

DEVELOPING LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN MUSEUMS

Grass Roots Training

15 November, Inverness Museum and Art Gallery
PPT Summary: Highland Museum of Childhood Case Study

Developing Learning Programmes

- No shortage of advice & help available: GEMS, SMC, MLA
- Internal factors to consider: budgets, staffing, space, training
- External standards to be met: accreditation, child protection, service levels, visitor services

This can be liberating & daunting at the same time.....

Focus on one area at a time!

Decide on the area of greatest need eg.:

- *What to do with school groups*

Decide on your target audience

- *Use the unique features of your collections - and yourself!*
- *Link to 5-14 Guidelines (download from Learning & Teaching Scotland website)*

Assess Current Provision

Is there a need for change?

- *Are links to curriculum unfocussed?*
- *Is there too much direct teaching?*
- *Do children concentrate on worksheets to detriment of the bigger picture?*
- *Is there too little formative evaluation?*
 - *ie., Could you make more of teacher input?*

Aims

Key Aim “To develop, deliver & evaluate a high quality teaching session for P6-7 pupils studying The Victorians”

- *To motivate the pupils and foster self-esteem*
- *To support classroom learning and to demonstrate to teachers and pupils alike the relevance of the museum as a learning resource*

Objectives

Specific Objectives

- Improve communication between museum and schools
- Focus content & structure of sessions on interactive experiences
- Introduce direct evaluation and use results to monitor development
- Use evaluation results for policy review and as a tool to facilitate wider benefits such as funding, museum’s profile

Devise a Pilot Session

1. **Welcome & Introduction** – everyone feels more comfortable knowing who you are and what’s going to happen
2. **Do they need/want to watch your video?** asking parents or teachers will tell you if yours is suitable
3. **Don’t forget to include break-time!**
4. **Role-play** – can be very simple – or scripted! Linked to dressing up
5. **Direct teaching and object handling** – collect replica or duplicate objects. A little lateral thought will develop their learning potential
6. **Group Activities** – for “The Victorians”
 - Dressing up
 - Slate & pencil and pen & ink, desk, copperplate writing
 - Notes and drawings
 - Activity sheets
 - Playing with traditional toys and games
7. **Victorian Strathpeffer** – one of our “optional extras”

Practical Requirements

- **Funding bids** – *allow time*
- **Construction of costumes** – *volunteers often keen to help*
- **Liase with schools** – *but don’t demand too much input!*
- **Research role play** – *allow plenty of time*
- **Activity sheets** – *more “open” questions*
- **Space** – *disruption, weather*
- **Marketing** – *database, mailshot*
- **Staffing/volunteers** – *check Child Protection clearance, use skills*

Evaluation

Baseline – targets are probably being met via:

- *Visitor surveys*
- *Patterns of school visits - records*
- *Facilities & resources already available*

but standards of a qualitative nature may need re-assessment

Front-end analysis

- *Find out new developments in education – publications, colleagues, teachers*

Formative evaluation

- *Involve teachers in design and appropriateness of role-play costumes, activity sheets, whole session*

Summative evaluation – find out how successful, after it’s over

- *Make sure teachers (and pupils by interview) get the opportunity to give feedback, either informally or, better, by filling in questionnaire relating to original agreed objectives of visit*