

Making a Mark

A Tees Valley museums and National Portrait Gallery partnership as part of the Dept for Education Museums and Schools programme



Report on feedback from pilot programmes Feb – March 2013

Summarised by Jo Graham
Learning Unlimited, April 2013



1 Background

The Arts Council Museums and Schools Programme 2012-15 enables regional museums to partner with clusters of local schools, national museums and work with Bridge Organisations to increase the number of high quality educational visits by schools in areas which currently have lower than average cultural engagement. The programme is being funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and administered by Arts Council England. Each project will encourage the development of a high quality learning experience, sharing skills and best practice and encourage a legacy of increased learning provision and participation by schools and young people in the project areas.

The Making a Mark project is a partnership between Tees Valley museums and the National Portrait Gallery and is part of the Arts Council Museums and Schools Programme 2012-15.

The five local authorities that comprise the Tees Valley are working with the National Portrait Gallery and regional schools on a three year programme of engagement that looks at local history and the expression of identity through different areas of the curriculum. *Making a Mark is a programme that explores how the Tees Valley made its mark on Britain, especially in the age of industry, and how we can still trace the lives and influences of people locally. The programme offers students the chance to be curious, collaborative and creative in making their own marks, inspired by our local heroes and heritage.*

The project will use the stories of local heroes and individuals and local heritage through creative learning and cross curricula approaches including art and history. It is developing 'peer' partnership with individuals, themes, movements and ideas (both historic and contemporary) contained within the National Portrait Gallery's collection.

Across the programme partners will explore different methods of learning delivery and involve artists where appropriate in programme design and the development of practice. Approaches will seek to build relevance and contemporary connections with the programme themes to engage young people of different abilities through activity designed to support the curriculum and skills development.

Over the lifetime of Making a Mark the programme should involve 12,600 students visiting three times each, making a total of 37,800 visits across all partners and **years**.

2 Introduction

The aim of this brief report is to pull together a small sample of feedback from teachers on pilot sessions. Although all the sessions covered different content in a variety of ways, the desired outcomes for students and teachers were the same and it is therefore of interest to reflect on early responses to these initial workshops.

3 Executive summary

Overall the pilot sessions went well. When asked how they would persuade other teachers to participate in Making a Mark sessions teacher responses varied from stressing how well organised and run the sessions were to emphasising the benefits to students. The latter included covering much more than could be done in a classroom, encountering authentic objects and inspiring students.

Teachers clearly felt that Making a Mark was beneficial to students. Most of the students achieved all of the desired outcomes, with four of the six schools saying that all their students developed a greater interest in the school subjects studied through the programme. Evidence teachers gave indicates that students found the sessions highly motivating, inspiring them to want to do more and helping them improve their skills and understanding.

"Pupils created some excellent pieces of creative writing. The museum inspired their writing and brought their settings and characters to life." **Year 10 teacher**

Although one might expect teachers involved in pilots to be slightly more enthusiastic than average, nonetheless the unanimously positive outcomes for teachers are encouraging. All teachers considered their local museums to offer a valuable experience to students and all said they were more likely to include heritage and museums in their curriculum planning.

We also asked schools how sustainable the idea of three visits for the same students was likely to be. Key factors in taking part in the pilots were funding, being aware of the quality of the museum's offer for schools and curriculum fit. Schools were split on whether such an investment of time could continue, although most were positive. All schools however felt that counting MaM time as a contribution towards Arts Award would be of interest.

"My Key Stage 1 team of teachers and teaching assistants thoroughly enjoyed all of the sessions. They all felt that enjoyed all of the sessions. They all felt that it was definitely worth the 3 hours we spent out of school." **Year 2 teacher**

4 Method and sample

Teachers were given questionnaires following their sessions. Six teachers returned their questionnaires to five of the six partners. The questionnaires covered a wide range of students from Reception to Year 10. Most were Key Stage 2. Questionnaires also covered a range of group sizes from 16 to 61. Students took part in a range of sessions including creative writing, art and historical enquiry.

5 Key findings and implications

The findings from this study are based on a very small sample and should therefore only be used as indicative. Implications therefore also need to be corroborated before being used to underwrite action.

- 5.1 half the teachers felt that being able to come out of school for three sessions for the pilot was the result of exceptional circumstances. Half felt that they would be likely to be able to do so again. Teachers mentioned the funding as being instrumental in enabling them to take part. One school talked encouragingly about building a relationship.

Implications:

It will be important for Making a Mark to establish a good reputation for quality and convince teachers of the benefits to students whilst funding is still in place if it is to build any kind of sustainability. There are however early signs both from teachers and from the museums that the three visit model can help build deeper relationships between schools and museums.

- 5.2 curriculum relevance both in terms of knowledge and skills was obviously key in both the decision to take part and in the benefits cited.

Implications:

Making a Mark should use these elements in marketing to new schools. The team should also reflect on the sessions and activities on offer at their own and partner sites to ensure that the maximum learning benefit is being offered at each museum.

- 5.3 all the teachers felt that schools would find MaM more attractive if the programme hours counted towards Arts Award,

Implications:

When the Arts Award research highlights the potential of the programme each partner should see which of their projects could be structured to count towards Arts Award Discover or Explore.

5.4 the pilots achieved all of their desired outcomes with most of the students. In particular teachers felt there was a positive impact on school work in the curriculum area covered by the workshops. The impact feedback from the secondary literacy workshops was especially positive.

