

exchange



Museums, Libraries and Archives
inspiring teaching in the West Midlands

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introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide support, information and inspiration to Initial Teacher Training providers, their staff and trainees, on how to work in partnership with museums, libraries and archives in the West Midlands.

What do museums, libraries and archives offer?

Museums, libraries and archives connect people to inspiration, creativity, learning and enjoyment. They have a huge potential to support learning in schools, complementing the National Curriculum in almost every subject and nurturing creativity in teaching and learning.

Broad areas of educational policy such as curriculum reform, Assessment for Learning, personalised learning and provision for young people through the Every Child Matters outcomes, all underpin the work of the cultural sector in a way that will benefit the early professional development of trainee teachers.

Museums, libraries and archives offer ITT providers the opportunity to enhance the experience of trainees and to offer innovative practice. Partnerships with the cultural sector support the needs of children and young people, focusing on personal competencies, thinking and learning skills, enquiry, collaboration, reflection and creativity.

In the West Midlands, museums, libraries and archives offer ITT trainees and providers:

- Rich and unique resources
- Tailored training, workshops and placement opportunities
- Opportunities for learning outside the college or school setting
- A chance to fire up trainees' confidence, enthusiasm and passion
- Development opportunities for a wide range of qualities, attributes, and values

getting involved

Museums and libraries in the West Midlands already offer several specific projects to ITT providers and their trainees:



Literature Matters West Midlands

Literature Matters is a national project, which aims to enthuse teacher trainees and their tutors about children's literature and show them the creative potential of library services.

School Library Services in the West Midlands, working with the regional ASCEL group, are currently delivering four modules created to support achievement of these aims. The four modules are delivered independently or as part of a series and can be tailored to provider and trainee needs. They include:

- School libraries and what they can offer
- Culturally diverse literature and authors
- Inspirational storytelling
- Reader development

Trainees engaged in the modules so far have expressed an appetite for learning through literature and an enthusiasm to make the most of their own book knowledge. The modules have engendered a passion for reading with pupils and staff and a commitment to develop a whole school reading culture.

Trainees have also developed skills in multi-agency working and selecting appropriate resources for teaching.

“A fantastic informative session”

“Gave guidance which will aid my teaching in schools.”



West Midlands Museums Hub ITT project

Museums across the region now offer delivery of a variety of interactive training modules to ITT trainees on using museum collections with school children, at both primary and secondary level.

The modules illustrate how learning through museums can help children to develop their thinking skills and creativity and can support a variety of learning styles.

Sessions can be tailored to the needs of the students in terms of focus and duration.



ITT trainees involved so far tell us they have especially valued the opportunity to learn about:

- The range of resources available from museums
- How museums support different learning styles
- How museums visits link to the National Curriculum
- Cross curricular links
- Handling artefacts
- How museums support science activities
- The hands-on interactive and active approach of museum learning
- Museum outreach services
- Pre and post visit ideas for the classroom

“It’s made me realise all the different resources that are available from the museum.”

“I have always thought that museums were worthwhile, but now I appreciate their role more fully.”



context & QTS Standards

In the West Midlands, there are **205 museums (holding 7,039,825 objects), 14 library services (running 307 branch libraries and 51 mobile libraries) and 24 archives.**

“The QTS standards and requirements launched this year fully allow, and indeed encourage, the use of short-term placements at settings other than schools as a means for trainees to meet those standards. We hope that ITT Providers fully engage with this, and that it becomes a means to open up a discussion on the format and purpose of the placement within teacher education.”

Andrew Ettinger, Partnership (ITT) Team, TDA

Working with the cultural sector can support trainees across all areas of the QTS Standards particularly those relating to:

- Development of specialist knowledge and leadership skills
- Knowledge of resources and provision of inspiring learning environments in out of school contexts
- Recognition of the role of professionals from other sectors
- Development of collaborative and creative approaches to teaching and learning
- Partnership development and multi-agency working
- Understanding and respect for diversity and personalised learning
- Commitment to continuing professional development

**QTS Standards: Q5 Q6 Q7 Q8 Q10
Q14 Q19 Q24 Q25 Q30 Q32**



ITT trainees who have already been involved in using museums, libraries and archives in their training and lesson planning in the West Midlands have commented on their own and their pupils' developments:

Activity, behaviour and progression

"I would contact a museum when doing any future projects in school, to see what resources to help might be available."

