

Getting the most from a Museum visit: pre- and post-visit notes and activities

Who are these materials for?

These materials have been designed to support ESOL learners participating on tours and workshops led by a British Museum ESOL Tutor. However, they can be used to prepare learners for self-directed visits and can be adapted for EFL, EAL and IELTS learners. We have included some tips about how to make the most of your visit, some pre-visit and post-visit activities.

Getting the most from a museum visit

- The success of your visit will depend on how it is integrated into the learner's classroom work
- Be prepared. Learn about what you will see beforehand through pictures, research and discussion.
- Be selective about what to look at on the visit – spending more time looking at a small selection of objects is more rewarding than trying to take in a large selection of objects in less detail.
- Encourage learners to make a return visit on their own, as a class group, or with their family by finding out about what's on at the Museum:
www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on.aspx?ref=header

Around the Museum

It's good to tell learners about the benefit of carrying small bags (there is a charge for the cloakroom) and the possibility of security checks, as well as reminding them that eating and drinking is not permitted in the galleries.

Pre-visit classroom activities – some ideas

Below is a selection of suggested pre-visit class activities. You may think of some of your own.

- **Getting to the Museum**

Ask the learners to plan their route to the British Museum using public transport. Use the British Museum website and the TFL website (www.tfl.gov.uk) to help you.

- **Useful vocabulary**

A sample list of words and categories related to the Museum and its collection. What other words or categories can be added?

museum	case label display exhibition artefact origin gallery inscription collection conservation genuine reconstruction copy treasure
objects	coin statue sculpture medal carving print bowl glass jewellery vase tombstone
Materials	wood glass metal bronze brass ceramic stone bone marble clay plastic gold
Purpose	ritual decoration celebration praise wealth vanity memorial

- Create a **wordsearch** of the words above using an online tool (for example: http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/WordSearchSetupForm.asp?campaign=flyout_teachers_puzzle_wordcross)
- **Reading activity on history of the British Museum (see the reading activities at the end of the document)**
Use the reading activities provided (E1 and E3 and above) or use the website to find out more about the museum, and Sir Hans Sloane's collection

www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/the_museums_story.aspx

- **Download the image bank** from the British Museum website. You can use the image bank to introduce learners to the types of objects they will encounter in the exhibition and to support follow-up activities back in the classroom.
- **Use Explore:** Explore is an online database of 5000 objects from the collection.
 - Browse objects from the collection, search by theme or World culture or follow online tours.
 - Create a PowerPoint or image bank of objects you might see during your visit to the British Museum from your own searches.
- **Group discussion: Why visit museums?**
 - What is a museum and what is in it? (*Tip: Think about everything, not just objects - e.g. displays, shops, cafes*)
 - What do you think a museum is for and what can you do in a museum? (*Tip: Think about, education and learning, events information, tourism, conservation, a place to meet friends and hang out etc.*)
 - How does the British Museum compare to other museums? (*Tip: Think about exploring its size, its history and collection in comparison to other museums in this country and abroad*)
 - Restitution (link to pages on website)
- **Learning from objects**
 - Ask learners to explore a selection of personal or cultural objects from their own collections (i.e. objects brought from home) using who, where, what, when, why and how questions to encourage detailed examinations of an object.
 - In groups, ask the learners to think of as many questions as they can about the object(s) or pair up the learners, giving each pair one object and use it for blindfolded 20 questions.
 - Alternatively bring in a selection of different objects from your own home and use them to practise the questions with the learners – try and choose objects with lots of opportunities for the learners to use adjectives, so choose objects with unusual shapes, colours, materials or uses.
 - Use Explore to look at specific objects and create a bank of questions about the objects, for example:
 - a) What is it?
 - b) When was it made / found / brought to the Museum?
 - c) What does the object tell us about life in the past and the people who owned / used it?
 - d) Why is the object important?

- e) What is the connection between the object, the country it comes from and Britain?
- f) Why is the object in the British Museum?
- **Highlights of the collection online information search activity and matching exercise**
 - Explore the origins and ages of selected objects in the collection. Use the images provided to match the picture with the description and use the website to find out more about the objects. All the objects can be found on the Explore pages on the website.
 - Download a map of the world (e.g. www.mapsofworld.com/world-map-image.html) and print it out at A3 (if possible). Put the objects on the map according to their countries of origin.
- **Dating systems**
 - Using the object images from the matching activity above to familiarise learners with different systems (AD BC and AH) and the use of Centuries (eg. 5th Century).
 - Ask the learners to create a timeline of objects from the oldest to the newest.

