

**Downtown Dragons Tour Evaluation**  
**January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006**  
Based on 36 Surveys Returned

1. Our goals for the **Downtown Dragons Tour** are to get students: 1) walking in downtown Pittsburgh, 2) noticing buildings, 3) learning a bit about the city's history and architecture, and 4) having fun. Did we accomplish these four goals?

Yes 36      No 0      Comments:

- It was an excellent tour. Our tour guide talked to the students on their ability level. He took extra time with our group.
- I am an adult Pitt Student (age 50) and I noticed new things about Pittsburgh and architecture in general.
- He did a great job of presenting age-appropriate info in a fun way.
- She was excellent.
- We learned a lot and had a wonderful time.
- Absolutely - 3
- Students were really enthralled with actually walking in the city.
- The kids really paid attention to the architecture and loved it.
- Very informative, interesting and fun.
- She was excellent and really had the children thinking.
- I have lived here my whole life and I learned a lot today.
- He was an awesome guide.
- I enjoyed learning everything today.
- I love it! I've lived here my whole life and learned something.

2. Did your students learn anything new about Pittsburgh's history and architecture?

Yes 36      No 0      Comments:

- Many of them have never been in the city.
- The teachers, parents, and interpreters did too - 3
- Many things were discussed about the architecture of Pittsburgh - 2
- They learned about the city burning and materials used for rebuilding - 2
- Lots of facts.
- Difference between gargoyles, grotesques, etc. - 2
- They learned about the grading of Grant Street, reinforcing things they had already learned.
- Especially since they knew very little.
- My students were able to recall facts when questioned the next day. Awesome!
- Can't wait to share what they learned in classroom projects.
- The guide was very detailed.
- They learned how the buildings changed and even were sometimes moved over the years.
- I never tire of learning new things about Pittsburgh, especially Downtown— my favorite neighborhood.

3. Would you have liked to have our docent speak more about Pittsburgh's history and architecture?

Yes 13      No 22      Comments:

No:

- I think she did a great job, but we just touched on so many different things and nothing was looked at in depth.
- We were a little rushed for time.
- The tour was perfect - 3
- It was a nice mixture of both. The tour guide was very pleasant and conversational. He took me into buildings, pointed out things, talked a lot about the city history, etc.
- The length of the tour and the depth of the content was just right for this group.
- The information was a perfect blend of both history and architecture. The time worked out - 2
- She told third-grade students exactly what they needed to know at this age level.
- It was completely covered at the level of our students - 3
- I feel that he did a fine job of covering everything that I wanted to learn about as well as my class.
- He did a great job. He was excellent with the age group and kept it interesting - 2
- I think that too much more would have confused them.
- A little more about history – flood, steel mills, etc. - 2
- By the end of the tour, the children were tired. It was just enough.
- He tailored how much he said to the kids. He pointed out many things but elaborated on things that most interested the group. He was great about answering questions.
- More history would help it augment our unit of study even more (History of Pittsburgh).
- I think he gave as much detailed information about our town's history and architecture as the time allowed.

4. Was the knowledge of the docent adequate to effectively present the **Downtown Dragons Tour**?

Yes 36      No 0      Comments:

- He related very well to the students.
- Our guide did a superb job. He was very patient, knowledgeable, and very interesting - 3
- He was great.
- The docent did a very nice job in presenting the information and it was evident he cared a lot about giving a good tour - 3
- She did a great tour.
- She did a great job.
- Very informed and engaging.
- She had wonderful stories and info.
- She was very informative and answered all questions asked by students with professionalism (must be teachers) regardless of level of questions asked.
- He was outstanding. We loved the tour!
- Absolutely/Perfect/Super - 3
- He had additional photos to show me as well - 2

5. Could you and the students hear the docent above the city noises?

Yes 34      No 1      Comments:

- There is not much you can do with the natural sounds of the city.
- It was a peaceful Saturday morning.
- I noticed that some had microphones but she spoke clearly.
- He also made sure to engage students and keep their interest - 2
- He would repeat what was said if a car would pass - 2
- He utilized microphone when necessary - 3
- Occasionally the speaker system went "on the blink" for a couple of minutes - 2
- A group of 11 students worked well. Our students are suburbanites – great for them to hear the sounds, see the sights and smell the city.
- The train was the only problem.

6. What did your students enjoy the most about the **Downtown Dragons Tour**?

- Tour of the city
- Facts presented
- "T" ride - 7
- The prison
- Churches
- William Penn Hotel - 3
- The feeling of looking up at those stately buildings and noticing new things – gargoyles, grotesques, arches, etc. and being able to learn about their function and their history.
- Walking across the Smithfield Street Bridge noticing what happened when Grant's Hill was removed, etc.
- Finding items in the pictures on the buildings - 3
- Bessemer Court
- Union Trust Building - 3
- Courthouse
- Walking across the Smithfield Street Bridge - 3
- Looking for gargoyles and grotesques - 11
- Learning about history/architecture - 4
- The Grand Concourse Restaurant - 3
- Exploring the building 2
- The vault
- The more ornate the building was, the better they liked it and asked more questions about it than others.
- Measuring 125 years across Smithfield Street Bridge
- Finding where we were on the map
- Stained Glass
- Dollar Bank Lions - 3
- Finding the lion's faces on their shirts and name tags
- Being out in the real world and finding the things on clue cards
- Comparing old pictures to current skyline - 2
- Morgue
- The novelty of exploring Downtown
- Learning more about William Pitt (we're studying him now in Social Studies)

