



And the people listened, and their faces were quiet with listening. The story tellers, gathering attention into their tales, spoke in great rhythms, spoke in great words because the tales were great, and the listeners became great through them.

— John Steinbeck —

AZ QUOTES

1



"When it comes to my topic, I think it is **really, really** important for this audience to understand that _____."

1

2

2

WHAT IS "INTERPRETATION?"

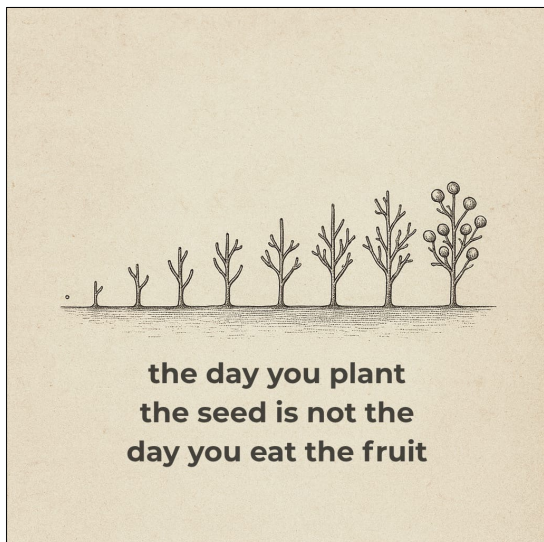
- Aimed at revealing meanings and relationships, **not facts as an end in themselves**
- It is not instruction in the academic sense
- Aimed at inspiring Guests
- Aimed at connecting tourists to the places they visit



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3



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4

Interpretation is a mission-based approach to communication aimed at provoking in audiences the discovery of personal meaning and the forging of personal connections with things, places, people, and concepts.

4

What can we do to
influence our Guests
behaviour and 'make a
difference on
purpose?'

➤ **T**hematic

➤ **O**rganised

➤ **R**elevant

➤ **E**njoyable

5

TORE FRAMEWORK FOR INTERPRETIVE COMMUNICATION

Based on two centuries of research we know that good Interpretation has four essential qualities. It is:

THEMATIC

Organised (easy to follow)

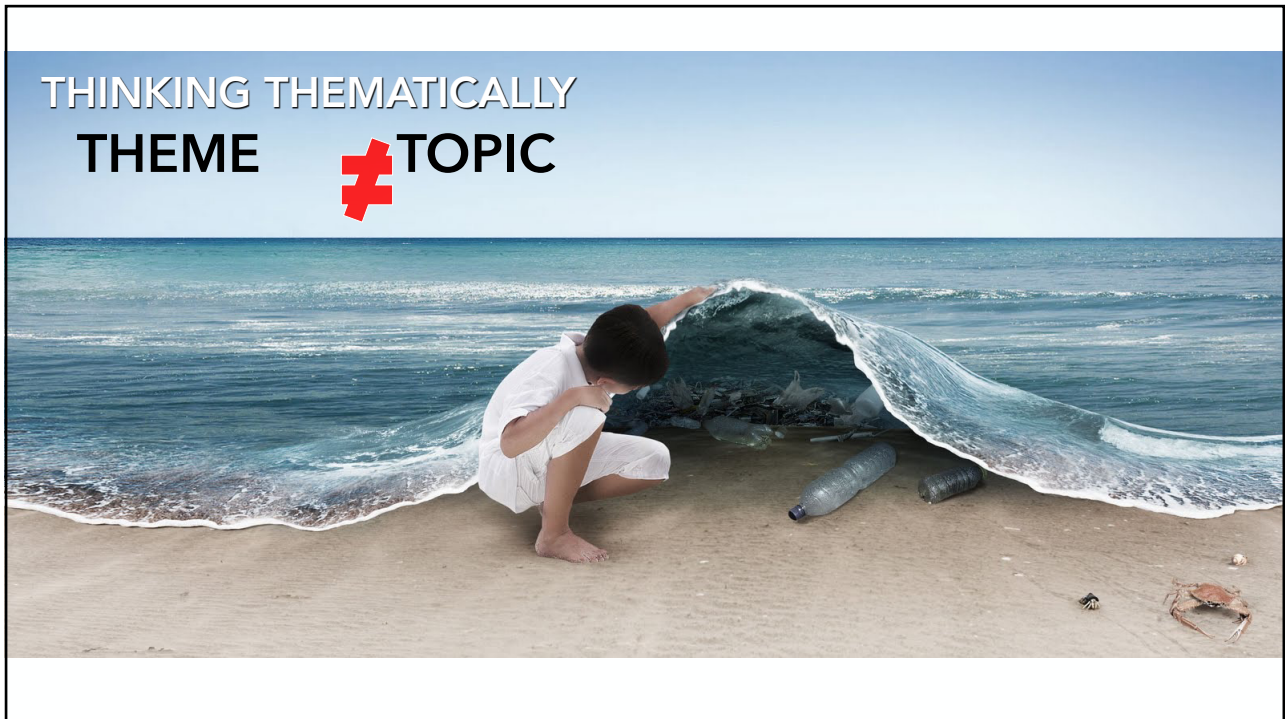
Relevant (meaningful & personal)

