



London Museum Development Volunteer Training Bank: **Creating Tours for Family Audiences Handouts**

These handouts were written by Julie Chandler (info@londontowntours.london / www.londontowntours.london) on behalf of the London Museum Development Team. Julie is a professional Blue Badge Guide and leads walking tours on a wide range of subjects for tourists and corporate clients. In addition to leading tours, Julie combines her guiding skills with her background as a trainer, to train guides and staff at various visitor attractions to deliver tours, thereby enhancing their service offering for their visitors. She has run a number of training sessions for the London Museum Development Programme. Julie is a member of the Institute of Tourist Guides, Association of Professional Tourist Guides, Guild of Registered Tourist Guides, City of Westminster Guide Lecturers Association (former Chairman) and the City of London Guide Lecturers Association.

Julie has produced the 'Creating Tours for Family Audiences Handouts' to be used in conjunction with the 'Creating Tours for Family Audiences Presentation,' 'Creating Tours for Family Audiences Exercises,' and the 'Creating Tours for Family Audiences Training Plan' available on the London Museum Development Team's Volunteer Training Bank (www.museumoflondon.org.uk/supporting-london-museums/resources/training-bank).

For more information on how to use these resources to support you to train your volunteers, please read the 'How to use the Training Bank' and the 'Train the Trainer Guide' documents available here: www.museumoflondon.org.uk/supporting-london-museums/resources/training-bank

This full-day course has been designed to give Volunteer Managers the skills to deliver training to their staff and volunteers on planning, developing and delivering family-friendly tours. In turn, this training will give staff and volunteers the confidence to deliver tours to their organisation's family audiences.

The 'Creating Tours for Family Audiences Handouts' provides handouts to give to delegates throughout the training session.



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Handout 1: Planning your Tour

Decide your theme

Think about:

- Which galleries, topic or historical period you like and know about – and will appeal to children
- Is the gallery or space difficult / noisy / busy?
- National and London Curriculum
- What children like / know / read / watch (TV, film, books)

Choose your objects / stops

Think about:

- TVPs (Top Visual Priorities) – is it big / does it catch people's attention?
 - Can you avoid it, even if you don't like it or it doesn't 'fit' with your tour?
- What objects do you like / dislike – and what do children like
- What motivates or inspires you?
- Can you see it? Can the children see it??
- Is it colourful / interesting / fun?
- Can you describe it / explain it?
- How many objects / stops should you include?

Plan your route

Think about:

- Select objects / stops which are not too far from each other – remember children have little legs!
- Work out a route from object to object that seems logical / easy – walk it through
- Think about the space and environment
 - Where you would stand and where your group should stand, or even sit
 - Consider noise – AVs and interactive displays, tannoys

Timing

Think about:

- How long have you got / are allowed?
- Attention span of children
- Walking time in between stops



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Handout 2: Resources to use when researching your tour

Your Museum / Attraction

- Website – online collections
- Archive / Library
- Existing Tours
- Colleagues / Curators

Internet

- Wikipedia – just be careful to check it is accurate
- Site websites – Historic Royal Palaces, English Heritage, National Trust, cathedrals, churches, other museums and attractions
- Area websites – local councils, tourist areas
- Specialist / themed websites – e.g. British History Online, BBC History, National Archives, UK Government, British Monarchy, Biography.com
- Subscription websites – check to see if your museum / heritage attraction has access to sites such as JSTOR, Oxford Reference Online, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Encyclopaedia Online, The Times Online, Internet Archaeology

Books, Magazines and Periodicals

- Historical – Samuel Pepys' Diary, John Stow's *Survey of London*, Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*
- Reference – London Encyclopaedia, Oxford Dictionary, Shire Books, Pitkin Guides, Guide Books
- Fiction / Literature – Charles Dickens, Zadie Smith, Sebastian Faulks
- Biographies
- Children's Books – Usborne History Books, Horrible Histories
- Magazines, Periodicals, Comics – BBC History, Archaeology Today

Other

- Paintings
- Photographs
- Maps
- Television programmes / documentaries / films
- You Tube



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Handout 3: Writing your tour

Research

- How much information do you need?
 - More than you will tell your group – enough to fill the time with some to spare
 - Background knowledge
 - Enough to feel comfortable
- What information do you need?
 - What – is it, was it used for, is it's modern equivalent, is special / unique about it, is it made of, is fun or interesting about it
 - When – was it made, was it used (historical period, event), did the Museum acquire it
 - Where – was it made, was it used, was it found, did the Museum get it from
 - How – was it made, was it used, does it work
 - Why – is it here, is it interesting, is it important
 - Who – owned it, is it (in a painting / photograph), used it, wore it, made it, designed it

Structure

- Beginning / Introduction
 - Start with a bang – get their attention from the start
 - Set the scene – let them know what you're going to be talking about and why
 - Which period, gallery, object
 - Mention one or two highlights that they will see / you will talk about
 - Housekeeping
 - Your name – maybe ask theirs (and their ages)
 - What the tour is about
 - How long the tour will be
 - Photography policy (if you have one) – beware of parents taking photos of other people's kids
 - Questions? – as you go along or save for the end (good luck with that!)
- Middle
 - The core of your tour needs to cover your main content / story
 - Facts and stories about each object
- End / Conclusion
 - Finish on a high – make it memorable



- Always finish with a conclusion, which summarises what the tour featured
- Ask if there are any final questions
- Thank the group for listening and wish them an enjoyable visit / day

