

Let's play museums!

Jo Graham, Learning Unlimited
Claire Pounder, MIMA, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art
Liz Vine, Kirkleatham Museum

Let's Play museums

Our backgrounds

Jo Graham

- Learning Advisor for Making a Mark, Tees Valley Museum partnership
- Primary and EYs teacher
- Head of Interactives at the Science Museum London
- Learning Unlimited since 2000
- Written for Nursery World, Nursery Education, Practical Preschool
- EYs policies, programmes, research projects and spaces
- Thinktank, Birmingham, National Maritime Museum and London Transport Museum

Liz Vine

- Education Officer at Kirkleatham Museum
- Lead partner for Making a Mark, Tees Valley Museum partnership
- Ecologist and visitor Centre manager, Norfolk Wildlife Trust – environmental education
- 25 years service at Redcar and Cleveland Museum Service
- Programmes for EYFS through to 6th form

Claire Pounder

- Learning Curator, MIMA
- Youth Worker, locally, regionally and internationally
- Dementia Friends Champion and SPECAL Friend
- EYFS – Agent of Change
- Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) Master Practitioner

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Learning through objects

Learn about the lives
of people who made,
owned or used the
objects and about
places in the past

A way to compare
past and present

Spark the imagination

Develop enquiry skills

Popular with
kinaesthetic learners

Provide first-hand,
memorable
experiences

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The importance of experience

- Developing knowledge
- Developing dispositions
 - Being curious
 - Investigating
 - Exploring
 - Courage
 - Resilience
- Strong sense of self and agency
- Shared conversations

*The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them. **Understanding the World***

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Developing Thinking

- Processes of thinking are largely the same as in adult learning. Developmental differences come from:
 - **Cognition/knowledge base**: that is the pool of **experience** from which we draw
 - **Metacognition**: that is understanding about our own processes of thinking and learning
 - **Self-regulation**: gaining strategic control over our own mental processes in response to **experiences**

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Experiences grow the brain

- The human brain is still developing throughout the EYFS
- 80% by age of 3
- Development is experience dependent
- New experiences promote synaptic growth, grow neural pathways and can help develop self regulation and executive function skills

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Amazing object-based experiences



All these objects are in Tees Valley museums and galleries.

