

4. Bringing the curriculum to life through a cultural residency

The *My Primary School is at the Museum* project offered a different way of viewing School-Museum partnerships and trips. Many schools organise exciting off-site school trips and educational visits to enhance their curriculum. Often these are day trips and, as a school, you may not have considered a longer term residency in a museum or cultural organisation before.

‘Schools and teachers became more confident in using out-of-classroom resources and spaces for teaching. The more relaxed environment encouraged teachers to explore a greater range of resources, in creative ways, to deliver the curriculum. The projects also fostered deeper relationships between schools and parents, contributing to greater community cohesion.’

(My Primary School is at the Museum, 2016)

The MPSM pilots demonstrated a way that teachers could use their local museums as a learning base, covering many curriculum areas but in a different way. For schools and teachers, this gave an opportunity to consider creative ways in which to deliver the curriculum and confidence using out-of-classroom spaces.

There are vast opportunities to learn in a museum or cultural setting which go beyond initial assumptions, for example, an art gallery isn’t only for art learning.

Use ‘Bringing the curriculum to life through a cultural residency’ to:

- Evaluate the breadth of curriculum opportunities available to children in a museum setting.
- Look at how residencies can be planned to include many cross curricular opportunities.
- Consider how museum learning practice can help you plan and deliver experiences and learning in a museum setting.

Information and inspiration in ‘Bringing the curriculum to life through a cultural residency’:

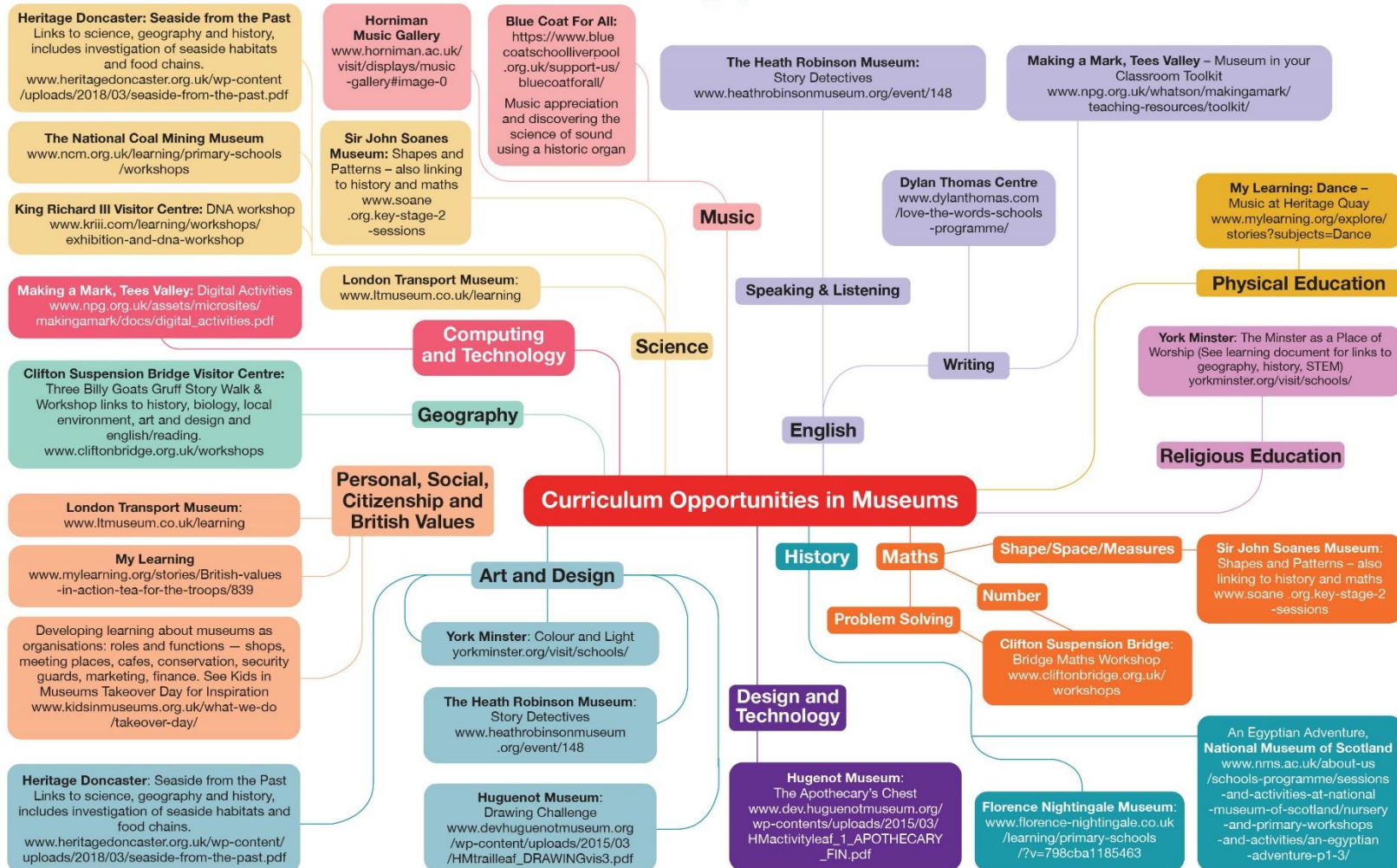
- Curriculum opportunities in museums
- Curriculum map example
- Curriculum planning using a Discovery Tree
- Useful links to resources, websites and activity ideas

