

Teachers' pack

ESOL Tours

Skills for Life

Information for tutors and group leaders



Pre-visit information



Victoria and Albert Museum, © V&A, London

Where is the V&A?

The V&A is on Cromwell Road in South Kensington, London SW7 2RL.

For full information on how to get to the V&A please visit the website:
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/visit-us/getting-here/>

How do I book a visit?

To book an ESOL or Citizenship Tour contact the Bookings Office:

Phone: 020 7942 2211

Email: bookings:office@vam.ac.uk

Write to: Bookings Office, Victoria and Albert Museum, London SW7 2RL.

Visits can be booked for any week day (10:00 – 16:00) and at other times by arrangement. We generally require two weeks notice.

If you would like to bring a large number of students we can divide the group into two or more smaller groups.

Support for people with disabilities is available on request.

How much does the tour cost?

The tour is free of charge to publicly funded colleges and community organisations.

Who is this tour for?

The tour is for adult ESOL students on government-subsidised Skills for Life courses studying the Adult ESOL Curriculum. ESOL tours are designed to encourage the use of core skills in Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing and offer students the opportunity to develop their language skills in a stimulating environment.

The V&A also offers Citizenship tours which are designed to complement the Citizenship component of the ESOL curriculum and help prepare those students planning to take the Life in the UK Test. The aim of the tours is to increase students' awareness of UK history and cultural diversity.

Pre-visit information (cont.)

What happens after I book a visit?

After booking your tour, one of our V&A ESOL guides will contact you to find out more about your group's language level and interests, and to discuss the visit with you.

Your group can choose to visit two of the following galleries:

British Galleries

China

Glass

Japan

Islamic Middle East

Medieval & Renaissance

South Asia

What happens on the tour?

On the day of your visit, the V&A ESOL tutor will tell you briefly about the history of the V&A. They will then take the group on a tour of their two chosen galleries, answer questions and support students using worksheets.

Tours last about two hours.

How do I prepare my students for the visit?

Preparing your students for the visit will enhance their enjoyment and ensure that it is a meaningful learning experience that will support their language skills.

We have prepared some pre-visit activities to do with your students in class before you visit the V&A. Please see pages 4 to 11.

If you would like to know more about the V&A's collections and programme of exhibitions and events, please visit: www.vam.ac.uk.

*Mosque lamp, probably Egypt, about 1630,
museum no. 580-1875*



Pre-visit activities



V&A ESOL tour, © V&A, London

Below are some suggested activities for discussion and some practical activities for the students to complete in class before your visit.

Group discussions

Discuss in advance with your students:

Planning the visit

- 1 Which galleries they would like to visit.
- 2 Why people collect objects.
- 3 How people are expected to behave in a museum – reasonable quietness, not touching exhibits unless indicated, not being allowed to carry large bags, security checks.
- 4 What they will do on their visit – meet the guide, go on a tour of the chosen galleries, complete worksheets, have a cup of tea.

What is a museum?

- 1 Have you visited a museum before? Where?
- 2 Did you enjoy it? What did you like about it?
- 3 What is a museum and what is in it? (Exhibitions, displays, shop, cafés...)
- 4 Who works in a museum?
- 5 What other things do museums do? (Conservation, research, education...)
- 6 Do you think museums are important?

You could discuss the following statements:

What do you think a museum is?

- It is a place where beautiful and valuable works of art are kept.
- A museum tells us about the history of a country.
- It is a beautiful building with beautiful things inside.
- It is like an encyclopaedia. It tells you about things you don't know.
- Museum displays help us to understand our culture.
- It is an exciting place. You can handle objects and see how they are made or how they work.
- Museums take care of old things. Museums show us things from other countries and help us to understand other ways of life.

Group activities

Planning your journey and finding information about the V&A

This activity involves group work, reporting back and question and answer sessions. Students choose the task they would like to do and divide up into two groups.

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

This group could find information on:

- where the V&A is
- possible bus routes and price/length of journey
- the journey by tube – stations/lines/changes/price/length of journey

Students could use an A-Z, V&A leaflets, the V&A website, bus and tube maps.

Group 2. Finding out information about the V&A

This group could find out about:

- opening and closing times
- current exhibitions
- what kind of objects the museum has
- café facilities
- entrance fees
- shop

Students could use printed information about the V&A, or visit the website: www.vam.ac.uk/content/visit-us/opening-times/

V&A ESOL tour, © V&A, London



Museum vocabulary

Looking at museum vocabulary in advance may be useful. The visit is a good chance to extend vocabulary to include words relating to objects on display.

You could use these activities – adapted to the students' oral and literary levels – to help students understand words relating to objects, materials and techniques.

