

4 - 7
Middle Childhood

Teacher Resource

EXTRAORDINARY STORIES

FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Western Australian Museum – Perth

25 October 2011 - 5 February 2012

museum.wa.gov.au/bm-exhibition.



Free
entry and
activity posters
for students.

SINGAPORE AIRLINES 

 SINGAPORE AIRLINES CARGO

 **The West Australian**

THE BRITISH MUSEUM



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN **museum**

Decorated archer's shield
19th Century CE
Papua New Guinea

© Trustees of the British Museum

Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum

Self-guided Experience

Overview : Experience a 1.8 million year journey around the world as you view artefacts from Commonwealth countries in the *Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum* exhibition.

This exhibition is filled with some of the British Museum's most important items, rarely lent to other museums, and tell extraordinary stories about the world's people, who we are and where we have come from.

Duration : Approximately 45 minutes.

Your group/s are welcome to explore the remainder of the Museum's galleries before or after viewing the exhibition. We recommend that teachers become familiar with the Museum's layout and collections by visiting the Museum prior to their excursion date.

What your class will experience:

- Examine objects from the British Museum's collections from Commonwealth countries – objects that span 1.8 million years of human history and a diversity of cultures.
- Collect an activity poster for completion back at school / home.

Excursion Booking and Enquiries:

Museum Education Bookings and Enquiries

Phone: 9427 2792

Fax: 9427 2883

Email: education@museum.wa.gov.au



Please refer to museum.wa.gov.au/education or our 2011 Education Programs brochure (available on our website or in hard-copy form) for an overview of the range of facilitated programs and self-guided experiences available for school groups.

Queen chess piece from the Lewis chess sets
12th Century CE
found in Scotland, probably made in Norway

© Trustees of the British Museum



Teacher Resource

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'Throne of weapons', made by Kester
2001 CE
Mozambique
© Trustees of the British Museum

Links

Curriculum

Society & Environment

Culture

Students understand that people form groups because of their shared understandings of the world, and, in turn, they are influenced by the particular culture so formed.

Time, Continuity and Change

Students understand that peoples' actions and values are shaped by their understanding and interpretation of the past.

Technology & Enterprise

Technology in Society

Students understand how cultural beliefs, values, abilities and ethical positions are interconnected in the development and use of technology and enterprise.

The Arts

Arts in Society

Students understand the role of the arts in society.

Key Messages

1. Artefacts can help us to understand different cultures.
2. Human history can be explored through investigating objects and stories.
3. The countries of the Commonwealth are made up of diverse peoples.

Galleries



Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum,
Temporary Exhibition Gallery, Beaufort Street Wing

At the Museum

Self-guided Experience

Approximately 45 minutes

All school visits to *Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum* are self-guided.

We have developed three pathways through this exhibition for students. Each themed pathway highlights eight different objects in the exhibition. Each pathway is accompanied by an activity poster (available for free for each student when you visit the museum). Your students can complete one, two or all three!

Please allow for time to explore the Museum's other galleries before or after visiting the *Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum* exhibition. Maps are available at the Front Desk to assist you in navigating around the Museum, or please ask a staff member for directions.

Please split your class/es into small groups of no more than ten students. Each group should be allocated an adult leader.



Collect

Please collect on the day of your excursion:

Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum poster series (for every student).



Step Back in Time

Discover some of the oldest objects from the exhibition on an interactive timeline. Poster includes pictures and an overview of the rare artefacts featured.



Journey Around the World

Locate some of the Commonwealth countries on the world map and explore the objects represented in an interactive mapping activity.



Connect to Culture

Investigate aspects of culture represented by the objects using activities with a graphic organiser.

Related Museum Resources

Exhibition Information



For information on *Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum*, please visit the exhibition website at museum.wa.gov.au/bm-exhibition.

Planning your excursion

- Excursion Essentials
- Excursion Management Plan



Available online museum.wa.gov.au/education

Publications

Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum exhibition catalogue (available for purchase from the exhibition).



Akan drum
17th-18th Century CE
Made in Ghana, Found in USA
© Trustees of the British Museum

Classroom Activities

From this list, please select some activities that are suitable for the age and ability of your students.

