A GUIDE TO THE V&A FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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The Home of Creativity

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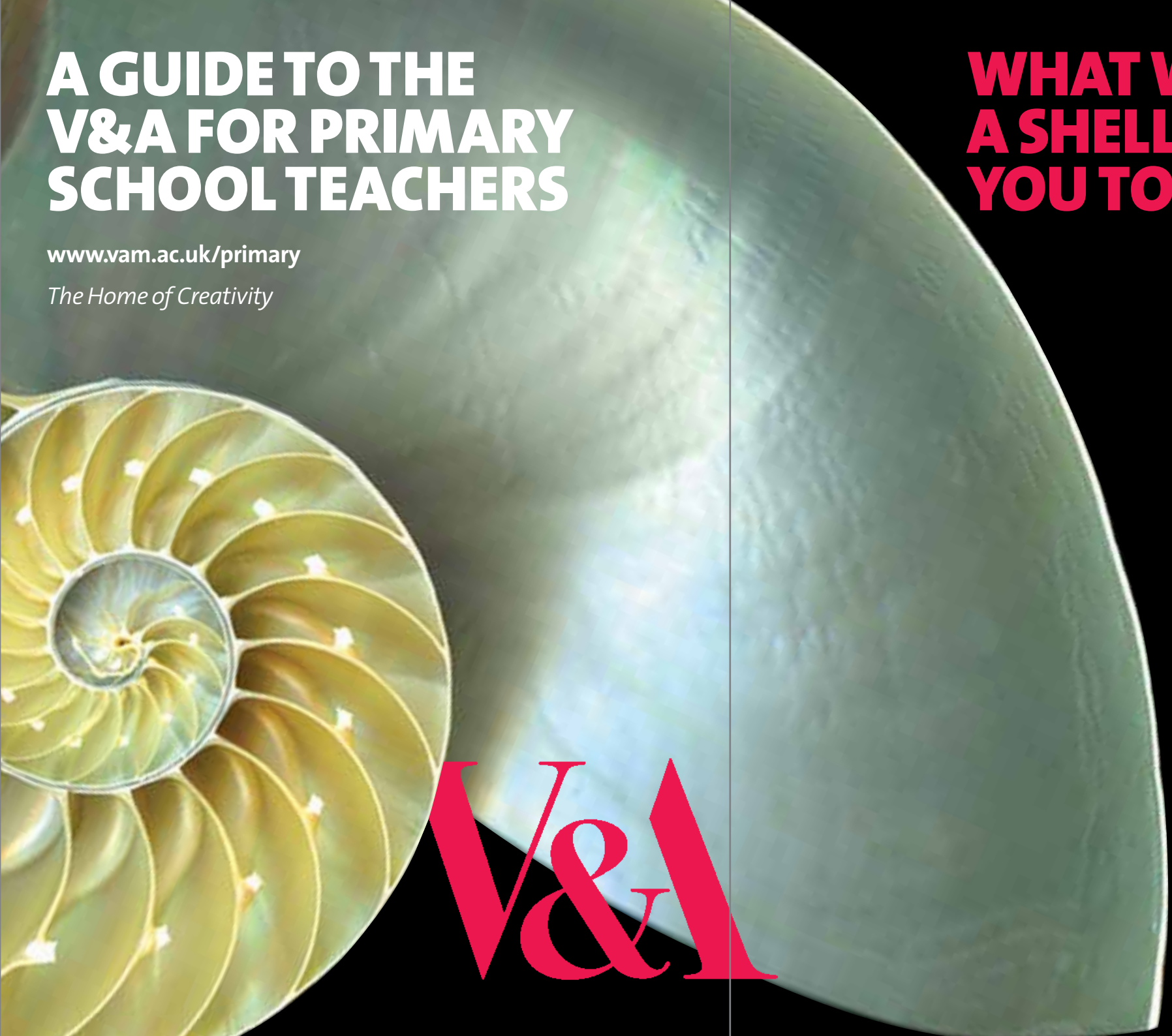

WHAT WOULD A SHELL INSPIRE YOU TO MAKE?

The Burghley Nef,
France, 1527–8

The Burghley Nef is a salt cellar that looks like a medieval ship. The hull is made from a nautilus shell.

