

Teachers' notes and trail

Self-led visit: EFL

Introduction

This short trail on the British Museum has been created as a means of exploring the museum for EFL students, including students from private colleges, language schools and visiting groups of international students. You may also wish to use the accompanying **Visit guide: Self-led visits** and also the **Getting the most from your visit** preparation sheets. The latter has been designed with ESOL learners in mind but can be adapted for EFL.

Pre-visit preparation

Use the document **Getting the most from your visit** and the website to look at the history of the British Museum. There is an **Image bank** you can also use to look at key sites within the Museum and key objects.

Use the website <http://www.britishmuseum.org/visiting.aspx> to find the main galleries on the map and plan the best way to navigate around the museum during your visit. The trail starts in the Great Court and moves into Room 1 – the Enlightenment Gallery, then goes around the Main Floor, via Rooms, 27, 26 and 24, into Room 4 and finishes in Room 61 on the Upper Floor.

Using the trail

The trail has been designed to be printed on both sides of an A4 piece of paper. Ideally it should be printed in colour, then folded into 3 (in landscape). On the back are the general questions that students should be familiar with before the visit.

The trail can start outside or inside the Museum (depending on the weather). After the initial welcome to the Museum and the purpose of the visit, the trail starts from the Great Court. Then opening the booklet, start from Room 1 and follow the arrows. The arrows get gradually darker to help students follow the route. There are spaces provided for students to answer questions and make notes or drawings. You can print individual sheets or enough for one between two or three students.

Make sure that you remind the students to bring their own pencils or pens.

During your visit

The trail allows students to move through the Museum at their own pace but as group leader you should be expected to be aware of where groups are and be available to provide support where necessary. Arrange a meeting time and place for the beginning and end of the visit and provide contact numbers if anyone should get lost. Check that everyone knows where the toilets are.

Behaviour

Do take time to remind your students of your expectations of their behaviour in and around the Museum.

Food and drink

Remind the students that no food or drink (except water) is permitted in the Galleries.

Photography

Except where indicated by notices, you are permitted to use hand-held cameras and to take flash photography. Tripods and other camera stands are not permitted.

Why we say “Please don’t touch”

It’s a good idea to discuss this topic with your students before they come. They will be learning about two important aspects of the Museum: conservation and public display.

Touching objects destroys them, even stone ones. Even with the cleanest of hands, the natural oils in our skin can damage the toughest materials, even marble. We want to preserve the objects so that future generations can see and enjoy them too.

As well as damaging objects, touching them with dirty hands can very quickly discolour them.

Touching display cases can smear the glass, this looks unpleasant and makes it harder to see the objects.