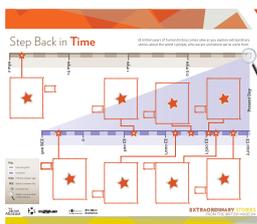
- **Web-wise:** Have your students visit museum.wa.gov.au/bm-exhibition and britishmuseum.org to find out more about these museums, the exhibition and the objects in *Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum*.
- **Common-sense:** Use the internet and other sources of information to have your students discover more about the Commonwealth. You might like to have them explore:
 - when, how and why the Commonwealth was formed.
 - which countries are part of the Commonwealth. Each student or group can choose one country, find out more about it and make a creative presentation to the rest of the class.
 - the importance of CHOGM (held in Perth in 2011).
 - where the countries of the Commonwealth are located on a world map (they might like to use the Journey Around the World activity poster).
 - the history and symbolism of the Commonwealth flag.
- **Sharing Stories:** This exhibition is called 'Extraordinary Stories' because each object has its own unique story. Have your students select their favourite object from the exhibition and write their own creative story about it. Share their stories in small groups or with the class, and bind them together to create a class book.
- **Living Library:** Each student can choose an object from the exhibition that they found interesting. Then they can imagine that the original owner or creator of this item was still alive, and could be interviewed for half an hour. If you could meet this person, what would you talk about? What would you ask them? What would a historian or a museum curator ask them?

Poster Activities

Step Back in Time

Step back in time and discover some of the oldest objects from the Commonwealth countries.

The suggested activities here relate to the following poster, available free for each student when you visit the Museum.



You might like to explore the following objects in greater detail with your students.

■ Chertsey Shield:

- Research how and why the Chertsey Shield was made, and how it was likely to have been used. Why is this shield considered a significant object?
- Find out how this shield was discovered and the condition that it was found in. Research the role of conservators in museums. Discuss which items would be in greater need of conservation eg paper objects vs stone vs metal.

■ Queen chess piece from the Lewis chess sets:

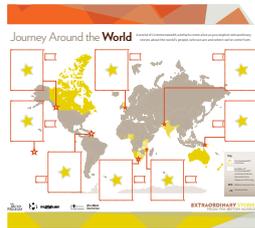
- Research the Lewis chess pieces, including when and where they were 'discovered'. Discuss which pieces of information are based on hard evidence and which pieces are based on speculation. How does this affect our interpretation of history?
- Have your students research the origins and history of the game of chess, and how it has changed over time.
- Have students make their own replica Lewis chess pieces using the salt dough recipe and instructions on the British Museum website (search for 'Lewis Chess' to help you find the link quickly!).

■ Stone chopping tool:

- Research the Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania. Why is this a significant site?
- Why is this stone tool so important in our understanding of human evolution?

Journey Around the World

Journey around the world and explore amazing objects from Commonwealth countries. The suggested activities here relate to the following poster, available free for each student when you visit the Museum.



You might like to explore the following objects in greater detail with your students.

■ Vuvuzela, FIFA World Cup 2010:

- Within a very short period of time, the entire world came to know what a *vuvuzela* was. With this in mind, discuss why the British Museum would add to their collection something that is inexpensive and mass-produced. Compare this to their custodianship of rare and priceless objects.
- Find out about the controversies surrounding the noise from these instruments. Examine this issue from several points of view and stage a debate on whether or not these instruments should have been banned during the World Cup.

■ 'Throne of weapons', made by Kester:

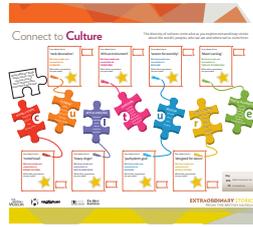
- This 'throne' has been made as part of the *Transforming Arms into Tools* project. Research this project and discuss why it was created. Have students create posters to advertise the aims of this program.
- Investigate and discuss why you think these guns were turned into a 'throne'.

■ Decorated archer's shield:

- Research the role of shields like this one from Papua New Guinea. What is the significance of the materials used, and the meanings of their shapes and the designs on them?
- Compare this shield with any others you can find in the exhibition or online. Make a chart or table and record their similarities and differences.
- After researching shields like this one, construct your own life-size shield from cardboard or other craft materials, and create a meaningful design on it. Make a museum-style label explaining your work, and create a display of them where the school can see them.

Connect to Culture

Connect to culture when you investigate objects from Commonwealth countries. The suggested activities here relate to the following poster, available free for each student when you visit the Museum.



You might like to explore the following objects in greater detail with your students.

■ Ife head:

- Research the Yoruba peoples of Ife and then investigate who historians believe this statue represents. What clues can the statue give?
- Research the 'lost wax technique' and explain how it must have been used here. Why did the discovery of this statue challenge European views on African Civilisation?

■ Akan drum:

- Research where and why this drum was made and what it was used for. How did it get from Africa to America? What was the relationship between this part of the USA and England at that time?
- Get your students to investigate the traditions of drums. What cultures had (or have) them and what uses do they have? Have the class make their own drums from recycled materials. Invite a community drumming group to perform for your school.

■ Sandstone sculpture of Ganesh:

- What is the significance of this statue? Have students research different religions from the Commonwealth, and the various ways that gods are depicted and worshipped.

■ Prow from a war canoe:

- Find out more about Maori culture and the importance and use of canoes within it.
- This canoe prow would have taken a skilled craftsman a very long time to carve. What other carved objects can you find in the exhibition? Where do they come from? How are they different from or similar to each other?