Curriculum links – Literacy

- explanations
- descriptive writing
- persuasive writing
- labelling
- non-fiction text
- non-chronological text
- summarising
- questioning

Introduction

- The word museum can be used for both museums and galleries. It is a place where collections of objects and art works, which have scientific, historical or artistic value, are stored and displayed. The word object can be used to describe all museum works including paintings and sculptures and therefore this activity can be used at any of our sites.
- Curators in museums and galleries choose the objects that are put on display and the way in which they are displayed. They write the information that tells the visitors about the objects.
- Working as museum curators your class will explore our galleries in small groups. The children will then work together to choose their favourite objects to create their own museum and interpretation.
- To find out more about the objects on display the children can talk to our staff, read the object labels or use the Find out More folders available in each gallery.
- The trail is intended to take place in all our galleries although you may wish to limit the number of galleries the children visit.
- Ideas for follow up activities back at school can be found at the end of these teachers’ notes.

Our sites

- Museums Sheffield Millennium Gallery has two permanently displayed galleries (Metalwork Gallery and Ruskin Gallery) and two temporary display galleries, one dedicated to contemporary craft and design and the other that houses a range of exhibitions – see our website for details of our current exhibitions.
- Museums Sheffield Graves Gallery features the city’s visual art collection as well as touring exhibitions from national galleries such as the Tate and the National Portrait Gallery.
- Museums Sheffield Weston Park has six permanently displayed galleries (History lab, Sheffield life and times, Arctic world, Treasures, About art and What on Earth!) as well as a temporary display gallery (Harold Cantor). The Arctic world gallery was designed around the people of Sheffield’s favourite object, Snowy the Polar Bear.
- For more information on our galleries and collection please visit www.museums-sheffield.org.uk

Before you visit

- Your Challenge! Your class will choose an object from each gallery to create a museum of their own. They may want to base their choices around a particular theme or they may just want to choose their favourite objects.
- Different themes could be given to different groups of children depending on the topics being studied in school, galleries used and the age and ability of the children.
- Examples of cross curricular themes could include history, people, animals etc. The possibilities are endless and the children may want to come up with their own theme for their museum.
- Unfortunately, owing to copyright issues the children will not be able to take pictures of the objects so they will need to draw them instead.
My Museum
Teacher Notes

In the museum

• Working together in small groups the children will take on the role of curators. You may wish to subdivide the small groups into pairs. It works best if you can start each small group off in a different gallery so that no one area becomes too crowded.

• The children need to choose/select seven objects in total for their museum.

• They then need to sketch each object in the trail booklet. They could then write a label for their object or add five describing words.

• The front of the trail has a space where the children can name their museum. They can also add further information about their museum e.g. what facilities are available – shop, café, toilets etc, opening times and admission prices. This could be based on our museums or the children could describe their ideal museum.

• The back page of the trail encourages the children to focus on one object more closely. You may want to ask them to rewrite the objects label to make it more suitable for a different audience e.g. younger children.

• There is also space on the back page for the children to think about what else they would like to know about their chosen object and where they might find out this information.

Follow up ideas

• Share the children’s exhibitions

• Ask the children to present their choices to the rest of the class, a vote could then be taken for the top five objects in the class

• Create a display of the children’s museums

• Design a brochure to encourage other classes/schools to visit the museum

• Compare the object labels – which bits of information have been omitted or added – does this make a difference to the object?

• Use the labels as inspiration to create a class museum

• The children could use their descriptions of their objects to recreate them in an art lesson

• Follow up the children’s questions by doing further research in books or on the internet. The children could also write letters to experts asking them for the answers to their questions

• Create a museum from objects from home or school

• Design posters to advertise the museum