4.1 Curriculum opportunities in museums

This document shows the wealth of curriculum relevant activities inspired by museum collections. It is not exhaustive but will give you a 'way in' to seeing cross curricular opportunities available to you and your children when in a museum setting or cultural institution. By looking at different ways of working, you will be able to make curriculum links to tailor the bespoke programme you could build when working in partnership with your museum learning team.

My Primary School is at the Museum

Curriculum Opportunities in Museums



4.1.1. Summary of project examples by curriculum area

The curriculum examples illustrate the cross curricular nature of museum learning. They demonstrate how different curriculum areas can be taught in a museum space regardless of the focus of the museum. Use the summaries and weblinks below to explore the breadth of curriculum opportunities that may be available over a residency. We have included stated curriculum links as well as the cross curricular opportunities offered by the learning workshop/activity or the museum collections.

- **Art and Design:**

The Heath Robinson Museum – Story Detectives

<https://www.heathrobinsonmuseum.org/event/148>

Heath Robinson, renowned for his illustrations and humorous and satirical drawn inventions, prompts discussion and learning about how images communicate ideas and narratives (e.g. Robinson's series of drawings showing how a small occurrence triggers a series of events which leads to disaster). Story Detectives looks at understanding layers of meaning in images and visual metaphor. Links to English and Art & Design (as well as History).

Huguenot Museum – Discovering Plants and Discovering Families

<https://huguenotmuseum.org/learning/primary/>

These workshops from the Huguenot Museum are very practical ways of linking museum collections with learning activities from different curriculum areas. Links to Art & Design (as well as History and Science).

York Minster – Colour and Light

<https://d10okuw2vik61v.cloudfront.net/uploads/2020/01/Learning-Centre-workshops-2020-pricing-NEW.pdf>

This learning workshop offers a cross curricular study of stained glass. Children learn about stained glass and how it is made (linking to Art & Design), as well as the properties of glass (Science) and the religious significance of light (Religious Education).

- **Computing and Technology:**

Making a Mark, Tees Valley – Museum in Your Classroom - Digital Activities

https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/microsites/makingamark/docs/digital_activities.pdf

This activity guide provides many ideas and activities to combine digital skills with collections (in this case based on the National Portrait Gallery) but could be applied to many collections and cultural institutions.

- **Design Technology:**

Huguenot Museum – The Apothecary's Chest

<https://huguenotmuseum.org/learning/primary/>

This learning workshop draws upon its French Hospital Collection and looks at historical medicine. Learning is facilitated through object handling and hands on weighing and measuring of ingredients. Children will develop understanding of historic ailments and medicines. Links to Design & Technology (as well as Science and History).

- **English**

Dylan Thomas Centre – Love the Words school's programme - Writing

www.dylanthomas.com/love-the-words-schools-programme/

The Dylan Thomas Centre offer guided visits for children from Foundation through to Key Stage 3. The visits are based on writing and poetry (e.g. activities on cut up poetry and story dice) as well as understanding Thomas' childhood in Swansea and his war work and writing about World War 2. Links to English (as well as History).

Making a Mark – Museum in Your Classroom Toolkit

<https://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/makingamark/teaching-resources/toolkit>

This comprehensive toolkit guides school staff in developing a scheme of work inspired by the National Portrait Gallery's collection and online image resources. It includes linking with local museums and investigating primary sources (linking with History and Art) and, through the skills of curation and display, gives a real purpose for writing (links to English).

- **Geography:**

Clifton Suspension Bridge Visitor Centre – Three Billy Goats Gruff Story Walk and Workshop

<https://www.cliftonbridge.org.uk/workshops>

This workshop looks at the local environment around the Clifton Suspension Bridge. It combines Art & Design creating a headband with a story performance, walking across the bridge and retelling the traditional tale. Links to English (and Science and Art & Design).