Implications:

This is very encouraging and suggests that in developing an evaluation framework MaM should consider looking to measure the impact on attainment, potentially achievement. If the outcomes around literacy can be replicated, this is potentially a highly significant area of work for museums, that may even lever in further funding.

5.5 the pilots were highly successful at achieving the desired outcomes for teachers.

Implications:

Since it is teachers who need to be persuaded to participate, this is very encouraging. It suggests that teachers who have been involved may be happy to act as champions if asked. However, the pilot teachers were largely teachers who were keen on heritage or art to begin with. These will be important outcomes to continue to monitor through the programme as teachers who have not tended to include heritage in their everyday practice become involved.

6 Findings in detail

6.1 What motivated you to be able to come out three times with the same students?

Teachers gave a wide range of reasons

Finance	2	Flexibility to school needs	1
End of project	1	Want a relationship	1
Free	1	Local pride	1
Topic/Theme	3	Independence and thinking skills	1
Knew Museum/past success	3	Literacy skills	1
Real objects/authentic experience	1	Cross curricular	1

"It was the culmination of our project and the financial assistance to be able to give the children 3 unique experiences was too good a chance to miss." **Year 4/5 teacher**

“Willingness of the gallery to work with school and adapt to suit school needs. Support with transport costs as we could not have walked the smallest children.” **Reception teacher**

“This project linked well with our school drivers – belonging, confidence, possibilities and initiative. To develop ‘Possibilities’ we are trying to provide the children with as many opportunities outside of school as possible... with our ‘Belonging’ theme, we are trying to instil in our pupils, a sense of belonging to a community of which they can be proud.” **Year 2 teacher**

6.2 Is that likely to continue

Yes	No
3	2

6.3 What should we say to other teachers when we are encouraging them to come for 3 visits as part of the programme?

Hands on	2	Well organised, staff good	2
Huge curriculum coverage	1	Caring atmosphere (younger children)	1
Memorable	1	Skills and achievement for children	1
Authentic opportunities within subject	1	Inspirational	1
Enjoyment	1	New	1
Differentiation	1	Need for clear understanding of offer	1

“It covers so many areas of the curriculum through a hands on experience that would take you weeks to cover in the classroom. Through the hands on approach the experience is more memorable to the children and they will retain so much more information as a result.” **Year 4/5 teacher (CIMM)**

“The project was very organised. Artistic skills were clearly and directly taught to the children step by step, ensuring all children succeeded and felt proud of their work.” **Year 2 teacher (HAGM)**

“Children will love the opportunity to feel real objects and listen to historical facts from an Anglo Saxon princess.” **Key Stage 2 teacher (KM)**

“Worthwhile experience, it opened the pupils’ eyes. Inspirational.”
Year 10 teacher (HoS)

6.4 If **Making a Mark** sessions could be counted as hours towards an Arts Award at Discover or Explore level would you be interested?

Yes	No
6	0

“I think if the sessions counted as hours towards an Arts Award, this would definitely encourage more schools to participate.” **Year 2 teacher**

6.5 Do you think that **Making a Mark** achieved any of the following outcomes for your students?

Outcome	Students			
	A	M	S	N
Students are more aware of and curious about the heritage of their area	3	3		
Students develop a stronger sense of belonging and pride in the local area	2	2	2	
Students develop a greater interest in the school subjects studied through the programme	4	2		
Students develop their creative thinking and/or practice	1	5		
Students have developed their independent learning and thinking skills	2	3	1	

A: All, M: Most, S: Some, N: None

Developing local awareness:

“The children were very interested in the old artefacts from Hartlepool within the museum and wanted to spend time in the space.” **Reception teacher**

“Some pupils have already started to investigate their local area.” **Year 10 teacher**

“Children were able to make links between names of parks and the person they were named after, once they had seen the portraits.” **Year 2 teacher**

Children showed a real interest when looking and talking about work. This broadened their horizons. **Reception teacher**

Developing creativity:

"The sessions enhanced follow up art activities in school." **Year 2 teacher**

"The children loved making collage faces and were desperate to do more back at school." **Year 2 teacher**

"Pupils created some excellent pieces of creative writing. The museum inspired their writing and brought their settings and characters to life." **Year 10 teacher**

Engagement and enjoyment:

"All children on task and interested." **Key Stage 2 teacher**

"Thank you for a lovely engaging experience. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed it. Every time we came, the pupils were waiting at the minibus to jump on and get here." **Year 10 teacher**

Motivation and attainment:

"The children were really enthusiastic about each of the 3 sessions and were interested to learn more." **Reception teacher**

"When back in the classroom pupils constantly used the experiences to aid their writing. Motivation levels are at an all time high." **Year 10 teacher**

"They were proud of their achievements." **Year 10 teacher**

"Pupils have started to read books again!" **Year 10 teacher**

6.6 Do you think that **Making a Mark** achieved any of the following outcomes for you?

Outcome	Y	N
Teachers consider their local museums to offer a valuable experience to students	6	0
Teachers are more likely to include heritage and museums in their curriculum planning	6	0

“Very valuable and engaging.” **Key Stage 2 teacher**

“My Key Stage 1 team of teachers and teaching assistants thoroughly enjoyed all of the sessions. They all felt that it was definitely worth the 3 hours we spent out of school.” **Year 2 teacher**

“Our school feels that it is essential that the children should know about their area and its heritage. We would be very keen to make sure we work with the museum / an artist / learning team again.”
Year 2 teacher

“Having an actual artist who could demonstrate their skills to the children was amazing. The children gained so much from this.” **Year 2 teacher**