers, what surprised you?*
    a. *Probe if needed: What do you think your choices say about how your interests or reasons for visiting the park are similar to or different from other visitors?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

And now let's talk about your interests more broadly. Everyone has different topics or activities they are interested in—things they enjoy doing and learning about and are motivated to keep coming back to.

3. *How do these pictures and words connect with interests you have outside of the park, if at all?*
    a. *Probe as needed: What about this box that you selected? And this box?*
    b. *Probe if relevant: What about others in the group that placed stickers?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. *Why is this a good place to explore your interests?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. *What are ways the park could better support your interests?*

_____

_____

_____

6. *Have you found or do you hope to find any new interests during your visit today?*
    a. *Probe as needed: Has a past experience at this park sparked a new interest for you?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. *(Optional question if time: What are some of the benefits and challenges of parks trying to better connect with visitor interests?)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

Wrap-up

Thanks so much for your help. Have a great rest of your visit!

- Answer any final questions and provide visitors with their incentive.
- Note the group characteristics below and quickly document any top-of-mind reflection notes (e.g., issues that affected the interview, things that went well or didn't go well).
- Prepare for the next interview.

Number of group members by approximate age:

Whole group		*Involved in activity or interview*	
___ Adults (>18)	___ Youth (13–17)	___ Adults (>18)	___ Youth (13–17)
___ Children (2–12)	___ Infants (0–2)	___ Children (2–12)	___ Infants (0–2)

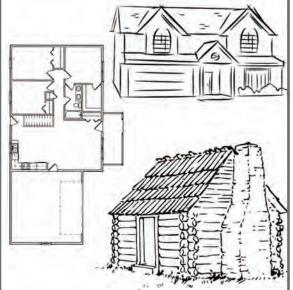Reflection notes (what went well, what didn't go well, possible changes to interview and protocol):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Observe Wildlife

Rock Formations

Plants

Water/Sky

A **B** **C D**

Craft

Be Active

Home/Design

Learn More

Friends/Family

Mystery/Puzzle

History/Story

Music/Arts

Film/Books

Help Out
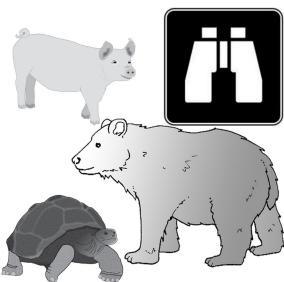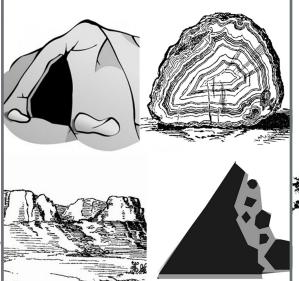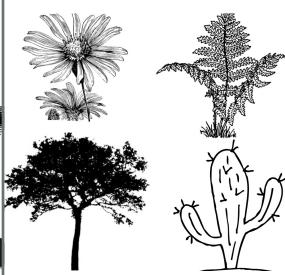

Social Media

Other

Observar la fauna

Observe Wildlife

Formaciones geológicas

Rock Formations

Plantas

Plants

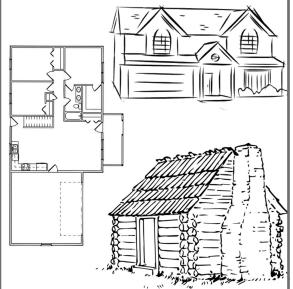
Agua/Firmamento

Water/Sky

A

B

C

D

Manualidades
Craft

Actividad física
Be Active

Hogar/Diseño
Home/Design

Aprender
Learn More

Amistades/Familia
Friends/Family

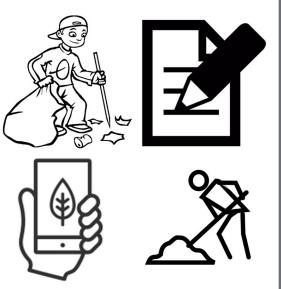Misterios/
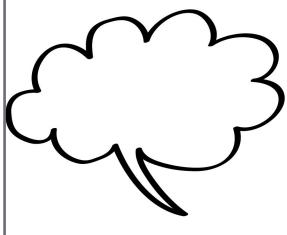Rompecabezas
Mystery/Puzzle

Historia/Cuentos
History/Story

Musica/Arte
Music/Arts

Cine/Libros
Film/Books

Ser voluntario/a
Help Out

Redes sociales
Social Media

Otro/a
Other