- **History:**

Florence Nightingale Museum -

<https://florence-nightingale.co.uk/primary-schools/?v=79cba1185463>

National Museum of Scotland – An Egyptian Adventure

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/about-us/schools/schools-programme/sessions-and-activities-at-national-museum-of-scotland/nursery-and-primary-workshops-and-activities/an-egyptian-adventure-workshop-p1-3/>

This workshop is a guided experience of the Ancient Egyptian collection at the NMS leading children on a trail to experience the coronation of a new Pharaoh. It involves multisensory experiences and

handling objects and links to History by understanding lives in the past. It also links to Speaking and Listening parts of Literacy/English and the Expressive Arts through the use of drama.

- **Maths:**

Sir John Soane's Museum – Shapes and Patterns

<https://www.soane.org/key-stage-2-sessions>

The Sir John Soane's Museum houses a vast collection of architectural pieces, antiquities and architectural drawings that are a vast window into architectural history. This workshop's key question is 'Can buildings speak?' Children will look carefully at the collections to find shapes and patterns used in buildings for thousands of years, and link with the Science curriculum areas of materials and forces. Also links with Numeracy and History.

Clifton Suspension Bridge – Bridge Maths Workshop

<https://www.cliftonbridge.org.uk/workshops>

This is a workshop linking every aspect possible about the Clifton Suspension Bridge to maths. The workshop covers many things: money, fractions, distances and weights and also links to problem solving and reasoning.

- **Music:**

Horniman Music Gallery – Musical Instruments Around the World

<https://www.horniman.ac.uk/learn/learning-sessions/booking-session/musical-instruments-around-the-world>

The Horniman's Learning team use the extensive collection in the Music Gallery to host workshops for schools which are hands on and interactive linking to the music curriculum but also to geography showcasing instruments from around the world. As well as Musical Instruments Around the World the Learning team offer a workshop on Gamelan.

Bluecoats For All Project – Restoration of Historic Organ

<https://www.bluecoatschoolliverpool.org.uk/support-us/bluecoatforall/>

This Heritage Lottery Funded Project involved the restoration of a historic organ in Bluecoats school chapel. Activities for school children included a science ceilidh. Children listened to pieces of music played on the organ, learnt about the physics of sound and then recreated how the organ's pipes work using ceilidh dance moves. There is a fantastic video on the Bluecoats For All website (link above) which shows how this science ceilidh worked.

- **Physical Education:**

MyLearning: Dance – Music at Heritage Quay

<https://www.mylearning.org/stories/music-at-heritage-quay/937?>

Heritage Quay hosts a collection on British 20th/21st century music. MyLearning hosts a film and images from the collection called 'Music at Heritage Quay' which draws together the curriculum

areas of music, history (particularly 20th century) and dance. The site has extensive teacher notes and activity ideas.

- **Religious Education:**

York Minster – The Minster as a Place of Worship

<https://d10okuw2vik61v.cloudfront.net/uploads/2020/01/Learning-Centre-workshops-2020-pricing-NEW.pdf>

It may be obvious that a Cathedral links to Religious Education however by being at a historic building there are strong cross curricular opportunities to link to history and religious buildings and architecture. The workshop includes an act of worship in the crypt which has a collection of historical architecture.

- **Science:**

Heritage Doncaster: Seaside from the Past

<https://www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/seaside-from-the-past.pdf>

In this KS1 workshop, with links to Science, Geography and History, children investigate seaside habitats and food chains. As well as writing scripts, being a Punch and Judy puppeteer, and examining and identifying shells and fossils found on the East Coast!

King Richard III Visitor Centre – DNA workshop

<https://kriii.com/learning/workshops/exhibition-and-dna-workshop/>

This workshop offers a clear cross curricular opportunity to link history with science. The children participating extract DNA from a banana with University of Leicester's Go Bananas experiment and learn about DNA in the context of the discovery of the remains of Richard III.

London Transport Museum

<https://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/learning/schools/key-stage-2>

All of the Learning workshops for Key Stage 2 are cross curricular sessions linking to many subjects including Science, History, Design and Technology.

The National Coal Mining Museum

<https://www.ncm.org.uk/learning>

The NCM workshops link science and engineering with history for example looking at rocks and fossils, local history, children working underground and mining inventions.

Sir John Soane's Museum – Shapes and Patterns

<https://www.soane.org/key-stage-2-sessions>

See under maths

4.2 Curriculum map example: Swansea Waterfront Museum

This document shows the curriculum developed by Laura Luxton and the Swansea Waterfront Museum for a residency with reception class children. This residency lasted for 5 weeks in the *My Primary School is at the Museum* pilot and is linked to the Welsh curriculum. Usefully it captures the breadth of curriculum possibilities and which opportunities were pre planned and which were developed on site at the museum.