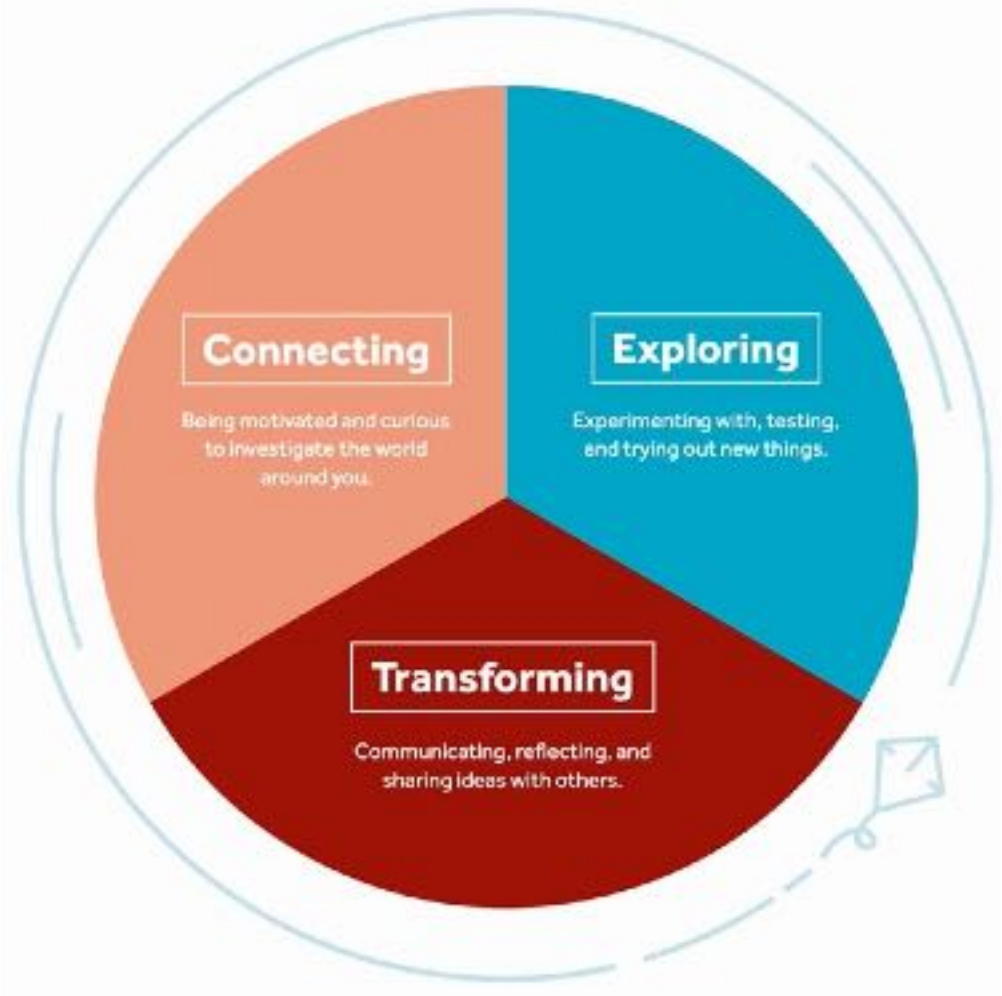






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What are creative processes?



Lego Foundation report (2019): What we mean by creativity

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Developing creativity through objects



Connecting:

Being motivated and curious to investigate the world around you.



Exploring:

Experimenting with, testing, and trying out new things.



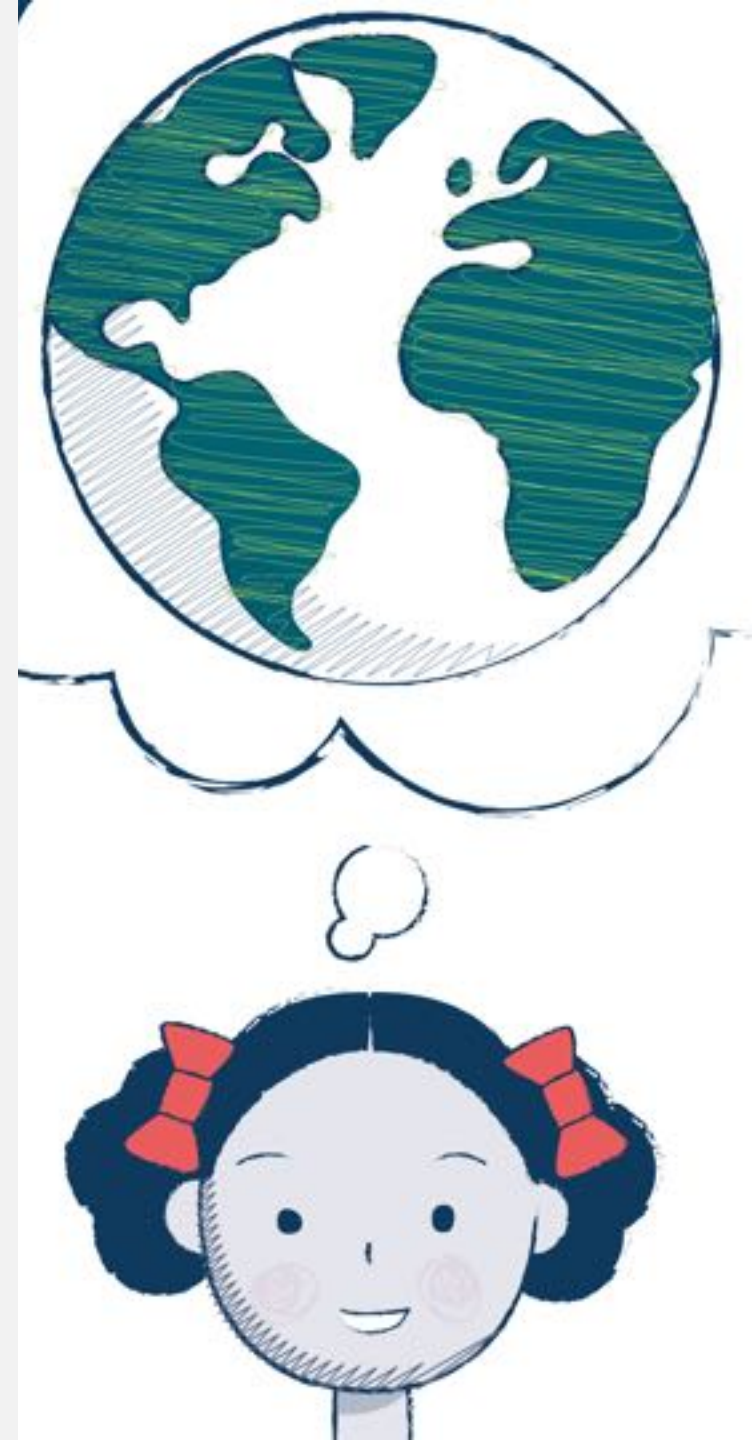
Transforming:

Communicating, reflecting, and sharing ideas with others.