Enjoyable

When all four
qualities are in
place,
"successful"
communication
is almost
guaranteed.

"Success" means that
Guests pay attention
and get the point
(theme)

6



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THINK IN TERMS OF THEMES, NOT TOPICS

TOPICS

Birds
 History of ... forests
 Bats
 Cultural diversity in ...
 Ancient ... lifestyles
 Biodiversity in ...
 Rivers
 Volcanic eruptions
 Volcanoes
 Animal behaviour



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THINK IN TERMS OF THEMES, NOT TOPICS

EXAMPLES OF THEMES FOR THE TOPIC 'BIRDS'

Flightless birds have solved problems that other birds were never faced with.

The vulture fulfils the role of "garbage collector," which is an extremely important, though under appreciated, ecological function.



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COMMUNICATING THEMES HAS A PURPOSE!

Presenting strongly relevant themes in an Organised Relevant and Enjoyable way increases your chances of making a difference on purpose.



Themes can provoke people to think, even if they forget isolated facts.

Having a theme helps YOU prepare.

10

COMMUNICATING THEMES HAS A PURPOSE!

Making a **purposeful** difference in how our Guests think, feel, and possibly behave, is easier when you can see the pathways through which such a difference can be made.

Themes are beliefs; beliefs are the building blocks of attitudes and behaviour.



Having a strong and compelling theme almost guarantees an interesting presentation.



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SO WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BE THEMATIC?

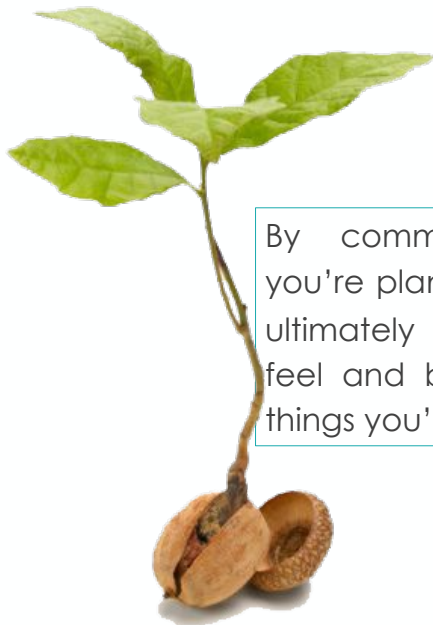


You want to make a difference in what people think and feel with respect to a place.



Guests will forget isolated facts, but they'll remember aspects of a strong theme.

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By communicating strong themes, you're planting seeds (beliefs) that can ultimately influence how Guests think, feel and behave with respect to the things you're interpreting for them.

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**IS A
MESSAGE**

**ANSWERS THE
QUESTION
"BIG DEAL?"**



A THEME

**ANSWERS THE
QUESTION
"SO WHAT?"**

**IS THE MORAL
OF THE STORY**

14

WHEN IS A THEME STRONG?