WM Museums
Hub training sessions

Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity

"I found the whole session useful – it helped me to think of new ideas to introduce a love of reading in my future classes"

Literature Matters
module sessions

Knowledge and understanding

"I can really see the cross curricular links now, and how a trip to a museum could really spark off a new topic theme well."

WM Museums
Hub training sessions

Skills

"I will now be able to use books which deal with certain issues (e.g. bereavement, single parent families) much more confidently".

Literature Matters
module sessions

Attitudes and values

"The initial worry about how appropriate museums can be to help children has gone. The delivery by museums can be really interesting."

WM Museums
Hub training sessions



Getting Started:

10 things you can do next, to make sure that you are getting the most out of museums, libraries and archives in the West Midlands

- Look at relevant museum, library and archive websites (see contacts page)
- Contact MLA West Midlands to ask for some local contacts (see contacts page)
- Find out about other training and research opportunities in the museum, library or archive sector
- Visit your local museum, library or archive to see what's on offer
- Think about how you could use museum, library and archive resources in your subject teaching
- Organise for West Midlands Hub or Schools Library Services to deliver a training module for trainees
- Plan to use a museum, library or archive resource in your lesson planning
- Take pupils on a visit to a museum, library or archive
- Organise an exchange placement with a museum, library or archive member of staff
- **Read the rest of this document to find out more!**

cross curricular teaching & learning

Museums, libraries and archives offer stimulating settings to explore cross curricular teaching and learning. They can bring a connection between real life and learning in maths, design technology, science and other subjects.

- Opportunities to seek knowledge and understanding from a wide range of sources
- Hands on opportunities to engage with 'living history' encourages complex thinking about the interrelatedness of real-world scenarios
- Looking at artefacts encourages active investigation of a range of perspectives and tools
- Participating in storytelling involves effective communication and participation in collaborative dialogue

Using museum artefacts in a cross curricular way

As part of their PGCE course, primary level trainees at the University of Birmingham took part in a practical session developing ideas for using museum objects such as *Siliquofera Grandis* (see below), a large flying insect from New Guinea, to develop a cross curricular approach to teaching and learning.

The facilitator provided an example of cross curricular thinking linked to a colourful piece of textile art on the theme of tropical fishes. The students then began to see connections and develop their ideas making suggestions covering geography, maths, music, art, and science. Extending their thinking further they considered rainforest environments and camouflage colouring.



What ideas do you have using this object across different subject areas?

EXPLORING ISLAM with the Gladstone Pottery Museum

This project was designed to encourage year 5 and year 8 students to improve their Maths, RE and Art & Design skills by exploring Islamic art forms. Students visited the gallery and participated in workshops to explore the origins and design principles (maths: geometric elements, symmetry, tessellation, recurring pattern) of Islamic art and then had a chance to design and fire their own tile. Core mathematical skills were improved and children learned about the chemical process underpinning glazes and pigments. The project celebrated a dual heritage for many local children by linking and celebrating Staffordshire potteries and Islamic culture.



raising standards

“Big increase in standards of work and children’s self confidence.”

Art co-ordinator

“The students really enjoyed the practical work especially the tile making, spray painting and glass painting. Students’ remembering information in the key curriculum areas was greatly improved”

Teacher

expanding cultural horizons

“Really opened their eyes to other cultures and gave the children positive role models from different ethnic backgrounds.”

Year 5 teacher



independent learning

“It inspired the pupils to do their own presentation about the project using photostory in their own time. They wouldn’t normally have done this in school.”

Year 5 teacher



professional development

“The new skills the creative partners showed us will be of use in other lessons.”

Year 5 teacher



innovative, creative approach

“It was lovely to try out some new and exciting skills, it helped me approach the subject in a new way and make new connections between subjects”

Teacher



thinking skills

Museums, libraries and archives offer spaces for active learning about evidence and how we understand our world. Imagine a student's response to exploring Victorian workhouse menus or documents detailing the purchase of slaves.

Exploring the collections of museums, libraries and archives involves investigative skills that help build analytical understanding.

Museums, libraries and archives offer hands-on sessions where learners can begin to think about local and global histories in an environment that stimulates curiosity and exploration.