My Primary School Is At The Museum Reception Children (4-5yrs), National Waterfront Museum Swansea (Transport)		Foundation Phase Curriculum Map		
FP Area	Learning Activity	Planned?	Link to Donaldson Area of Learning & Experience	Link to Donaldson Four Curriculum Purposes
Language, Literacy and Communication	Author workshop, choose a mode of transport in museum and imaginative writing where you would go and why?	Pre-planned	Science & Tech LLC	Ambitious, capable learners
	"See, Think, Wonder" model opportunities to discuss artefacts.	On site	Humanities LLC	Enterprising, creative contributors
	Charles Horace Watkins biography, inventor of the Robin Goch plane	Pre-planned	Humanities LLC	Ethical informed citizens
Mathematical Development	High Frequency Word Search on artefact descriptions in museum	On site	LLC	Ambitious, capable learners
	Counting logos and wheels	On site	Maths & Numeracy	Ambitious, capable learners
	Data handling number of people entering museum at given times of day.	Pre-planned	Maths & Numeracy	Ambitious, capable learners
	Searching for number words	Pre-planned	Maths & Numeracy	Enterprising, creative contributors
Personal, Social Development, Wellbeing and Cultural Diversity	Counting in 2's using bike wheels/wings in the collections naturally.	On site	Maths & Numeracy	Ambitious, capable learners
	Seaside long ago workshop – understanding Welsh heritage.	Pre-planned	Humanities	Ethical informed citizens
	Museum Etiquette Lesson – mind map how to behave in public and why	On-site	Health & Well Being	Healthy, confident individuals
	Parent Open Day – children to conduct closing tour at end of project	Pre-planned	Health & Well Being	Enterprising, creative contributors
Welsh Language Development	"Tedi Twt" Lesson, offered through Museum as it is a workshop they offer regularly.	Pre-planned	LLC	Ambitious, capable learners
	Welsh colour treasure hunt	On site	LLC	Ambitious, capable learners
	Using "beth sy yn y bocs?" (What is in the box?) to discuss artefacts in a box before revealing them.	Pre-planned	LLC	Enterprising, creative contributors
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Local area walk; using museum as base we went to see what else was in the vicinity including the marina and beach	On site	Humanities	Ethical informed citizens
	History of transport – Museum facilitated including tour	Pre-planned	Humanities	Ethical informed citizens
	Pirates – "Bart Ddu" workshop of the history of pirates, museum led	Pre-planned	Humanities	Ethical informed citizens
Creative Development	Design a new mode of transport with features	Pre-planned	Science & Tech	Enterprising, creative contributors
	Observational drawings from Museum balcony	On site	Expressive Arts	Enterprising, creative contributors
Physical Development	Fancy dress and role play activities (Pirate day)	Pre-planned	Expressive Arts	Healthy, confident individuals
	More incidental walking due to nature of activities in big space	On site	Health & Well Being	Healthy, confident individuals
	Leisure Centre Work-out and Play – LC is next to museum	Pre-planned	Health & Well Being	Healthy, confident individuals
	Beach yoga – using local beach for yoga and fresh air	Pre-planned	Health & Well Being	Healthy, confident individuals

PDF Curriculum Map Example, *My Primary School is at the Museum*. With thanks to Laura Luxton from the pilot at the National Waterfront Museum, Swansea

4.3 Curriculum planning using a Discovery Tree

During the MPSM pilot at Tate Liverpool, the way in which children's interests were built upon over time was vividly reflected in a discovery tree, which 'grew' on the wall over the course of the two-week residency, documenting children's interests via what they did and said.

It was based on the Reggio inspired P.L.O.D (Possible Lines of Development) approach.

The tree also served as a way of making children's thinking visible, as it was created by observing, listening and documenting children's voices, experiences and interests¹.

Documenting in this way gave the teachers and educators time to explore children's interests and find artworks or activities to use as provocations in the gallery to further extend their learning.

Finally, the tree also highlighted to everyone – including the children who could see their own branches grow over time – the child-led nature of the experience.



*Figure 1
Discover Tree
Planning from
My Primary
School is at the
Museum*

4.4 Useful links to resources, websites and activity ideas.

4.4.1 Write on Literacy Booklet

This guide shows how museums and galleries can support a core element of the National Curriculum: literacy. It presents ideas and tried and tested techniques and activities undertaken over four years by two partnership literacy projects in Manchester and Preston.

