

Pre-Tour Summary –Fall, 2007

Thank you for working with MOSTH to provide your students with a valuable learning experience. This museum visit allows your students a chance to practice good social behavior, visit a public facility, and put their knowledge to use.

Someone from the Museum staff will be available to greet your scheduled group at the gated butterfly garden/patio doorway (Kuhn entrance). Please take time to notice the plants and insects in the garden/patio area as you use the walkway.

While your group is receiving stickers and reviewing the Museum rules, your group's designated adult will turn in the group count and settle the bill with the museum admission's desk/office. If the group completes their orientation of the rules, they may turn their attention to the metal grilles in the archways and the chandelier in the Grand Lobby to look for the 10 different south Texas animals worked into the steel and copper.

The museum tour is best understood if students are in smaller groups. You will need an adequate number of adults (**every 10 students should have someone to monitor and share information with them**). Each group will begin in one of these areas and rotate to the following area after a set amount of time—about 20 minutes.

The areas that are available at this time are:

The Grand Lobby- There are several items in the Grand Lobby worth noticing. Take time to look for the 10 animals in the metal work, the mesquite doors, the courthouse railings, and the map showing our visitors' point of origin.

A Walk back in time through the north wing of the Museum of South Texas History to see:

North Wing-Rio Grande Legacy-The information here is posted in and around the exhibits in both English and Spanish for greater understanding. Encourage the reading of posted labels by different students or the group's accompanying adult. Observation and listening skills will also help to enrich the experience. The exhibits begin with our history millions of years in the past and you follow time forward to the end of the 19th century.

Rio Grande Legacy continues with/The River Crossroads/ 20th Century in South Texas- This area was opened to the public in November, 2007. The information here is posted in and around the exhibits both in Spanish and English. This exhibit will continue the journey through history that you began in the North Wing.

The Courtyard- This consists of viewing the exterior of the jail building (cir.1910), viewing the native plants in the courtyard, roping the metal cow, pumping (you may need to prime the pump) water at the sink and viewing the bricks in the patio display of South Texas Ranch brands/ family names. **Inside the Old Jail Building** view the Alfredo "Freddy" Gonzalez Exhibit and notice (to your right) the archives which hold pictures, maps and documents about the history of this area.

Down the hallway and in the rooms to the left you will find displays of artifacts and pictures that will change periodically.

Upstairs is the Hanging Room, which was the location of an execution in 1913, and you will see the solid metal door of the "violent cell". Temporary exhibits can be found in the area to the north of the cells.

Now you have experienced all the areas of the Museum of South Texas History...We invite you to make one more stop at

The Store –Please allow students into the store in groups of 10 or less (refer to rules for further details). There will be some type of activity set up behind the stairs for students waiting to enter the store.

As a teacher using this self-guided tour program, please don't feel overwhelmed if you are not familiar with the intricate aspects of Valley history. The exhibits serve as excellent points to introduce students to their history and allow them to exercise their critical thinking skills. Using a **Visual Thinking Strategy** when leading the tour will involve you as the teacher asking simple open-ended questions, which children can answer by looking carefully at the exhibit and/or the text panel. You will find a more detailed list of activities and information that will help you understand and enjoy your museum experience on the education portion of the Museum of South Texas History website at www.mosthistory.org Please look over this resource. You may want to apply some of the activities to your visit.