- When the statement alone provokes thinking
- When it begs for further development
- When people in your audience urgently want to know what lies behind it
- And when it's 100% factually correct

15

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A **Theme** is expressed in complete declarative sentences, has a subject and verb and ends with a full stop or exclamation mark!

Strong themes are easy to process (**Organised**) - They're short and clear. They use plain, not "fancy" language.

Strong themes are loaded with **Vitamin R(elevant)** - They're not merely interesting; they matter.

E - The essential ingredient of **enjoyable** interpretation is that it's presented in a way that matches the audiences' idea of having a good time, even if having a good time means being sad or angry or scared or contemplative. If it wasn't all we'd ever watch were comedies! Although some Interpretation might not be very uplifting or lighthearted, it simply pleases the mind to pay attention to it, at least for a while.

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THEMES - MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON PURPOSE

WRAP YOUR THEME AROUND A UNIVERSAL CONCEPT

EG

Anger	Fight	Morality	Struggle
Birth	Good	Mortality	Suffering
Conflict	Happiness/Elation	Mystery	Supernatural (the)
Cruelty	Hate	Pain	Survival
Darkness	Heroines and heroes	Patriotism	Suspense
Dark side (the)	Hunger, starvation	Power	Tension
Death	Irony	Regret	Thirst
Defeat	Joy	Sadness (remorse)	Threats
Evil	Killing	Saving (someone/something)	Tyranny
Fairness	Longing	Sex	Uncertainty
Fear	Love	Spiritual, cosmic	Victory

Linking the **tangible** with the **intangible**: The Pounamu (**tangible**) of the West Coast is a story of loss, power, beauty, and everlasting love (**intangible**)

17



MAKE IT PERSONAL MAKE IT ABOUT YOU

In ancient Maya culture, being clever was often more important to daily survival than being strong.

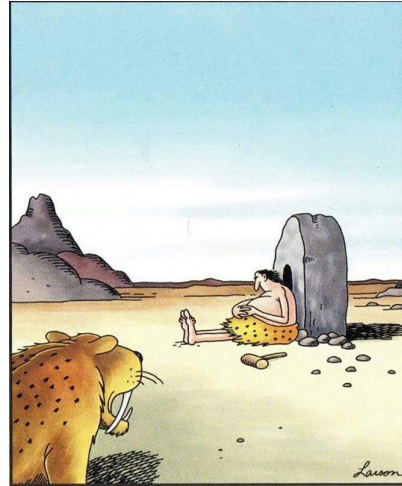
If **you** were an ancient Maya, being clever was often more important than being strong, especially if **you** were trying to stay alive.

18

INCORPORATE AN ANALOGY

Falling asleep at the wheel endangers everyone in the car!

When I die, I want to go peacefully like my grandfather did, in his sleep - not screaming, like the passengers in his car!



Thag Anderson becomes the first fatality as a result of falling asleep at the wheel.

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INCORPORATE A METAPHOR (OR SIMILE)



At the end of a busy day sitting down in front of a favorite piece of art can often clear your mind.

"Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." *Pablo Picasso*

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LIVEN UP THOSE VERBS!

This landscape *was sculpted* by harsh winds and torrential rain.

Harsh winds and torrential rain **sculpted** this landscape.



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TRY TO SUBSTITUTE THE VERB 'TO BE' WITH A VISUAL VERB

am
are
is
was
were
will be
being
been



This blue glacial ice *is* a story thousands of years in the making.