WELCOME TO THE HOME OF CREATIVITY!

Step inside and explore a wealth of art, design and performance that brings cross-curricular learning alive. From Tudors to Victorians, da Vinci to Rodin, Buddhism to Islam, the V&A is a fantastic learning resource for primary schools and it is free to visit.

Use this guide to explore

How the V&A is organised *page 2*

Curriculum themes and learning objectives supported by the V&A *page 4*

Activities to do in the Museum *page 16*

Planning a successful self-guided visit *page 20*

'The V&A was the best school trip ever. Go there, it is amazing'

Year 6 pupil

For advice about your visit email schools@vam.ac.uk or call 020 7942 2622

HOW THE V&A IS ORGANISED

The V&A is organised in five major themes – Asia, Europe, Materials & Techniques, Modern and Exhibitions.

Asia
Discover galleries dedicated to Japan, China, South Asia, South East Asia, Korea and the Islamic Middle East.

Europe
Explore medieval, Renaissance, Tudor and Victorian art and design.

Materials & Techniques
Investigate making processes in detail, including architecture, ceramics, jewellery, furniture and sculpture.

Modern
Learn about 20th and 21st-century design styles including Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Modernism and Postmodernism.

Exhibitions
There is a full programme of exhibitions throughout the year. Students and teachers can take advantage of concessionary ticket rates. Check the website for a list of current and future exhibitions.
www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions

Hands-on Discovery Areas

Many galleries include hands-on discovery areas – look for on the map. There are fantastic hands-on areas in:

Medieval & Renaissance, Levels 0, 2:
Make a brass rubbing or complete a giant slider puzzle made of replica medieval tiles (Discover the Medieval World, Level 0, Room 10c). Put your hand inside an armour gauntlet and feel its weight (Level 2, Room 62).

Britain 1500–1900, Level 4:
Activities include a Victorian clothes dressing-up area, a guess the mystery objects game and a chance to build a replica of the Crystal Palace (Victorian Discovery Area, Level 4, Room 122b).

Theatre & Performance, Level 3:
Try on original theatre costumes and create stage sound effects (Theatre & Performance, Level 3, Rooms 103–106).

Ceramics, Level 6:
Find out how ceramic objects are made through touch objects and construction activities (Ceramics, Level 6, Room 143).

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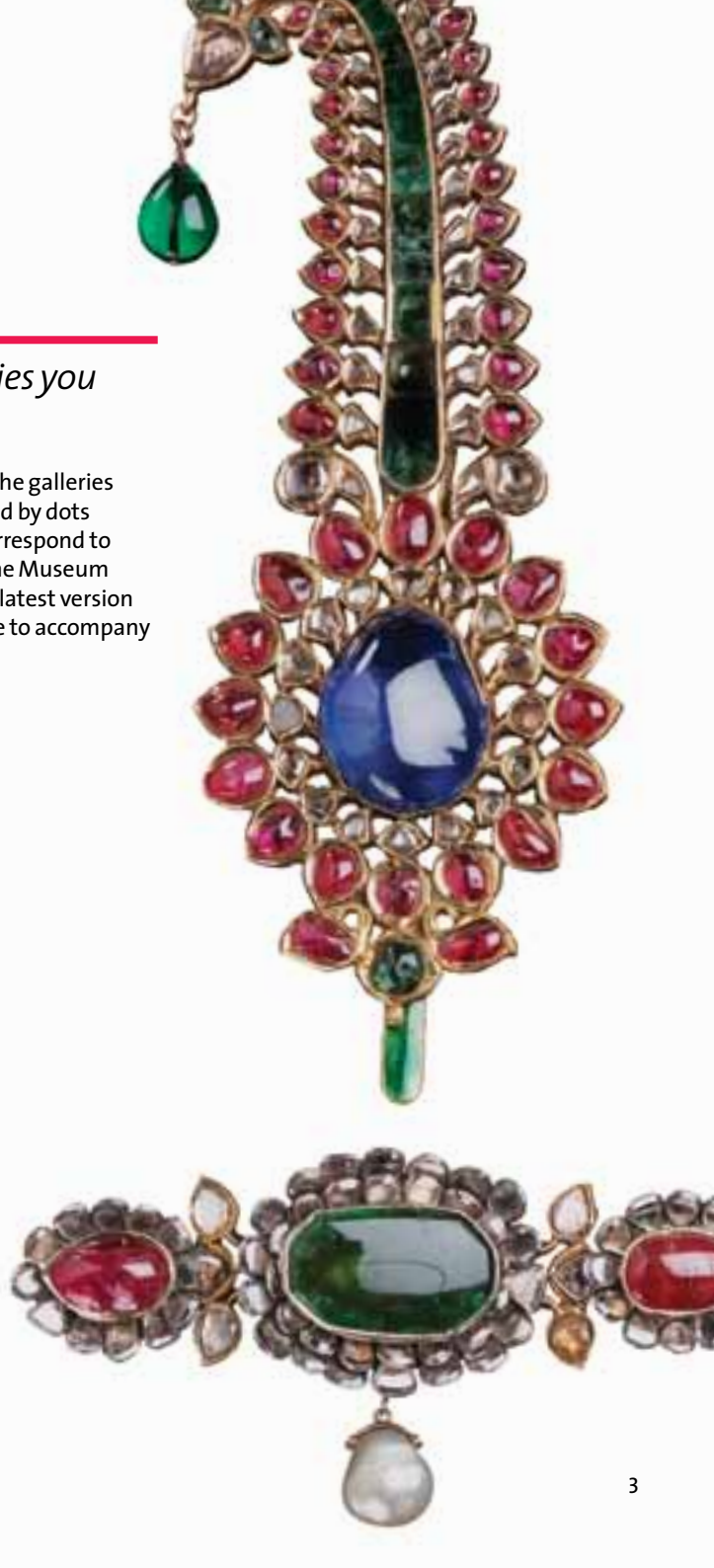
Locating the galleries you want to visit