<https://museumdevelopmentnorthwest.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/write-on-literacy-booklet.pdf>

4.4.2 Creative Spaces: Children as co-researchers in the design of museum and gallery learning

This publication explores how children approach learning in a museum or gallery space and has recommendations for creating opportunities for child-led learning.

<https://museumdevelopmentnorthwest.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/creative-spaces.pdf>

4.4.3 The Huge History Lesson

This collaboration between the Times Educational Supplement and British Museum has a step by step guide to conducting a historical enquiry investigation using museum collections.

<https://www.tes.com/hugehistory/index.html>

4.4.4 Enquiry Led Learning

This blog post shares Tyne and Wear Museums and Bradford Museum's approaches to engaging children using enquiry led learning in gallery spaces.

<http://myschoolatthemuseum.site/2019/03/12/three-great-enquiry-based-approaches-that-inspire-child-led-learning-in-the-museum/>

4.4.5 The Secret Life of Objects

Inspiring ideas for using objects in a museum and classroom context, includes an Object Investigation Framework.

<http://edau.cymru/content/downloads/The-Secret-Life-of-Objects.pdf>

4.4.6 See, Link, Wonder – Science Museum

A simple question and discussion tool to help people to make observations and personal connections with an object, image or hands-on experience.

<https://transformingpractice.sciencemuseum.org.uk/see-link-wonder-discussion-tool/>

4.4.7 A guide to Using Objects to Find Out About the Past

Activities to help students explore objects and develop their skills in looking, describing, questioning, hypothesising, testing and recording. Created by the Tees Valley Museums Making a Mark partnership, part of the Arts Council Funded Museums and Schools Programme.

https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/microsites/makingamark/docs/guide_to_investigating_objects.pdf

4.4.8 A Guide to Using Portraits, Paintings and Images to Find out About the Past

Activities to help students explore paintings, portraits and other images, and develop their skills in looking, describing, questioning, hypothesising and testing. Created by the Tees Valley Museums Making a Mark partnership and the Arts Council Funded Museums and Schools Programme.

https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/microsites/makingamark/docs/guide_to_using_portraits_paintings_and_images.pdf

4.4.9 Museum and Education Toolkit

This Toolkit explores and explains the pros and cons of different methods and techniques from museum and heritage education, including tours, trails and talks.

http://network.icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/minisites/ceca/Annual_Conference_Docs/2017-10-08_Education_toolkit_-_e-book_EN.pdf

4.4.10 MyLearning

Hosts over 200 resources from arts, cultural and heritage organisations from across England, acting as a central hub for teachers to find accurate and engaging information, high quality media, activity and

discussion ideas, all linked to the national curriculum. Funded by the Arts Council England and managed by Leeds Museums and Galleries.

<https://www.mylearning.org/>

4.4.11 Using Archives

An online, free to access, CPD unit from the Historical Association and National Archives. It includes advice about developing an engaging enquiry for students and working with archives in your area to create a local history unit.

<https://www.history.org.uk/secondary/module/3098/making-history-using-archives-in-the-classroom>

4.4.12 Our Migration Story

Teaching difficult or challenging history using museum's collections, advice from Imperial War Museum hosted by Our Migration Story

[https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/uploads/Teaching%20Difficult%20Histories Imperial%20War%20Museum.pdf](https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/uploads/Teaching%20Difficult%20Histories%20Imperial%20War%20Museum.pdf)

4.4.13 Huguenot Museum Trails

These downloadable trails and worksheets from the Huguenot Museum are a useful starting point which could be adapted to any museum setting.

<https://huguenotmuseum.org/learning/learning-resources/>

4.4.14 I See, I think, I wonder

This approach uses a routine of asking three questions to encourage children's skills of observation and interpretation.

What do you see?

What do you think is going on?

What does it make you wonder?

<https://thinkingpathwayz.weebly.com/seethinkwonder.html>

Bradford Museums and Galleries' Art & Science of Noticing workshop is underpinned by a similar child-centred approach to structuring thinking. The facilitated session, led by children's curiosity, focuses on how children respond and react to the collections and buildings. Watch this short video brilliantly bring to life the approach and its impact.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5li-jZKb4p4&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.bradfordmuseums.org/blog/the-art-science-of-noticing>

4.4.15 Take one picture

This project includes examples of connecting schools to art pieces and is run yearly by the National Gallery. There are excellent resources for cross curricular work linked to a painting/artwork. (The BBC was previously involved in the Masterpieces in Schools project which took a masterpiece on tour to schools <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2013/masterpieces-in-schools>)

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/take-one-picture>