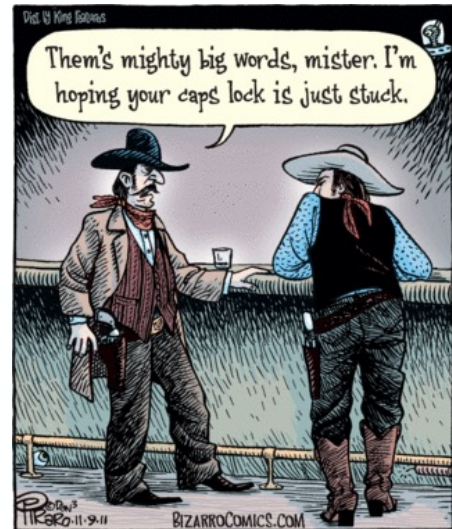
Amid the creaks and thunder of moving ice, blue glacial ice **reveals** the light that time couldn't silence – filtered, pressed, and echoing through the ages.

22

USE EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONAL LANGUAGE

During the Iron Age, the widespread adoption of iron for making tools and weapons coincided with other changes in society, including differing agricultural practices, religious beliefs and artistic styles.

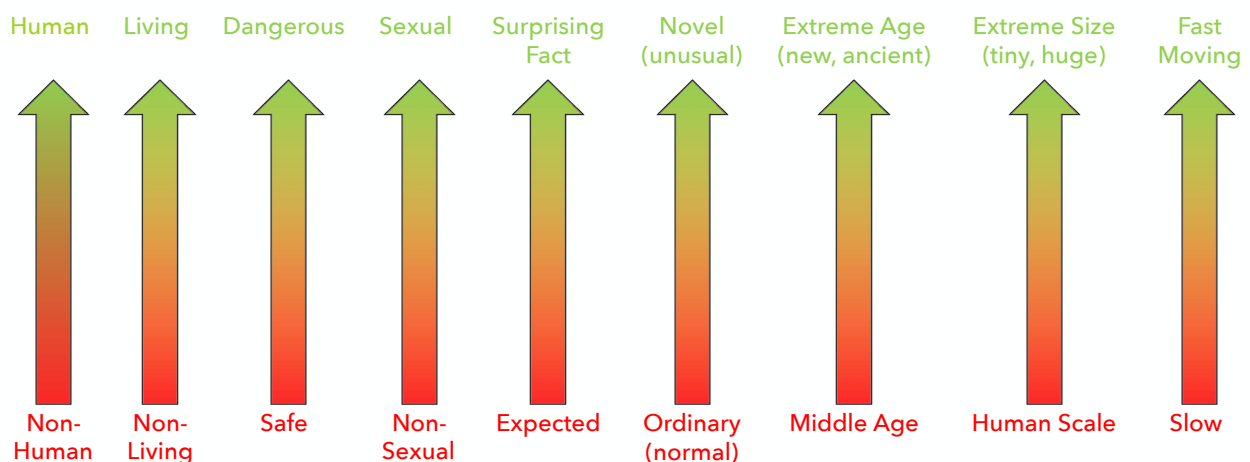
People in the Iron Age not only discovered a far better material for making their tools and weapons, they also found new ways to farm and worship, and to express themselves in art.



23

APPLY KNOCKAN THEORY

HIGHER INTEREST



LOWER INTEREST

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It took 3.8 billion years for Earth to get a civilisation. If it is to survive and flourish, if its golden age is not behind us but in front of us, the decisions we take in the next few decades will shape the future of life itself.

|

25

25

The artefacts of Antarctica are the intimate, fragile residue of the limits of human endurance; the living expression of the great and good we are all capable of.



|

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CETACEANS

Cetaceans not only captivate us with their size, intelligence, and playful nature, they also reveal profound similarities to humans in their capacity for love, culture, and community. Together, we share a remarkable connection rooted in complex social bonds, cultural traditions, and the vital role we both play in preserving and nurturing our shared environment.

POSTER THEME TITLES:

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

FROM LOVE TO CULTURE: THE BOND BETWEEN
CETACEANS AND HUMANS

CETACEANS: STEWARDS OF THE SEA

CETACEANS AND HUMANS: A SHARED JOURNEY

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WHAT THEMES ARE NOT

1. They are not usually 'titles', unless the title expresses an entire sentence.
2. They are not usually 'taglines' (or slogans).
3. They are not commands (imperatives).
4. They are not questions (interrogatives).