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Museums and galleries in Development Matters

- Expressive arts and design
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Understanding the world



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Museums and galleries in Development Matters

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning

Children will be learning to ... plan and think ahead about how they will explore or play with objects.”

“Children will be learning to ...respond to new experiences that you bring to their attention.”

“Take children to new places, like a local theatre, a museum, a National Trust heritage site, a fire station, a farm or an elderly people’s home.”

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Curiouser and curiouser

- **A pre-pandemic exploratory project:**
- *What does an effective EYFS visit look and feel like?*
- Seven museum learning officers and EYFS teacher buddies
- Knowledge varied, used the CoEL to strength test plans
- Piloted the visits, to play with the ideas
- Used the findings to help us think about the wide range of ways that EYFS visits might be structured

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Children as playful explorers

Captain Cook Birthplace Museum

- Whole visit based on 'exploring'
- Invitation letter in school
- Involving parents/carers
- Treasure collection bags
- Using Google Expedition VR headsets
- An explorer story
- Lots of free play activities

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Children leading the learning

- Creating explorer 'maps' of their journey from home to school to the museum
- Leading their parents in exploring the galleries

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Children as active learners

Take-over!

- The museum staff have all caught the dreaded lurgy and need help to open the museum for the day! The Take-over Teams will explore the museum and try out the jobs our staff do, including: staffing the reception and welcoming visitors, acting as gallery guides or security guards, cleaning the displays, being artists in residence, creating displays and sorting objects.
- Key early learning outcomes:
 - Students will find out about the jobs people do to make a museum a special place in their neighbourhood.
- Main early learning approaches:
 - Active learning
 - Play
 - Thinking critically



I'm taking
over
Kirkleatham
MUSEUM • REDCAR

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Being involved and concentrating



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Keep on trying



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Enjoying achieving what they set out to do



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Children thinking creatively and critically

Can you really PLAY in a gallery/galleries? – YES YOU CAN!

MIMA, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art focused on children's creativity and critical thinking.

You can find out about the Curiouser and curiouser project in this [YouTube video](#).

You can also read [a case study](#) about the project published for the cultural sector.

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Objects get children talking

Children asking their own
questions

*Children were asking their
own questions and
answering each other's.
The words came tumbling
out. They were almost
falling over themselves in
trying to get their ideas out.*

Practitioner



Ask the object a question

More objects: more questions ...



Kirkleatham Museum

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**Another
approach –
I wonder ...**



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Objects help critical thinking

In *Close Encounters with Culture* we tried out some critical thinking activities in nursery using objects

- Open ended opportunities for grouping
- Looking for connections
- Sharing their ways of seeing and hearing about how others were thinking



Dorman Museum

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Make your own toy museum

Make your own Toy Museum



Welcome to our 'Make your own Toy Museum' activity page. Here you will find a set of home schooling activities for 2-5 year olds linked to the English Early Years Foundation Stage (EYF) educational programmes. These activities form a day of home learning, helping children to learn through play as they create their very own toy museum.



Let's get started	↓
What shall we put in our museum?	↓
Are there any old toys in your house?	↓
Make a fun game of quoits	↓
Everyone is welcome - come on in!	↓
Extension	↓
Naughty bus	↓

Let's play museums

Films to use with children

Let's get started ↓

What shall we put in our museums? ↓

Meet Sue from the German Museum in Middlesbrough. Sue's going to help you make a start on your museum display. You'll need a range of toys and some boxes, stools or chairs to sit them on.

By choosing which toys to include in their museum and how to group them, children will be developing their skills in observation and sorting/classifying. They will spot similarities and differences and make connections. Discussing their toys will help them develop their reflective thinking and self awareness, as well as their communication skills. Making these decisions themselves is good for children's confidence.



Are there any old toys in your house? ↓

Meet Callie from Preston Park Museum in Stockton-on-Tees. Callie's going to show you some of the old-fashioned toys she's using in her display and help you compare them to your toys. Then she's going to send you on a hunt around your house to find something to add to your museum.

Handling collections of objects is a great way to encourage children to notice and describe, materials and their uses. It's another chance for children to make connections to, and be more curious about, the world around them. Whilst very young children don't need to understand about periods in history, looking at familiar objects and their equivalents in 'The older days' is a really good way of introducing the idea of change over time. Comparing their toys with your toys, and with granny's toys, can prompt a lovely sharing of family stories and help develop a sense of the past lives of people they know well.