The five major themes and the galleries within them are colour coded by dots throughout this guide to correspond to the colour coding used on the Museum map. You can download the latest version of the map from the website to accompany this guide.

- *Asia*
- *Europe*
- *Materials & Techniques*
- *Modern*
- *Exhibitions*



Turban ornament,
India, about 1755

CURRICULUM THEMES AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES SUPPORTED BY THE V&A

Persian Set,
Dale Chihuly, 1999

ART & DESIGN

As the national museum of art and design, the collections are bursting with objects to support this subject.

From sculpture to paintings, ceramics to glass, the Materials & Techniques galleries offer pupils a way to explore materials and how things are made. The Asia galleries are a great way to explore art and design from around the world. While, the Fashion and 20th Century galleries offer a unique look at world class examples of key trends and styles such as Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Modernism.

A visit can provide inspirational starting points for topic work as well as many different opportunities for cross-curricular learning.

Colour, pattern, texture, line, tone, shape and form

- *Asia, Islamic Middle East, Level 1*

Explore examples of geometric and floral pattern in the Islamic Middle East gallery, including one of the largest carpets in the world, the Ardabil Carpet.

- *Sculpture, Level 1*

Study line, shape and form through works by Bernini, Canova, Rodin and Henry Moore.

- *Glass, Level 4*

From Ancient Egyptian glass fragments to cutting edge contemporary designers such as Dale Chihuly, the Glass collections offer wonderful starting points for looking at colour, form and line.

- *Ceramics, Level 6*

From Ming to Wedgwood, Edmund de Waal to Grayson Perry, the Ceramics galleries are full of fantastic shapes and forms to take inspiration from.

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ART & DESIGN

Mosque lamp,
Turkey, about 1557

Materials and processes used in art, craft and design

- *Sculpture, Level 1*
- *Cast Courts, Level 1*
- *Asia, Level 1*
- *Medieval Renaissance, Levels 0, 1, 2*

Techniques: Carving, casting, moulding, relief
Materials: Terracotta, bronze, marble, wax, wood, ivory, shell

- *Glass, Level 4*

Techniques: Stained, painted, mould blown, engraved, cut and enamelled

- *Architecture, Level 4*

Materials: Glass, brick, stone, metal, concrete and thatch

- *Furniture, Level 6*

Techniques: Joinery, carving, digital
Materials: Wood, plastic, metal, fabric, lacquer
(opens December 2012)

- *Ceramics, Level 6*

Techniques: Casting, press moulding, factory production

- *Paintings, Level 3*

Techniques: Watercolour, oil, fresco, portrait miniatures

Robe,
China, 1780–1850

Artists, makers and designers in different times and cultures

- *Medieval & Renaissance, Levels 0, 1, 2*

Medieval tapestries, works by master sculptors Donatello, Michelangelo and Pisano, Leonardo da Vinci's sketchbooks, as well as armour and tableware.