Never

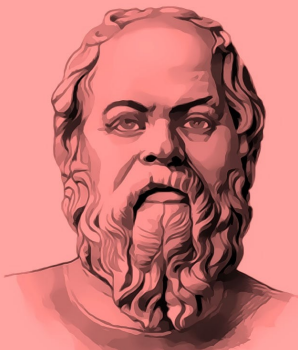
IN THE HISTORY OF
CALMING DOWN HAS ANYONE
EVER CALMED DOWN BY BEING
TOLD TO CALM DOWN.

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**I cannot teach
anybody anything,
I can only make
them think.**

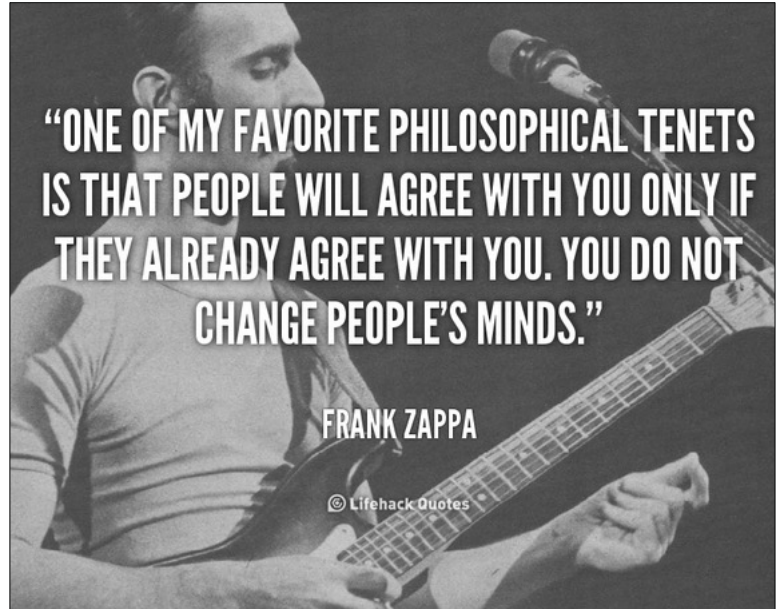
-Socrates



**"ONE OF MY FAVORITE PHILOSOPHICAL TENETS
IS THAT PEOPLE WILL AGREE WITH YOU ONLY IF
THEY ALREADY AGREE WITH YOU. YOU DO NOT
CHANGE PEOPLE'S MINDS."**

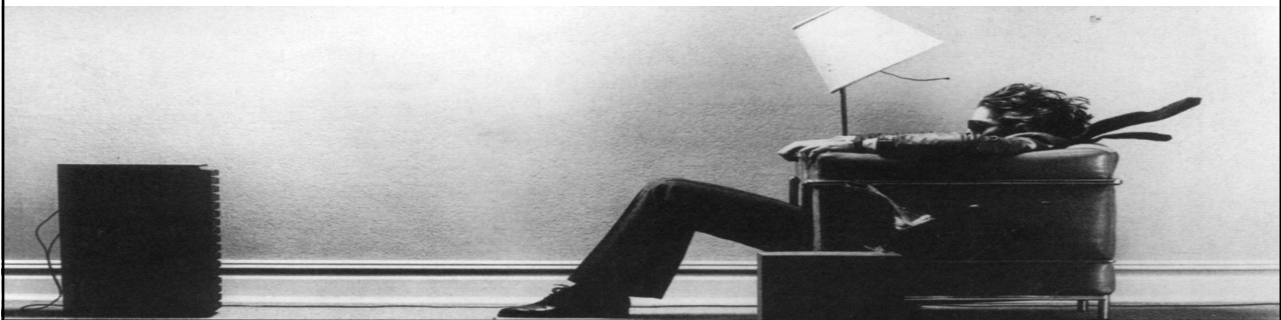
FRANK ZAPPA

© Lifehack Quotes



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**WE'RE NOT TRYING TO TEACH
NOTHING TO NOBODY ... WE'RE
TRYING TO BLOW THEM AWAY!**



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