

The Language Project supports students for whom English is not their first language on visits to the V&A Museum. The service is offered free to adult groups of refugees, asylum seekers, and people from the culturally diverse communities settled in this country who are studying on ESOL courses at colleges, adult education centres and community centres. The project runs all year. Bookings can be made through the Education Bookings Office on +44 (0)2079422211

As part of the **'Encounters' Exhibition** we can offer the following:

- a teacher's pack outlining pre-visit, visit and post-visit activities
- an introductory talk by an ESOL tutor when the group arrives at the Museum
- worksheets to focus on particular objects in the Exhibition
- support from an ESOL tutor as students go round the Exhibition

(NB we cannot offer the sort of interactive guided tour we do in other parts of the Museum because of space constraints)

A visit to the exhibition

**Encounters: the meeting of
Asia and Europe 1500 to 1800**

Victoria and Albert Museum

23 September to 5 December 2004

**Information for ESOL tutors and
Students**

Visit to the 'Encounters' Exhibition at the V&A Notes for Teachers

Pre-visit activities

1. The visit and its objectives.

Group discussion :

- **What is a museum and what is in it ?** - displays, shop, cafés.
- **What will we will do on our visit ?** - meet a V&A ESOL tutor, listen to a talk, look at objects in the exhibition, do worksheets, have a cup of tea.
- **how are people expected to behave in a museum?** - quietness, not touching exhibits unless invited, not being allowed to carry big bags, security checks.

2. Discussion of previous experience of museums.

Group discussion :

- **Have you visited a museum before? Where?**
- **Did you enjoy it? Why?**
- **What are museums for?**

There are two worksheets on this. One looks at a museum from the point of view of function (collection, conservation, exhibition, education etc) . The other takes a critical look at western museums and their right to hold many of the objects in their collections.

3. Planning the journey and getting information about the museum

This is an activity based on group work, reporting back and question and answer sessions. Students choose the task they would like to do, and divide themselves into two groups according to their chosen task. Each group will :

- collect information
- report back to the other group
- be ready to answer any questions from the other group
- prepare questions to ask the other group about their topic

Group 1. Planning the journey.

The group could find information on :

- Where the museum is
 - Possible bus routes and price/length of journey
 - The journey by tube -the stations/lines/changes/price/length of journey
- Students could use an A-Z, museum leaflets, bus and tube maps or telephone the museum for information.

Group 2. Getting information about the museum

The group could find information on :

- Opening and closing times
- Entrance fees
- Canteen facilities
- Prayer facilities

Students could use printed information about the museum, or telephone the museum to listen to the recorded information.

4. Information about the 'Encounters' Exhibition

There are pre-visit worksheets to promote understanding of the word 'encounter' and to draw on students' own experience of first encounters with another culture:

- **The background to the Exhibition.** There are two texts on this (Entry Level 2/3 and Level 1/above). They try to give a simple explanation about the rationale behind the exhibition and introduce the three key areas - discovery, encounters, and exchanges. They could be used as reading passages or as listening tasks with appropriate comprehension activities.
- **Ayesha talks about her new encounters in London.** A text that can be used as a reading exercise or recorded for use as a listening exercise. The main aim of the exercise(s) is to teach and reinforce the concepts of discovery, encounter and exchange, and related vocabulary to describe reactions to these.
- **A map highlighting the countries featured in the Exhibition.** Students could use this to show their own countries of origin and journeys.

Tutors and students can also access the general 'Encounters' Exhibition web site and download pictures.

5. Museum vocabulary

It is not assumed that the students will have enough language/vocabulary to read all the information given about objects in the exhibition. However, the visit is a good chance to extend vocabulary to include the sort of words that are not so common in every day use. A list of vocabulary is enclosed.

- **General museum vocabulary**

This includes words such as **gallery, display case, object** etc.

Activities for teaching the vocabulary could include :

- Using a drawing/photograph of a gallery to elicit/teach the new words
- Tutor writing the words on card and students finding / matching cards
- Students labelling the picture

- **Vocabulary to describe objects in the Exhibition**

Depending on the students' oral and literacy levels, activities to help students understand the meaning of individual words relating to material, process, colour and decoration could include:

- The tutor bringing in a collection of interesting objects for students to handle and eliciting/teaching new adjectives relating to the objects
- The students downloading images of objects from the Exhibition web site and using the new adjectives to talk about them

Oral practice - activities in pairs or in the whole group :

- true/ false statements about the objects;
- questions only requiring **yes/no** as answers;
- describing an object without naming it - other students find or draw it;

Literacy work - tutor writes key words on cards.