- *Britain 1500–1900, Levels 2, 4*

British art and design from the Tudors to the Victorians. Including five restored period rooms and work by leading designers such as Chippendale, Morris, Pugin, Mackintosh, Wedgwood and Liberty.

- *Asia, Level 1*

South Asia: Textiles, furniture, jewellery and paintings from the Mughal, Rajput and Deccani Courts. This gallery includes one of the V&A's most popular objects, Tipu's Tiger, a life-sized mechanical tiger devouring a British soldier.

Islamic Middle East: Textiles, tiles, carpets, ceramics, mosque lamps and minbar.

China: Displays include temple and worship, living, ruling, eating and drinking. Highlights include dragon robes from the Imperial Court.

Japan: Samurai armour, swords, kimono, tea ceremony utensils and woodblock prints.

HISTORY

Victorians

● *Britain 1500–1900, Level 4, Rooms 121–125*
Learn all about the Great Exhibition. See Joseph Paxton's original drawing for the Crystal Palace and see some of the actual objects that were displayed at the Great Exhibition. Find out how the Victorians lived through displays about fashion, eating and drinking, furniture, textiles and technology. Explore how Victorian designers such as William Morris were inspired by China, India and the Middle East.

Build a replica of the Crystal Palace, try on a corset and crinoline, watch a film about the Great Exhibition and guess the mystery objects.

● *Fashion, Level 1, Room 40*
See a display about Victorian fashion including a lady's day dress, a cage crinoline, a gentleman's top hat, coat and waistcoat, as well as fashion plates showing all the latest designs of the time.

The Museum building is a fantastic example of Victorian architecture. It provides a wonderful introduction to the legacy of Prince Albert and the Great Exhibition.

Tudor kings and queens

● *Britain 1500–1900, Level 2, Rooms 55–58*
Discover some of the luxurious and opulent objects, furnishings and clothes that were owned by Henry VII, Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and their courtiers. See portraits and sculptures of the rulers, and explore magnificent tapestries that would have adorned the walls of palaces and encampments. Step inside a replica parlour from an Elizabethan hunting lodge.

● *Medieval & Renaissance, Levels 0, 1, 2*
Find out what a medieval feast was like and see objects that tell the story of trade during Tudor times. These include the magnificent Burghley Nef salt cellar made from a nautilus shell. Try on a replica gauntlet worn by a knight in battle and explore armour worn by a horse!

