

LEARNING IN THE LAND OF LINCOLN: One School's Springfield Tradition



SCOTT B.

Title: Former Social Studies Teacher
of Years Traveling with Brightspark: 40

MEET SCOTT

As one of Brightspark's very first customers, Scott has led over forty student tours. The former social studies teacher has been retired for four years, but he continues to lead trips to the Illinois state capitol of Springfield. His groups usually have around 300 kids, yet over the years he's learned how to lead trips without flaws. Here are some of his insights.



BRINGING LINCOLN TO LIFE

Located in central Illinois, Springfield was the town that Abraham Lincoln called home for nearly 23 years. Scott's school district teaches 1800's history in sixth grade, so students know quite a bit about Honest Abe before they visit. According to Scott, "the site visits really bring home the life and accomplishments of Lincoln." His favorite sites? Lincoln's Home and the Lincoln Museum, where students can understand Lincoln's life with wax exhibits and tableaux.



THE PERFECT FIRST TRIP

Scott believes that seventh grade is the age that parents are likely to support a one-night tour. In addition to spending a day touring the sites of Springfield, his groups spend the evening at an amusement park and a hotel dance. "It is good training for our eighth grade D.C. trip, which is four days and three nights. They get to practice choosing roommates, checking in and out of the hotel and mealtime behavior."



KEEPING GOOD COMPANY

With around 300 students on every tour, it would be pretty hard for a couple of teachers to take care of everyone. That's why Scott calls in plenty of back-up. Their group is accompanied by three Brightspark representatives, two school nurses and sometimes even a social worker.

"Another thing is that we really take care of the chaperones," says Scott, who believes that getting the same chaperones to come year after year is key. "The chaperones have single occupancy rooms so they can get a better night sleep."

THE BEST PART?

"The fun for me is running the trip and watching the kids have a good time," says Scott. He explains that at this point he knows all of the attractions pretty well, so he mostly just enjoys making sure the trip runs smoothly.

UNIQUE TOUR IDEA

Over the years, Scott's learned that kids really can't do without their midnight snacks, but hotel vending machines can't handle 300 kids. Which is why his group sets up a trip to the grocery store. "We stand by the kids at the register to make sure they aren't buying Red Bull or unhealthy stuff."

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A TRIP OF A LIFETIME *Springfield Itinerary*

DAY 1



Depart School
Arrive in Springfield
Dinner at Hibachi Grill
Visit Knight's Action Park
Check into hotel
Two hour DJ dance party
Return to hotel rooms
Overnight security on duty

DAY 2



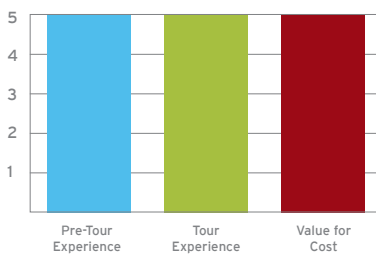
Breakfast at Golden Corral
Visit Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum
Lunch at McDonald's
Tour Lincoln's home
Old State Capitol Tour
Visit the Illinois State Museum
Oak Ridge Cemetery
Enjoy dinner at Godfather's Pizza
Depart for home

AN ESTABLISHED INSTITUTION

Because Scott has been running the trip for so long, parents and students have come to look forward to his school's Springfield and D.C. tours every year. At this point, he's even taken students whose parents took the trip years ago. He recently returned from his most recent trip. "It was a great time for all," he says, "we've gotten many compliments from our students."

SCOTT'S TOUR SURVEY RESULTS

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate the following:



On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to recommend Brightspark Travel to a friend:



CHOOSING BRIGHTSPARK

Over all the years, Scott's developed a familiar, easygoing relationship with his Brightspark team. He loves how they always treat his tour like it's their number one priority. For him, choosing a tour company goes far beyond low pricing; he is extremely loyal to Brightspark. "They customize the trip for us so well. They give us what we want and what we ask for, and they give us great advice when we're not sure what we want."

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