Looking at art with primary school students

As part of their PGCE course, primary level trainees at the University of Birmingham learnt how to talk about art and use drama techniques with their pupils. Facilitator Felicity Austen, explains:

“It is the questioning technique that is all-important here, and I explored a ‘framework’ of suitable open-ended questions that would give them the confidence and skills that are needed to look at works of art with children. The most important consideration for this age group is to teach the children to look closely and to use the information they get from this to make thoughtful deductions about the work. However, the single most important thing that I hope to have passed on to the students is that looking at works of Art with children must be a discussion.”



“Knowing what to do with children and paintings is useful. I know very little about art and this has made me much more comfortable dealing with this area.”

ITT trainee

PAY AND POWER

with Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives

Year 6 pupils from St Chad's Roman Catholic Primary School examined diverse archival sources at Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives, analysing information on health, food, holidays and dress, forming arguments and using evidence to discuss how their school has changed. They were able to closely examine 100 year old documents from their own school and a letter from a parent written in the late 1700's. The project offered a rich learning experience with discussions around the types of pupils that attended school, why they went to school, the ages they left, and contrasts in the curriculum.

is it real?

observation

what does it tell us?

is it like something you've seen before?

association & comparison

what type of object is this?

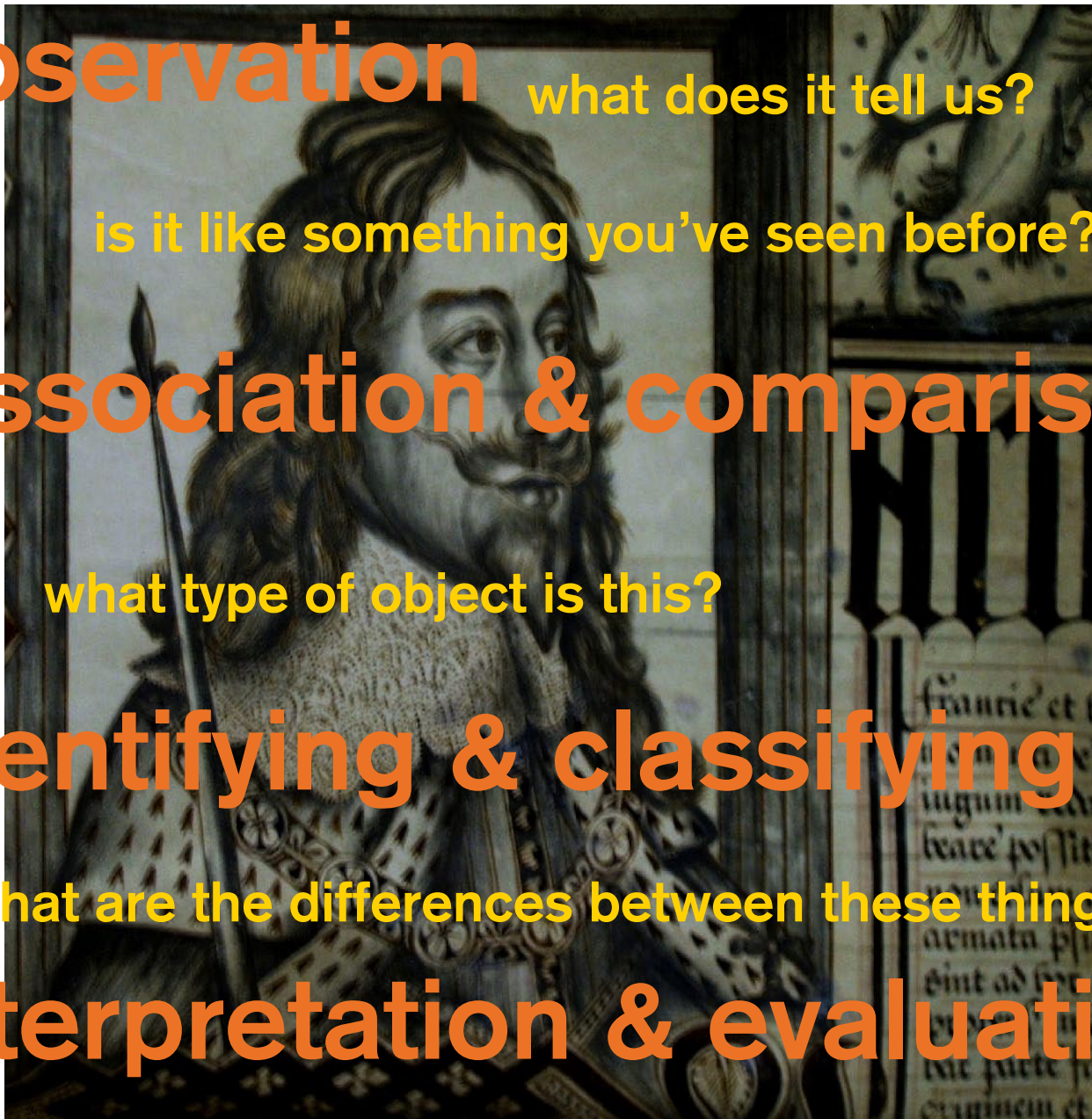
identifying & classifying

what are the differences between these things?

interpretation & evaluation

imagine how people lived when...?

how does it make you feel?



experiential learning

Museums, libraries and archives have rich collections that stimulate hands-on interaction and inquiry. These resources allow learners to engage with real-life experiences and offer an authentic setting to explore, experiment and learn through discovery and multi-sensory resources.

Museums and archives often relate historic events through 'live Interpretation' or drama that reveal hidden personal histories and provoke thinking.

ITT trainees 'learn by doing' in libraries and museums in the West Midlands:

The 'Cultural Diversity in Children's Literature' module was delivered to trainee teachers at the University of Wolverhampton by Warwickshire Schools Library Service. There were opportunities to look at contemporary, quality and diverse children's books tackling racism, sexism and inequality. Trainees took part in practical activities to select their own resources before taking part in a live performance of books useful for reading aloud in class.