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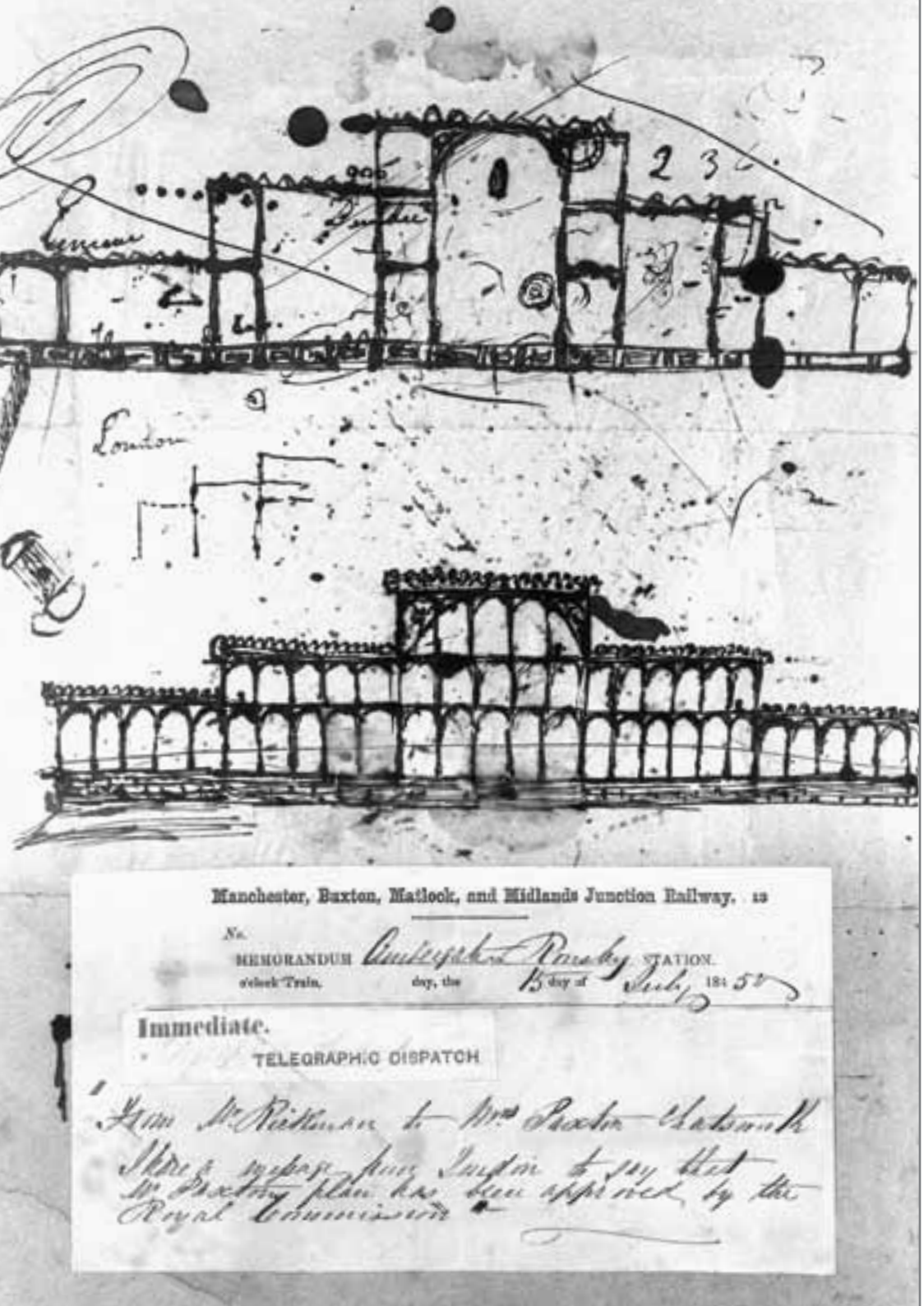
Mantua court dress, England, 1745–50



Design for the Crystal Palace, Joseph Paxton, about 1850

HISTORY

'Thanks for the great day! Really relevant and stimulating with much to think about on the way home and in school.'

KS2 teacher

Homes from the past

Through period rooms and interior furnishings, the V&A offers opportunities for pupils to compare and contrast homes from different times in history.

- *Medieval & Renaissance, Level 2, Room 64b*
  See a wooden house front that survived the Great Fire of London.

- *Tapestries, Level 3, Room 94*
  Be surrounded by the atmospheric Devonshire Hunting Tapestries that would have decorated the walls and provided warmth during medieval times.

- *Britain 1500–1900, Level 2, Room 58*
  Step inside a room from an Elizabethan hunting lodge.

- *Britain 1500–1900, Level 4*
  View a Victorian drawing room and designs for wallpaper, curtains and furniture by William Morris.

- *Modern, Level 3, Rooms 74, 76*
  See furniture and interior design from 1900 to the present day, including Arts and Crafts, Art Deco, Art Nouveau, and Postmodernism.

LITERACY

Circus horse puppet, 1800–1900

Traditional tales and myths from around the world

Some of the objects in the collections tell us about traditional tales or myths. They can bring a story to life and help pupils gain a deeper understanding of their meaning. Stories include:

- *South Asia, Level 1*
Tipu's Tiger

- *Islamic Middle East, Level 1*
The Tale of the Seven Sleepers

- *Sculpture, Level 1*
Explore Greek myths and heroes and heroines such as Neptune and Triton; Theseus and the Minotaur; Pandora's Box; and Thetis dipping Achilles.