- Students find/match the cards to the objects
- Students write descriptions of the objects. Other students find/ draw the object
- Students build a dictionary of new vocabulary with pictures.

The visit

Your group will be met at the museum by an ESOL tutor from the museum's Education Department, who will give a **general introduction** to the Exhibition, stay with your group during the visit, answer questions and support students using the worksheets on objects on display. However we cannot offer the sort of interactive guided tour that we do in other parts of the Museum because of space constraints.

The aims of the **worksheets** are both to encourage the use and understanding of language in a new context, and to provide a focus for looking at individual items in some detail, as the wealth of exhibits could be overwhelming. Students could work in groups, pairs or individually.

Activities on the worksheets include:

- Yes/no statements
- Finding objects and ticking boxes
- Matching words and pictures
- Yes/no questions
- Comprehension questions

Students will need some understanding of:

- Present continuous and simple past tenses
- Simple question forms
- The vocabulary from the Exhibition vocabulary lists

Activities after the visit

According to students' level, these could include :

1. Evaluation of the visit.

There are simple individual evaluation forms for students to fill in. If this was the students' first encounter with a museum there could also be class discussion on what they thought about the experience.

2. Writing a "thank you" letter to the ESOL tutor(s) in the museum's education department, individually or as a group.

3. Further development by the class tutor of the information in the worksheets.

4. Looking again at the "Critical look at museums" worksheet.

Students could look again at the statements about whether European museums should return the valuable objects they have taken from other countries, and consider :

- Do students feel any differently now that they have spent some time in a large museum?
- Do they still hold the same views ?
- Would they like to add statements to the "bubbles" sheet ?

This could be followed by a short essay, putting forward the different arguments.

5. Reminiscence work.

Students could bring in an object that is important to them that they brought with them to this country and say why it is important

Question: What do you think a museum is for?

It is a place where beautiful and valuable works of art are kept.

1

A museum tells us about the history of a country.

2

They are beautiful buildings with beautiful things inside.

3

It is like an encyclopaedia. It tells you about things you don't know.

4

Museum displays help us to understand our country's culture.

5

It is an exciting place. You can handle things and see how they are made or how they work.

6

They are collections of things that rich and powerful people took from other people.

7

Museums take care of old things.

8

Museums show us things from other countries and help us to understand other ways of life.

9

Question: Should European museums return the valuable objects they have taken from other countries?

There are people from many different countries living in London. It's good that they can see things from their cultures.

1

The Europeans often took these things illegally. It's like stealing valuable things. They should give them back.

2

Many tourists come to London, so more people can enjoy seeing these things than if they were in lots of different countries.

3

British museums have so many things they don't even display them all! Beautiful things are hidden in storage and no-one sees them.

4

British museums take good care of their exhibits. Many things would have been lost or damaged in their original settings.

5

British museums are too big. There are too many things and you don't know the context of an object. In its own setting you would understand better what it means.

6

It is wrong to take things from someone else's country. They should be in a museum there as part of their history.

7

If things are in London or Berlin, scholars who want to study them can do so easily.

8

The 'Elgin' marbles are part of an important Greek building. They belong there, not on the walls of a London museum.

9

Which of these statements support the idea that valuable objects should be returned to their country of origin?

Which of these statements do not support that idea?

What do you think?

Encounters: the meeting of Asia and Europe 1500 to 1800

What is the exhibition about? notes for teachers

These two texts (with the same content), one at Entry 2/3 and one at Level 1, give a simple explanation about the rationale behind the exhibition. They could be used as reading passages or as listening tasks - with appropriate comprehension activities/questions.

The aim of the texts is to set the scene and introduce the three key title areas of the exhibition - **discovery**, (find) **encounters** (meet) and **exchanges** (giving things to each other).

Encounters: the meeting of Asia and Europe 1500 to 1800

What is the exhibition about?

This exhibition tells a story about people from Portugal, Holland and England

They went to India, China and Japan.

Discovery

At this time people from Europe went to Asia.

They discovered many new things about Asia.

They were surprised because of the rich cities and palaces in Asia.

They also took many new machines (like clocks) to Asia.

Encounters

Why did people go to Asia?

For the government, or because of religion, or to sell things, or for themselves.

The European people were very interested in the Asian countries.