"This has provided me with greater ability to discuss appropriate book choices with my students"

ITT trainee

While completing her Secondary PGCE English course at Newman College, Jenny Bentley (pictured) completed a placement at Blakesley Hall.

"During my placement I've been involved in hands-on activities focusing on the building's structure, Tudor building techniques and music...I have learnt a lot from observing the way that the museum staff get the children motivated from the moment they walk through the door...It was good for me to see things through their eyes and to understand why pupils can find some subjects or learning environments difficult."



Express Yourself with Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

Students from College High, Warren Farm Primary and Perry Common Junior and Infants schools explored the different cultural traditions that create carnival, using artefacts from the community history, textile and fine art collections of the museum. Year 10 students worked with a professional dance company to learn African-Caribbean dance styles and develop confidence to deliver workshops to younger students aimed at increasing self-esteem through music and movement. Year 1 and 2 students visited the museum to learn print making and used their new skills to design and print their own costumes and banners.

active exploration

Finding out about carnival tradition, visiting the museum to look at textiles.

“All areas of the project impacted greatly on the children’s learning”

Year 2 Teacher



teamwork

The project promoted a peer learning model and communication skills.

“I learned about carnival and that when we all work together it makes us a team”

Year 2 pupil



processing ideas and applying theories

“The dance workshop was extraordinary, I watched the children blossom not only in skills but in confidence and cooperation, they worked as a team.”

Year 10 Teacher



personal growth

“One boy has blossomed due to the project and gets far more involved in activities. He has also joined the football team which he was too shy to do before”

Year 2 Teacher

culture & creativity

Museum libraries and archives inspire creativity in all learners through a variety of activities, enabling learners to imagine and explore new ideas, question and challenge accepted ideas and form links between different concepts:

- Questioning understanding, perceptions and beliefs through role play
- Creating artwork in response to a book, a poem, an object or archival record through risk taking, experimentation and play
- A storytelling session using books, objects or archival records can inspire imagination
- Development and reflection on ideas, concepts and creations in a supportive, safe environment where learners of all abilities are valued.