Use the V&A website and search the collections to find out more about these stories and objects.
http://collections.vam.ac.uk

Objects as starting points for stories

All objects in the Museum are on display because they have a story to tell. Whether this is about who designed it, what it is made from, why it was designed or who would have used it, there are infinite possibilities for storytelling within these walls! You could choose any of the galleries but we recommend the following:

- *Medieval & Renaissance, Levels 0, 1, 2*
- *Britain 1500–1900, Levels 2 , 4*
- *Fashion, Level 1*
- *Asia, Level 1*
- *Sculpture, Level 1*
- *Theatre & Performance, Level 3*

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Textiles

Different textiles and techniques can be found throughout the Museum. These range from tapestries to embroidery, rayon to silk, knitting to quilting. The galleries also offer pupils the chance to explore textiles from around the world, including kimono from Japan, dragon robes from China, embroidered silk from France and digital printing from the UK. We recommend the following:

- *Britain 1500–1900, Levels 2, 4*
- *Fashion, Level 1*
- *Tapestries, Level 3*
- *Asia, Level 1*

Armchair, designed by Gerrit Thomas Rietveld, 1916

Materials, structures and shelters

Explore the materials, shapes and forms used in architecture to create structures and shelters. Investigate different types of buildings and their purposes. Look at other areas of the Museum to get more inspiration for interesting structures and forms.

- *Architecture, Level 4*
- *Metalwork, Level 2*

Products and their users

Investigate a wide range of products, from lights to chairs, elaborate Victorian dining sets to one of the first examples of a Dyson vacuum cleaner.

- *Britain 1500–1900, Level 4*
- *Modern, Level 3*

For advice about your visit email schools@vam.ac.uk or call 020 7942 2622

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Stories and symbols

Explore and compare the differences and similarities between Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism. Step inside the atmospheric recreation of an Italian chapel in the Medieval & Renaissance galleries; explore what different symbols and gestures mean in Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam in the Asia galleries; uncover the significance of a Hanukkah lamp, Torah scroll cover and Kiddush Cup used in the Jewish faith in the Sacred Silver gallery.

- *Sacred Silver, Level 3*
- *Asia, Level 1*
- *Medieval & Renaissance, Level 0, 1, 2, 3*

Shiva Nataraja (Lord of the Dance), India, 1800–1900

MATHS

Counting, shape, pattern

Explore colourful designs in mosaics, Islamic tile design, William Morris wallpaper, architectural structures, mosaic flooring, windows and colonnades.

- *Britain 1500–1900, Level 4, Room 125f*
- *Islamic Middle East, Level 1*
- *Architecture, Level 6*
- *Ceramics, Level 6, Room 144*

Tile, Iran, about 1444

ACTIVITIES TO DO IN THE MUSEUM

These activities have been devised to provide starting points for looking at the collections, learning from objects and providing an engaging but simple activity to do with your class. These can be used to kick start a scheme of work or a project back in the classroom or extend one you have already started. Bring sketchbooks and pencils for your pupils so they can record, draw and discuss what they find. Some of the activities require single sheets of paper.

Tipu's Tiger,
India, about 1793–4

Mini Curator

Create your own mini collection of curiosities from the objects around you.
Fold your paper in half and then half again, or if you are using your sketchbook draw a grid to divide your page into four. Now carefully look around and select four objects. You could choose a theme such as colour, shape, nature, or fashion from long ago. Draw these into the boxes you have created to make your own mini collection.

– *Why did you choose these particular objects?*
– *Are there any links between them?*

Use the drawings to create a V&A classroom display.

Globetrotter

Travel overseas (no passports required!) through China, Japan, the Middle East and India.
Pick a theme such as pattern, eating and drinking, textiles or materials. Look carefully around the galleries for objects that fit your theme. Now have a go at drawing what you find in your sketchbook or on a piece of paper.

– *Can you spot any similarities between the things that you have found?*
– *What are the differences? For example, the patterns from the Middle East are full of geometric shapes. In China you may find lots more insects and animals!*
– *What are the differences or similarities to things we have in this country?*

Compare what you have drawn with your friends.

For advice about your visit email
schools@vam.ac.uk or call 020 7942 2622

ACTIVITIES TO DO IN THE MUSEUM

Creator

Be inspired by the objects all around you and create something 3D.
Choose an object that is interesting because of its shape or form. Make part or all of it in 3D. Use a piece of paper to capture the shapes and textures of the object by tearing, pleating, crumpling and folding until you have a 3D form. Develop your ideas back at school by making a collage with the rest of the class of the different shapes and textures that you have all made. Add colour and embellish with more detail to make the collage even more eye-catching.

