

HISTORY HITCH

History, Language & Culture Tours

Ideas to capture student sign-ups!

So, you're all signed up, excited and ready. The trip is going to be amazing and the students are going to walk away so excited and enthused! Now you need to get your students committed and registered, which can sometimes be the very hardest part. We hear about challenges every day from schools who just can't believe they didn't meet their minimum numbers. Following are some suggestions to stay ahead of that ball.

1. Define your details so you are set up for success. Some questions to define:

- a. Are you adding insurance costs during registration? Check with your school as many schools already have a student travel policy in place. We mandate that all schools have travel insurance. If your school does not have an existing policy, you may feel free to purchase insurance through Trip Mate during your registration process with us, or you may use any carrier you wish.
- b. Are you planning on everyone meeting at the school or at the airport? This is important because if you need to provide transportation to/from the local airport, you may need to budget funds for this element. If you would like us to include this service, please just let us know and we will be happy to provide a quote from a local transport provider.
- c. Will you have a trip shirt for everyone to wear on travel days? Is this something the students may already have (school shirt) or is it something you would want to purchase and include in the overall trip costs?
- d. What will you recommend that the students bring for extra expenses over and above standard trip costs? Will they need funds to purchase lunches or are these already included (varies by destination)? What about dinners - are any evenings open for dining on your own? Free time activities? Suggestions for snacks and gratuities? Souvenirs?
- e. Which adult staff will you have accompanying your group? Do they have special qualifications that you may wish to share with parents?
- f. Will your group need passports or visas? If so, we strongly suggest that after each child registers, they bring you a copy of their valid passport so you can ensure it will not expire prior to travel. Additionally, some countries require passport validation for up to 6-months after the published travel dates. Are you up to speed with specific requirements? The best place to check for passport and visa requirements is with the US Department of State, [International Travel](#). The costs for passports or visas are all born by the individual students and their families but it's always best to have basic information available if asked.
- g. If traveling internationally, it is always recommended that you understand possible medical concerns and be alert to any advised vaccinations or other considerations. The best place to review this is on the [CDC's website](#) (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention).
- h. Have you prepared a sample packing list? Ask us if you have any questions, we're happy to provide recommendations.



2. **Get prepared.** What are you going to give each student when they ask for information? We suggest a 1-page (front and back) overview of the trip showing what's included and what's not included, and all other details you feel you want to share. Add final trip costs, a link to the full itinerary on our website, the registration link and a note on how to register, deposit amounts and dates, the contact details for the person responsible, insurance information and other details. Have it ready to go for each child that shows interest.

3. **Families?** Are you going to allow families to participate? If so, you'll want to have a plan in case asked. Most schools that bring families have them sleep in separate rooming than the pupils (so students don't sleep in family rooms). Most adults will sleep double occupancy whereas students sleep quad occupancy so rates will generally be higher for parents/families as there are fewer people to split the room costs amongst. They're always welcome though and every person that books helps to bring down the student rates. Let us know what you need. Sometimes this is a great way to bring more people on the trip and keep student costs in check.

4. **Your Launch Letter.** Prepare and distribute a Launch Letter to give to your students and ask them to share it with their parents. Launch letters should include full trip details (bullet 2 above), but most importantly, write a personal note explaining what the students will gain from the experience. Will it help them in career choice? Will it help them by exposing them to different educational aspects? Cultural aspects? If traveling to a space week in Texas, will it empower students to perhaps explore NASA career opportunities? If traveling to Mexico, will they gain their scuba diving certification to study marine biology in the future? If traveling to Florida, will they be studying forensics at one of the top facilities in the USA? Might a trip to Spain or Italy open the door for pursuing future arts or potential international studies? Help the parents to understand how important this trip is going to be and the potential impact to their child. **Travel truly changes lives.**

5. **Student Teams.** We all know how important it is to get students involved from the start. By getting them involved, they feel more motivated to make sure the event will be a roaring success and can take pride in knowing they assisted in making it a reality for their friends and peers. Students are also the best at convincing others to join with them in registering. We suggest creating 2 teams of 2 students; assisting you from the beginning, perhaps earning some extra credit along the way but at the very least, being able to proudly post their work on their educational resume.
 - a. **Student Marketing Team 1** – Responsibilities include Social Media, School Announcements, Assembly announcements, Booster Club notifications, School Magazines, Newsletters and Newspaper articles and interviews.
 - b. **Student Marketing Team 2** – Responsibilities include creating shadow boxes with trip details, design and set-up of posters/flyers, presentation to and notification of alternative department staff so their students may join, plus notification of other potential school-wide departments - if a Forensics trip, perhaps the Math team may be interested in joining. If a Costa Rica trip, perhaps the Spanish team would be interested in joining. If traveling to Europe, perhaps the history team would like to join.

Finally, if you don't get the sign-ups you envisioned, talk to us about partnering with another school. We would be happy to get the word out and find another school that might be able to travel on the dates you need, sharing flight/coach and activity costs while meeting minimum number requirements.

We are very much looking forward to serving your school!

The History Hitch Team



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