- 1 The tutor brings in a collection of interesting objects
- 2 Students handle the objects
- 3 The tutor teaches new adjectives relating to the objects
- 4 Oral practice – students discuss the objects in pairs or with the whole group using:
 - true/false statements about the objects
 - questions which require yes/no answers
 - describing an object without naming it and other students find or draw it
 - students feeling an object in a bag and describing its shape and texture
- 5 Literacy work – the tutor writes keywords on cards:
 - students match the cards to the objects
 - students write descriptions of the objects. Other students find/identify the object
 - students make a vocabulary book

See Worksheets 2 and 3

Tipu's Tiger, mechanical organ, India, about 1793, museum no. 2545(I5)



Worksheets

Practice in reading and comprehension

1 The V&A and its history

Worksheet 1 provides basic information about the V&A and its history.

You can adapt this to suit your students.

2 Museum vocabulary (see Worksheet 2)

3 Describing objects (see Worksheet 3)

*The Burghley Nef, salt cellar, France 1527-8
museum no. m60-1959*



Worksheet 1

The V&A and its history



Victoria and Albert Museum, © V&A, London

The V&A is the UK's national museum of art and design. It was founded by the British government after the Great Exhibition of 1851 which took place in London's Hyde Park. It was named The South Kensington Museum in 1857. The government wanted designers, manufacturers and the public to learn about good design.

In 1899 it was renamed The Victoria and Albert Museum, in honour of Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert, who had been very much involved in The Great Exhibition.

The main entrance is on Cromwell Road. It has figures of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert above it.

The V&A has almost 7 miles (11 kilometres) of galleries and more than 2 million objects from all over the world.

Yes or No?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1 The Museum was started in 1858. | Yes / No |
| 2 The V&A is in South Kensington now. | Yes / No |
| 3 Victoria was Queen of England in 1899. | Yes / No |
| 4 The V&A building was founded by the British government. | Yes / No |
| 5 The V&A building is small. | Yes / No |
| 6 The V&A has a lot of objects from many different countries. | Yes / No |

Now discuss these questions with another student:

- Are there some museums in your country?
- Have you visited any museums before?
- What did you see in those museums?
- Did you enjoy these visits?
- What did you enjoy most about your visits?

If you would like to know more about the V&A and its history, visit www.vam.ac.uk/page/d/discover-the-v-and-a/

Worksheet 2

Museum vocabulary – materials and techniques

Look up and discuss the meaning of these words

Metals

bronze
brass
copper
gold
iron
silver

Fabrics

brocade
cotton
linen
silk
velvet

General

gallery
display
case
objects
exhibition

Ceramics

china
earthenware
clay
fritware
porcelain
stoneware
terracotta
glazed

Other materials

crystal
fur
ivory
leather
glass
wood
jade
paper
plastic

Stone

alabaster
gemstone
basalt
granite
limestone
marble
sandstone

Processes

carved
embroidered
enamelled
lacquered
woven
glazed
decorated
inlaid
painted

V&A ESOL tour, © V&A, London



Worksheet 3

Describing objects

1 Function: it is used for / it was used for / it might be used as

ornament / an ornament	decoration	furniture
worship	a garment	a tool
a container	a memorial	an implement
a musical instrument		

2 Materials: it is made of

glass	plastic	stone
marble	cloth	ivory
metal	gold	silver
iron	terracotta	porcelain
paper	cardboard	wax
precious stones		

3 Size and shape

round	spherical	rectangular
square	oval	irregularly shaped
box-like	ball-shaped	triangular
bowl-like	flat	

4 Colour and texture

rough	smooth	glossy
matt	soft	hard
thick	thin	heavy
light	delicate	sturdy
transparent	multicoloured	light / dark

Worksheet 3

Describing objects (cont.)

Choose two objects and make notes on them in the table below:

	Name of object	Name of object
Function What was it used for?		
Materials What is it made of?		
Size and shape What shapes do you see? How big is it?		
Colour and texture What colour is it? What is its texture like?		

Activities after the visit

Depending on students' level, these could include:

- Homework activities on the worksheets handed out on the tour.
- Evaluation of the visit (see Appendix for evaluation form).
- Writing a thank you letter to the V&A ESOL guide, individually or as a group.
- Looking at other worksheets and considering:
 - 1 Do students feel any differently now that they have spent some time in a large museum?
 - 2 Do they still hold the same views?
 - 3 Would they like to add anything they learnt to the statements discussed before the visit?

Students could also write a short essay, to discuss these arguments.

*The Ardabil Carpet, Iran, 1539–40,
museum no. 272-1893*