The Asian people were very interested in the people who came from Europe.

Exchanges

The people from Europe gave things to the people in Asia.

The people in Asia gave things to the people from Europe.

The people from Europe learned how to make new things.

The people in Asia learned how to make new things.

In the exhibition you can see some of these beautiful objects.

Encounters: the Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500 - 1800

The Exhibition is about different kinds of encounters between three European countries (Portugal, Holland, England) and three Asian countries (India, China, Japan) for 300 years from 1500 to 1800.

The Exhibition is in three sections:

Discovery

In 1497 people from Europe discovered a sea route to Asia. They wanted to trade with Asian countries. They bought spices and luxury goods like porcelain from Asia. Asian countries bought new machines like clocks from Europe. When Europeans went to Asia they were surprised at how rich the cities were and the luxury of the kings' palaces. They were also fascinated by unusual and exotic plants and sea shells.

Encounters

From 1500 to 1800 many European people went to Asia for diplomatic, religious, commercial and personal reasons. Their experiences were different in each Asian country. Europeans were fascinated by Asian cultures and the people of Asia were equally fascinated by European cultures. They believed each other's cultures were exotic.

Exchanges

There were many exchanges between Europe and Asia. People gave each other gifts. Sometimes countries made things specially for export to a particular country. Countries also copied each other's things. They learned from each other how to make new things. Over the years the cultures influenced each other.

The Exhibition shows some of the fascinating and beautiful things made at this time.

Useful Vocabulary

describing objects

arms and armour
cabinets
fans
hookah
manuscripts
miniatures
mirrors
porcelain
precious stones
scrolls
sea-shells
spices
textiles

describing materials

copper
iron
ivory
leather
mother of pearl
rock-crystal
decorated
inlaid
lacquered
mounted
exotic
luxury
valuable

Trade and other encounters

discovery	In the Seventeenth
encounters	century
exchange	
	England/English
diplomatic	Holland/Dutch
commercial	Portugal/Portuguese
religious	
personal	China/Chinese
	India/Indian
amazed	Japan/Japanese
excited	
fascinated	Europe/European
	Asia/Asian

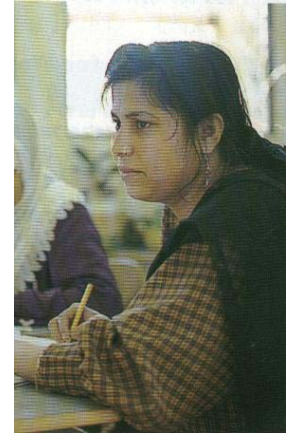
Ayesha talks about her new
encounters in London

Reading or listening task one - tutor notes

This text can be used as a reading exercise, or it can be recorded for use as a listening exercise.

The main aim of the exercise(s) is to teach and re-inforce the concepts of discovery encounter and exchange, and related vocabulary to describe reactions to these (eg experiences, interesting, wonderful, exotic, excited, frightened/frightening, fascinating)

Ayesha talks about her new encounters in London



I came to London two years ago from my village in Bangladesh. In London I have encountered new experiences and people.

In the winter I saw snow for the first time. I thought the snow was really beautiful to look at, but I felt freezing cold and I hated this!

After two weeks I started an English class for women. My teacher was an English woman, but I discovered that she spoke a few words in my language. I felt surprised and happy about this!

In my English class I met new people from many different countries. At the end of the first term we had a party. Some of the students wore traditional clothes from their countries. They looked so beautiful. At the party we exchanged interesting food dishes from different countries. Some of the food tasted quite exotic!

In the summer we visited a museum. The visit was fascinating and I enjoyed it very much. It was my first time on the underground. The train went so fast and there were so many different stations. I felt very excited and a little bit frightened!

Worksheet A

Ayesha's description of her new encounters

Mark the sentences TRUE or FALSE

She thought the snow was horrible to look at

She loved being freezing cold

She was unhappy because her teacher spoke in Bengali

She thought the students' party clothes were beautiful

The food at the party tasted exotic

She was excited and a bit frightened by the underground

She did not enjoy the museum visit

Worksheet B

How did Ayesha feel about her new encounters?

Put the sentences in the correct order

It was her first time on the underground

The students exchanged food from their countries at the party

She met many new people in her English class

Her class visited a museum

Her teacher spoke a little Bengali

She saw snow for the first time

The students wore traditional clothes at the party

A map highlighting the countries featured in the Exhibition

