

8 - 10
Early Adolescence

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



The West
Australian

THE
BRITISH
MUSEUM



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
museum

Ife head
14th-15th Century CE
Nigeria

© 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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• Step Back in Time	
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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).



The Phoenix Jewel
16th Century CE
England

© 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.

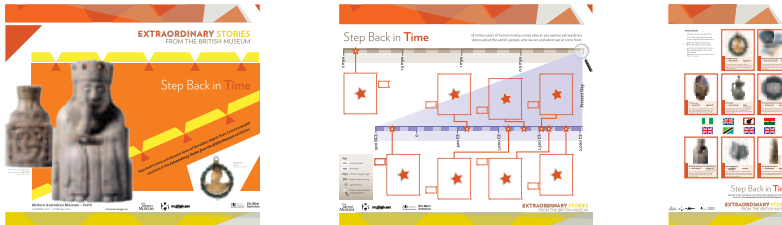
- **Web-wise:** Have your students visit museum.wa.gov.au/bm-exhibition and britishmuseum.org to find out more about these museums, the exhibition and the objects in *Extraordinary Stories from the British Museum*.
- **Common-sense:** Use the internet and other sources of information to have your students 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.
- **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?
- **Cultural Collections:** Ask students to identify an iconic object or artefact from a country of their choice (for example the Kelly Gang's armour, Tutankhamun's mask, Chinese Terracotta Warriors, etc). What makes an object 'significant'? Discuss why the significance of particular objects may be considered on a personal, national or global level.

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.

■ 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?
- Investigate early humans / evolution. When did we become 'human'? What marks that time as different from our primate relatives?
- In the context of human evolution, research other significant milestones such as the use of fire, the invention of the wheel, the development of agriculture or the domestication of animals etc. What was the impact of these milestones?

■ The Phoenix Jewel:

- Research the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, her achievements and the qualities she was admired for. Investigate the mythology of the Phoenix, and the symbolism of the red and white roses and how their use on this object was relevant to the reign of this queen.

■ **Asante Ewer:**

- This bronze jug is from the time of King Richard II of England in the 1390s, but mysteriously ended up in West Africa. Have your students research any connections between the two countries over time and write a theory on how they think this Medieval English jug ended up in Ghana.
- Around the belly of the jug is an inscription in Lombardic letters:

*He that wyl not spare when he may
He shal not spend when he would
Deme the best in every dowt
Til the trowthe be tryid owte*
(‘He that shall not save when he can
Shall not spend when he wants to.
Suppose the best in every fear
Until the truth is known’)

What do you think this inscription meant? Consider the time it came from, and the uses of such an item.

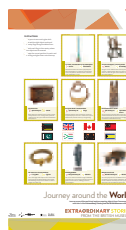
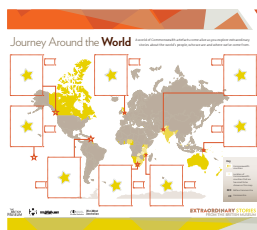


Asante ewer
14th Century CE
Made in England, Found in Ghana
© Trustees of the British Museum

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.
- Conduct some research into the history of apartheid policies in South Africa. *Vuvuzela* means 'welcome, unite, celebration' in Zulu. Why do you think this is significant in relation to the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990?
- 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:

- Refer to the following British Museum links for comprehensive resources on the 'Throne of Weapons':

britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aoa/t/throne_of_weapons.aspx

britishmuseum.org/learning/schools_and_teachers/resources/all_resources-1/resource_throne_of_weapons.aspx

britishmuseum.org/pdf/throne.pdf

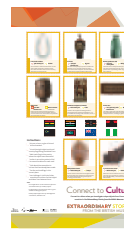
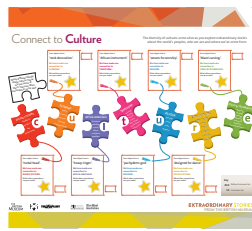
- This 'throne' has been made as part of the *Transforming Arms into Tools* project. Research this project and discuss why it was created. Have students create posters to advertise the aims of this program.
- Investigate and discuss why you think these guns were turned into a 'throne'.
- Find out about different organisations that assist people in war-torn countries and organise a special fund-raiser event at school.

■ 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.

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?
- Investigate the slave trade and the atrocities associated with it. Imagine that slave trade existed today in the same way it did in the past. Develop an awareness campaign to stop slave trade (eg poster, radio campaign, etc).

■ 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?