Streamlining

- Leave them wanting more
- Edit your information – don't overload them with information
 - It's often harder to decide what to leave out than what to put in!
 - Keep information in reserve to help with questions
 - Know more than you think you need
- Decide what you
 - Must tell them? = the single most important thing
 - Should tell them? = additional important information
 - Could tell them? = if you have time

Make It Flow

- Link each object to the next
 - Helps the tour flow smoothly
- Relate objects to contemporary events, other objects, other galleries
- Always signpost where you are going next and what you are going to cover
 - Keeps people interested

Creating interest

- Paint a picture (verbally)
 - Conjure up an image of the time / what life was like
 - Describe detail on objects that may not be seen at first glance
- Facts
 - Not too many as they won't remember
 - Be careful with dates! Stick to the key ones, eg 1666, but keep the rest vague, e.g. mid 1800s
 - It's better to have one great story for each object than 10 facts
 - Check your sources – ensure information is true
 - Turn facts into questions
- Include stories / anecdotes
 - Any unusual or human interest stories
 - Amusing anecdotes
 - Personal recollections (not opinions) – but be careful to remain objective
 - Are they true? Does it matter?
- Include quotes, if appropriate
 - Films, TV, books, theatre, songs, nursery rhymes



- Use props – pictures, maps, toys, objects
 - Ensure they are relevant, add value and are appropriate
 - Use with care – don't let props become a distraction or comfort blanket

Keep It Short and Simple

- Use simple language and vary your vocabulary depending on the ages in your group
 - Speak so the youngest child can understand you
 - Use words children would be familiar with
- Beware of technical terms and jargon – explain them, or ask them what it means
 - Phrases that we use all the time may not mean anything to others
 - Victorian? / Georgian? / The War?
- Use humour, but ensure it is appropriate and take care with jokes
- No swear words
- Be aware of cultural differences and try not to offend people



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Handout 4: Delivering your tour

Positioning

- You:
 - Adopt a well-balanced stance – feet slightly apart, weight evenly distributed, spine straight
 - Reduces physical tiredness
 - Lends an air of quiet authority
 - Stand next to an object / display case / artwork
 - Ensure you are not blocking anyone's view
 - Face the group – not the object
 - Check the group can all see you and the object and that they can hear you
- Your Group:
 - Bring the group in close – the closer they stand the less you have to project your voice
 - Bring little people to the front
 - Ensure the group leave room for other visitors to pass behind them
- Don't stand next to an AV or underneath a loud speaker

Indication and Description

- Clearly indicate which object you are talking about
- Point with your whole hand – palm facing the group and fingers closed (not spanned)
- Describe the object / detail
 - Size
 - Colour
 - Shape
- Check people can see it and that you are all looking at the same thing

Voice, Body and Face

- Voice – your voice is a tool – use it
 - Pitch – vary it for emphasis
 - Quiet and serious / loud and exciting / whisper
 - Pace – speak slowly so that you can be understood
 - But vary the pace to add excitement, if appropriate



- Pause – to allow people to take in what you've said and to look at the object
 - Breathe occasionally
 - Give yourself time to think about what you are going to say next
- Passion – inject enthusiasm into your voice
- Projection – communicate to the back of the group
 - Strong and audible
- Volume – ensure your commentary is not obtrusive for other visitors
 - But raise your volume when you need to
 - How loud? – Your voice should be loud enough
- Body Language and Face
- Confident and open – enthusiastic and welcoming
 - Not closed / negative
- Change facial expression depending what you are talking about
 - Smile, frown, glare
 - Avoid mannerisms and verbal tics
- Hands – what to do with them?
 - Can become distracting
 - Try not to wave them around
 - Keep them still – clasp them loosely together in front of you
 - Make hand movements meaningful
 - Use to indicate / demonstrate / describe and for emphasis
 - Do **not** (unless it is a planned *action*):
 - Put them in your pockets – fiddle with loose change
 - Fold your arms across your chest
- Eye contact = Lighthouse technique
 - Sweep your gaze across the group
 - Don't stare at one person too long or too often = Makes people uncomfortable
- Movement – Keep still - but you are not a statue
 - Don't (unless it is a planned *action*)
 - Dance
 - Sway from side to side
 - Rock back and fore
 - Walk around when you should be standing still
 - Walk and talk

Handling Questions

- Respond to their questions
 - Always repeat the question and / or explain it
 - So all the children understand the question
 - So everyone knows what's being asked



- To ensure you understand the question and haven't misheard it
- Answer it simply and succinctly – do not get side-tracked
- What if you don't know the answer?
 - Say so!
 - 'That's a great question', 'I've never been asked that before', 'I'll find out'
- Never rubbish a question or laugh, as you could destroy a child's confidence



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Handout 5: Family Engagement Tips

Ask Questions

- To engage / involve the children and keep them interested
- Use closed questions – to confirm / check = yes / no answers
- Use open questions – to generate discussion = longer answers
- Avoid multiple questions = too difficult

Involve Them....All of Them!

- Look for and ask for them participate / encourage them to join in
 - Don't force a child to take part if they clearly don't want to
 - Don't assume quiet or shy children won't want to get involved – they may just need a little more encouragement (maybe with Mum or Dad helping them too)
- Play a game, sing a song, dress up, bang a drum
- Get them to join in when you say a certain word or phrase
 - Boo, hiss, cheer, repeat it
 - Think about how pantomimes involve the audience
- Ask them to imagine what life was like when...
- Keep it simple for younger children (cheer) – more challenging for older children (active role)
- Appoint roles / characters or helpers
 - Hold something, read something, give them lines to say (on prompt cards)
- Don't forget the adults – what kid doesn't like to see their parent embarrassed?!

Expect Interruptions

- Handle them
- Involve a persistent interrupter