7. Was the length of the **Downtown Dragons Tour**

Just Right 29      Too Long 3      Too Short 1

Just right:

- However it was a 90° day, so the students were less responsive – 2
- Perfect time, the children were getting hungry.
- We were on a tight schedule.
- But, some students had difficulty “hanging on” near the end.
- They were tired but really did enjoy the walk.
- Thank you for adapting the tour to our needs. We followed up with a quick lunch and a Ducky Tour.
- We had no time restrictions. Our guide took his time and made it a very pleasant tour.

Too long:

- Perhaps for this age group (grade 3) ½ hour shorter would be a good compromise.
- It would have been fine if we could have had one bathroom break.
- We were a couple of minutes late but the tour went on much longer than planned and still felt a little rushed.

Too short:

- This isn't the first year a docent was late so one group might not have seen as much as others. Also, when a docent doesn't show up, the subway count is off.

8. Did group members feel comfortable walking around the city?

Yes 32      No 1      Blank 3

Yes:

- I grew up in Pittsburgh and have lived downtown, worked downtown, gone to school downtown, etc. I've been having a love affair with Downtown Pittsburgh all my life!
- We felt safe. Your people are well organized.
- A little hesitant (because our school is “out in the country”).
- But, docent sometimes crossed streets too quickly while back of line was not ready.
- Very safe.
- Our guide was very considerate about our children crossing the street and keeping all close together.
- I did have anxiety at times, but it is a different type of field trip than most.
- Our docent notified our group of street crossings and in which direction we'd be going so adults and students alike were at ease.
- Although many parents expressed concern before the trip.

No:

- The chaperones and teachers felt uneasy about crossing streets between cars and buses and not using crosswalks.

9. Did the docent take time to ask the students questions so they were challenged to think about the tour and reflect on their experience?

Yes 34      No 1      Blank 1

Yes:

- Questions were at a third grade level and student's questions were encouraged as well.
- He was very good about this.
- She asked many times.
- He frequently checked for understanding and asked students interesting questions.
- He definitely interacted with them.
- She did but we were so rushed that the kids didn't always have time to answer.
- It led to some interesting conversations later on the bus.
- They asked higher-level, open-ended questions.
- Our guide was able to answer.

10. Do you think your students enjoyed receiving the **Downtown Dragons** bookmark?

Yes 29      No 2      Blank 4

11. How did you hear about the **Downtown Dragons Tour**?

- Read about it in the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*
- A parent recommended it.
- Our school building is a landmark.
- Our teachers took the tour during the county wide in-service day - 4
- Other teachers - 10
- My daughter/son took one a few years ago - 2
- I took students when working at another school and wanted to take my current students.
- We learned about it from taking a tour of Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation with Pitt's library school.
- At a meeting of Gifted Teachers for Allegheny County a few year ago.
- Online - 2
- Members
- The Pittsburgh "walking tour" is an annual event for our third graders.
- Our school has done it before - 5

12. Why did you choose the **Downtown Dragons Tour** for your field trip?

- It sounded interesting - 2
- Tickets for Kids.
- Variety of buildings, and something I just thought that my students could enjoy.
- We were in a "local geography through history" block.
- I am fascinated with Downtown architecture.
- It looked interesting and it is something our kids have never experienced nor would on their own.
- Because it was a nice introduction to architecture for the children.
- It contained the information that is relevant to third grade study of Pittsburgh - 12
- To give the children a better appreciation for our city - 3
- Good tour, fun, educational, exercise.

- We heard good reviews about the trip. We thought it would be a good educational experience for our kids.
- Did it in years past.
- Curiosity. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade needed to “get out in the open” and learn something at the same time. It was also structured. 7<sup>th</sup> graders were old enough to appreciate it.
- The trip I took made quite an impression. I could see countless ways to connect it to our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade curriculum.

13. Would you take the tour again or recommend the **Downtown Dragons Tour** to others?

Yes 33      No 1      Blank 2

- I thought it was wonderful!
- Absolutely - 6
- Great trip – all should do.
- Great program. Your group/program is an under-recognized treasure to Pittsburgh!
- We already spread the word about the trip being worthwhile to other teachers.
- You accommodated our schedule and worked hard!
- It would be an excellent tour for visitors to our city.
- We’d like to do this again and I’m going to share at my Beaver County Gifted Teacher’s meeting.
- I have already told several people about what a wonderful experience it was - 2
- But another tour probably.
- It was informative and pleasant and efficiently run.
- I look forward to taking friends and visitors on the tour. I am relatively new to Pittsburgh and learned a lot. Other adults on the trip had grown up here and also said they learned a lot too!

14. Were you a chaperone on the tour or a school teacher?

Chaperone 13      School Teacher 23

15. Have you (or your students) visited the Downtown Dragons website at [www.phlf.org/dragons](http://www.phlf.org/dragons)? (If not, please do!)

Yes 14      No 15      Blank 7