Literature Matters: 'Inspirational Storytelling'

This module was delivered to trainees at Newman College by staff from Staffordshire SLS and Sandwell SLS. The session included speaking and listening in the curriculum, selecting resources and using tools to tell stories, for example, story sacks and oral storytelling. The trainees developed:

- The confidence to encourage creativity
- Practical ideas for classroom based work and resources for creative storytelling
- An increased ability to inspire children
- An increased understanding of school library service provision and expertise
- Their own creativity, innovation, enjoyment and motivation



“Very useful for my teaching placement. I can use the storytelling ideas to bring a fresh aspect to my class”

ITT trainee - Newman College

Why do we write? at The Pen Room

This project focused on the global phenomenon of written communication and its position in historical and contemporary societies. Year 5 pupils from Princethorpe Junior School in Birmingham worked at The Pen Room museum with creative practitioners from different cultural backgrounds. They created art and written work inspired by their own interpretations of The Pen Room collection which includes artefacts, records of events and stories. Collections studied at the museum included writing tools, Braille, graffiti, poetry, published materials, printing and illuminated texts.

Questioning and challenging

The pupils' investigative and questioning skills improved with pupils participating in discussions.

Imagining / envisaging what might be

Pupils were introduced to possibilities that they may never have considered. Their creative work included dance, drama and artwork.

Making connections

Pupils explored links between historic and contemporary societies.

Exploring ideas

Pupils were encouraged to focus on and investigate items from the collection that interested them.

Reviewing and reflecting

As the project progressed, their work became more varied and personalised.

"I visited the Pen Museum and it was very good because we made some work which is going to be published."

Year 5 pupil



"Pupil's confidence grew enormously, they all believe themselves to be writers now and that is before they have seen the finished product."

Teacher

contacts

To get involved, or for more information on the projects and case studies given here, please contact the Cultural Entitlement Officer at:

MLA West Midlands
Floor 2, Grosvenor House
14 Bennetts Hill
Birmingham B2 5RS
Telephone: 0121 631 5825
Email: info@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Useful websites

MLA West Midlands: www.mlawestmidlands.org.uk
The regional development agency for museums, libraries and archives.
They also have contact details for all the School Library Services

Museums4Schools in the West Midlands: www.museums4schools.org.uk
A guide to museums in the West Midlands and the best place to find names and contacts details for museums, libraries and archives local to you.

Inspiring Learning for All: www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk
More about the museum, library and archive approach to learning

Renaissance West Midlands: www.renaissancewestmidlands.org.uk
Information regarding the West Midlands Museums Hub
– the partnership between 5 regional museums
(Birmingham, Coventry, Ironbridge, Stoke-on-Trent and Wolverhampton)

Literature Matters: www.mla.gov.uk
Information regarding the national Literature Matters programme

The 24 Hour Museum: www.24hourmuseum.org.uk
The official guide to UK museums, galleries, archives and heritage attractions

& useful websites

cross curricular teaching & learning

<http://primaryhistory.org/leadinghistory/cross-curricular-learning,295,AR.html> - the key principles relating to cross curricular learning

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachinginengland/detail.cfm?id=213> - practical support for working across the curriculum

thinking skills

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/thinkingskills/> - overview of thinking skills approaches

<http://www.teachthinking.com> - quarterly magazine with practical articles on a range of thinking skills approaches plus reviews of new materials and resources

<http://www.sapere.net/> - SAPERE is a small charitable organization promoting the use of philosophical techniques and approaches in the classroom

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/banda/seal/> - SEAL: a curriculum resource to help primary schools develop children's social, emotional and behavioural skills

experiential learning

<http://www.learningandteaching.info/learing/experience.htm> - an overview of the theory and Kolb's Learning Cycle

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/casestudies/> - entering 'experiential learning' yeilds a useful set of case studies from citizenship to gradening & ecology

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/> - search for experiential learning yeilds many useful documents, including several on Study support for ITT trainiees

http://www.qca.org.uk/14-19/6th-form-schools/68_191.htm - download 'Maximising learning from work-related experiences'

culture & creativity

<http://www.ncaction.org.uk/creativity/> - some practical ideas on how to recognise and promote pupil creative thinking and behaviour

<http://www.creative-partnerships.com/> - Creative Partnerships website

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/naccce/index1.shtml> - report All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education by the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE)

<http://www.sfs.org.uk/> - the Society for Storytelling



notes



MLA West Midlands
Floor 2, Grosvenor House
14 Bennetts Hill
Birmingham B2 5RS
Telephone: 0121 631 5825
Email: info@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

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booksplus, Kirklees Education Library Service
Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives
Gladstone Pottery Museum
MLA West Midlands
MLA Yorkshire
West Midlands Museums Hub
The Pen Room

KSM Designs
danwilliamsksm@yahoo.co.uk
01484 683406



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