Post-visit classroom activities – some ideas

The following is a small list of ideas for follow-up activities. Adapt and create your own depending on your class needs. Two worksheets are provided which you can print off and do with your learners:

- Fill out the Feedback form
- Visit review and postcard activity (this has been formatted to be printed double-sided)

Here are some alternative suggestions:

- Plan a visit for friends or family (perhaps making a tour for children)
- Ask the learners to write a thank you letter to their Museum Tutor, asking them what they remember and to describe their favourite part of the visit and explain why
- Practise writing reported speech by asking the learners to summarise their visit, highlighting particular things they were told by the guide
- Prepare a presentation about their favourite object or part of the collection using PowerPoint or visual aids
- Research a particular part of the collection i.e. a particular culture or time period
- Write a museum label for one object. The description should be no more than 150 words and also needs to include the object name, date and place of origin of the object
- Create a classroom display using photographs from the visit, descriptions of the objects and brief summaries of their visit experience
- Download the walking trail 'A walk around Bloomsbury with Sir Hans Sloane' www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/Healing_Histories_KS2-4.pdf
- Listen to some of the podcasts from the BBC series, 'A History of the World in 100 objects': www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/ahow/all

Reading activity Entry 1-Entry 2

The history of the British Museum



The British Museum started in 1753, but the Great Court opened in 2000.

The museum started with 70,000 objects.

Now the museum has more than twenty million objects.

The objects are from many countries in the world.

More than 6 million people go to the museum every year. A lot of visitors are school children from Britain.

Are the sentences below true (T) or false (F)?

The British Museum is over 250 years old.	T / F
The Museum has two thousand objects.	T / F
The objects are all from this country.	T / F
The museum has 6 million visitors every month	T / F

Reading activity Entry 3 and above

The history of the British Museum



The British Museum was the first national public museum in the world. It has objects from every continent and is a museum of world cultures. Many of the objects in the museum are thousands of years old.

The British Museum was started in the Eighteenth Century, a time referred to in Europe as the Enlightenment. In 1753 Sir Hans Sloane gave his collection of over seventy thousand objects to King George II for the nation. From this collection the museum started and it opened to the public in 1759.

In the 1880s the natural objects such as the fossils, stuffed animals, rocks and plants moved to the Natural History Museum in South Kensington. In the 1990s the books, stamps and maps moved to the new British Library building at St Pancras (near King's Cross station).

The present building opened in 1848, but the museum has grown and changed. In 2000 the old library area became the Great Court with a glass roof of six thousand square metres of glass. It is the largest covered public space in Europe, but that's not the end as the museum is always expanding, with the new World Conservation and Exhibition Centre as the most recent addition.

The British Museum has over six million objects, but visitors can only see about one tenth of these objects on show in the Museum. The rest of the objects are in store. More than one thousand people work at the British Museum. More than six million people visit the Museum each year.

Are the sentences below true (T) or false (F)?

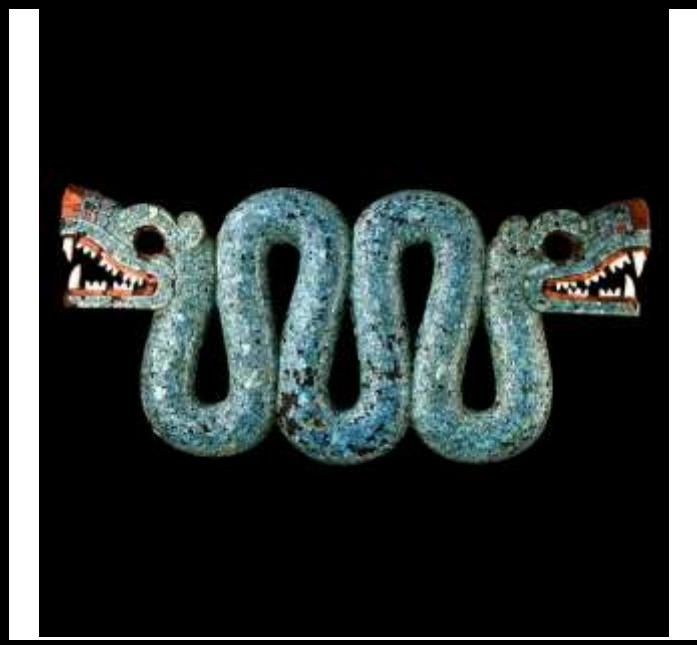
The objects in the British Museum are all from Britain.	T / F
The Museum started with 80,000 objects.	T / F
The Museum used to have large collections of books and natural objects, but it doesn't now.	T / F
The Great Court opened in 1848.	T / F
There is a new building for exhibitions.	T / F
It is impossible to see all the objects in the Museum.	T / F