Let's play museums
Pretend play

- Role play areas – a museum, a gallery or an antique shop, a clock shop, an umbrella shop
- Old fashioned keys
- Old fashioned clothes/accessories
- Mysterious objects

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Exploring play

- Old-fashioned kitchen equipment
- Natural objects
- Older style technology, e.g. record players, old film or polaroid cameras



Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash



Museum of Cambridge



Photo by Barbara Horn on Unsplash

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More play ideas

- 'Precious' objects to wrap, pack and transport, e.g. old books
- Museum signs and maps
- Natural objects that can be lined up or piled
- Old-fashioned weighing scales
- Small 'treasure' objects to bury in sand
- Old fashioned board, card or floor games

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Children make their own games

Round the museum or gallery game. Use pictures of objects or artworks -

- 'Lucky' squares
- 'Miss a go' squares
- 'Go back' squares
- Make their own rules

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Visiting a museum or gallery

There are so many ways to use objects in your setting - why go to a museum or gallery?

- real objects or artworks (cultural capital - enriched experiences and new knowledge)
- scale
- new environments to explore
- a chance to involve parents – building cultural confidence



CAPTAIN COOK BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM
1/12



ews & Pictures Ltd north









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Things to do in Tees Valley museums



04/02/2022 - 18/02/2022

Making a Mess – Under 5s Club winter



STATION SCAMPS

11 February 2022 - 10:00 to 12:00

School News and Updates

Keep up to date with all the latest updates and case studies for schools provided by our Learning Officers from our Tees Valley Museums partners.

Tees Valley Museums



19 January 2022 The Lost Words – NEW exhibition

Now that the Climate Conference is over, are you looking for ways to help children rediscover our connection to nature? The Lost Words can help.

FIND OUT MORE →



19 January 2022 Year 4s top tips to save the planet

In the run-up to COP26, Year 4 students from Green Lane Primary Academy were given the challenge to come up with their own top tips to help save the planet. Through studying the Victorians, they learned how 19th Century populations learned to live in our area spurring on industrialisation – but did that make the Victorians the villains of climate change?

FIND OUT MORE →



19 November 2021 New wellbeing package

Our new Arts team has created an emotional wellbeing package for schools. It's a fantastic time for us to offer to visit!

FIND OUT MORE →

Choose level

EYF5

Key Stage 1

Key Stage 2

Key Stage 3/4



Dinosaurs everywhere!

All our dinosaurs have gone missing! Can you help us find them? Children explore the woodland and gardens to find the dinosaurs and record their names. They uncover dinosaur skeletons and fossils in a mini-dino dig and make a fossil mould of their own to take away.

FIND OUT MORE →



Mini explorers

What is an explorer? What do they do? How do they travel and what do they find? A real chance to find out more about explorers and for young explorers to do some exploring themselves. This wonderful session will capture the children's imaginations from the second they arrive and will leave them wanting to explore even more!

FIND OUT MORE →



Museum takeover

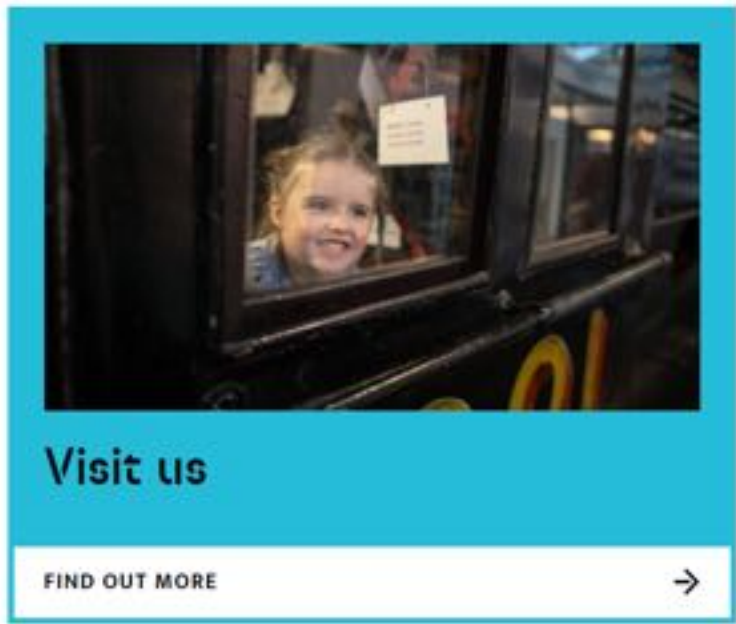
The museum staff have all caught the dreaded lurgy and need help to open the museum for the day! The Takeover Teams will explore the museum and try out the jobs our staff do.

FIND OUT MORE →

teesvalleymuseums.org/schools/

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

teesvalleymuseums.org



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