Read more about the Museum:

www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/the_museums_story.aspx

Images and object labels for matching, timeline and map activities







<p>Colossal statue of a winged lion from the North-West Palace of Ashurnasirpal II Nimrud (ancient Kalhu), northern Iraq, about 883-859 BC</p>	<p>The Rosetta Stone Egypt, Ptolemaic Period, 196 BC</p>
<p>The Lewis Chessmen Probably made in Scandinavia, thought to be Norway, about AD 1150-1200 Found on the Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides, Scotland</p>	<p>Bronze figure of Nataraja From Tamil Nadu, southern India Chola dynasty, around AD 1100 Dancing Shiva in a ring of fire</p>
<p>Ife head: Brass head of a ruler Wunmonije Compound, Ife, Nigeria, probably 1300s – early 1400s</p>	<p>The David Vases Jingdezhen, China, dated equivalent to AD 1351</p>
<p>Double-headed serpent turquoise mosaic Mexico 15th-16th century AD</p>	<p>Horsemen from the west frieze of the Parthenon Acropolis, Athens, Greece about 438-432 BC</p>
<p>Olduvai stone chopping tool From Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, 1.8 - 2 million years old</p>	<p>Mosque lamp Mamluk dynasty, about AD 1350-55 From Cairo, Egypt Commissioned by Amir Sayf al-Din Shaykhu</p>
<p>Mobile phone handset Made in China for use in Haiti, 2012 This mobile phone is from the Caribbean island of Haiti where wireless and mobile technologies are increasingly used to make and receive payments.</p>	<p>Hoa Hakananai'a From Orongo, Easter Island (Rapa Nui), Polynesia, around AD 1000</p>

Feedback form Entry 1 and Entry 2 Your Visit to the British Museum

What do you remember about your visit to the British Museum?

What surprised you?

What was your favourite part of the visit?

Look at these pictures. What are they?



- a) An Egyptian statue
- b) The founder of the British Museum
- c) Part of the British Museum opened in AD2000
- d) A statue from a palace from the 8th Century BC
- e) A stone that helped people to understand Ancient Egyptian writing

- f) This room was a library for books that belonged to the King.

What would you say to a friend who has never been to the British Museum?

Write a postcard to a friend or family member about your visit.



N.B Print these pages double- sided and your postcard should have pictures on the back.

Feedback form – class tutor
Your visit to the British Museum

We would like to find out about your visit to the museum. Please help us by filling in this form.	
Name	
College or institution	
Age (tick) <input type="checkbox"/> under 19 <input type="checkbox"/> 36-49	<input type="checkbox"/> 19- 25 <input type="checkbox"/> 50- 60 <input type="checkbox"/> 26-35 <input type="checkbox"/> 60 +
Gender (delete as appropriate)	Male/ Female
ESOL level (tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> E1 <input type="checkbox"/> L1 <input type="checkbox"/> E2 <input type="checkbox"/> L2 <input type="checkbox"/> E3
When did you visit the museum?	
Time of visit (delete as appropriate)	Morning/afternoon/evening
Was this your first visit? (delete as appropriate)	Yes/No

What did you like about your visit?

Was there anything you did like about your visit?

What did you learn from your visit?

How can we make your visit better?

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<p>Will you go again to the British Museum? What would you like to see?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

**Thank you for taking the time to fill this in.
We look forward to seeing you again soon at the British Museum.**