Pattern Maker

Create your very own tile design.
This activity will work best in the following galleries: Islamic Middle East, South Asia and the Museum building itself (floor mosaics, windows, doors). Get into groups of three or four. Imagine you are a team of specialist tile designers. You have been asked to design a pattern to decorate floor tiles in a palace.

Search for a geometric shape or a natural form like a leaf or a flower. Once you have found a shape you like, each person should draw their shape at least two or three times on separate pieces of paper.

Now team up with another group and try to create a pattern from the shapes you have drawn. Find a space in the gallery and lay out your drawings on the floor to create a repeat pattern for your tile design.

– *How many different combinations can you make?*

Now decorate the inside of the shapes using details inspired by the designs you see in the galleries. When you get back to school, see if you can create a pattern with the whole class using all your shapes.

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Re-inventor

Explore objects by making your own incredible inventions!
Find an interesting object.

– *What is its function?*
– *Who would use it?*
– *What is it made of?*

Now take a piece of paper to make a bold drawing of it. Make sure you fill the page! Once you have finished, fold your paper in half and half again and again. Use the lines to make neat tears. Now muddle it up with someone else's to tinker with the original objects.

– *What have you created now?*
– *Does it have a totally different function?*
– *What could it be used for?*
– *Who would use your new invention?*

Storyteller

Add voice and movement to objects to tell a story.
Find an object that you find interesting or strange.

– *If it could make a noise what would it be?*
– *If it could speak, what would it say?*
– *If it could move how would it move?*
– *Now think about who might have used the object and where it might have come from, before it came to the Museum.*

Speak out the 'thoughts' of the object and try to tell its story....

Helmet,
England, about 1540

PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL SELF-GUIDED VISIT

Top tips

Explore Search the Collections
Use this online resource to research objects, note their location in the Museum and check if they are on display.
http://collections.vam.ac.uk

Organise a pre-visit to the Museum
Teachers receive a complementary exhibition ticket for a pre-visit if they are making a group booking to an exhibition.

Download our learning resources
Use our learning resources to plan pre-visit and follow up work at
www.vam.ac.uk/learning

CPD events and INSET sessions
Book one of our CPD events or a free INSET session to learn how to get more from the collections and develop creative ideas.
Contact *schools@vam.ac.uk*

Brief your staff
Brief all accompanying staff and adults about the Museum and what you will be doing there before you visit.

Tips for planning a visit for SEN groups

We recommend that SEN groups book one of our free multi-sensory sessions. These are based around different key objects in the collections and provide students with a variety of ways of engaging with museum objects. The boxes include dressing up costumes, scents, sounds and an array of handling objects. Sessions can also include a hands-on making element depending on the needs and ability of your group.

We can also arrange for your group to have a separate quiet area during your visit to the Museum which can be used for preparing to go out to the galleries and for eating packed lunches.

A specialist changing bed is available, however, we do not have a hoist system and would advise schools to bring a portable hoist if one is available.

Contact our Schools Liaison Assistant for advice on the type of visit and session that would be appropriate for you at *schools@vam.ac.uk* or 020 7942 2622

Booking essentials

Ensure you book your self-guided visit at least ten days in advance. Workshops and events need to be booked at least three weeks in advance.

To book contact
bookings.office@vam.ac.uk
or 020 7942 2211

Health & Safety guidelines are provided to assist with your risk assessment.

Book a slot in our lunchroom for your class to eat their packed lunches. These are available in 30 minute slots, can be reserved at the point of booking and lockers are allocated on arrival.

We require the following teacher student ratios at a minimum:
Foundation Stage: 1 adult to 3 students
Key Stage 1 & 2: 1 adult to 6 students
Key Stage 3, 4, & 5: 1 adult to 15 students

For further information visit the schools pages on the website at
www.vam.ac.uk/learning

Book a tour or workshop

We offer a packed programme of tours, workshops and events. Book a session to explore key curriculum themes with a museum educator or professional artist.

To book contact
bookings.office@vam.ac.uk
or 020 7942 2211

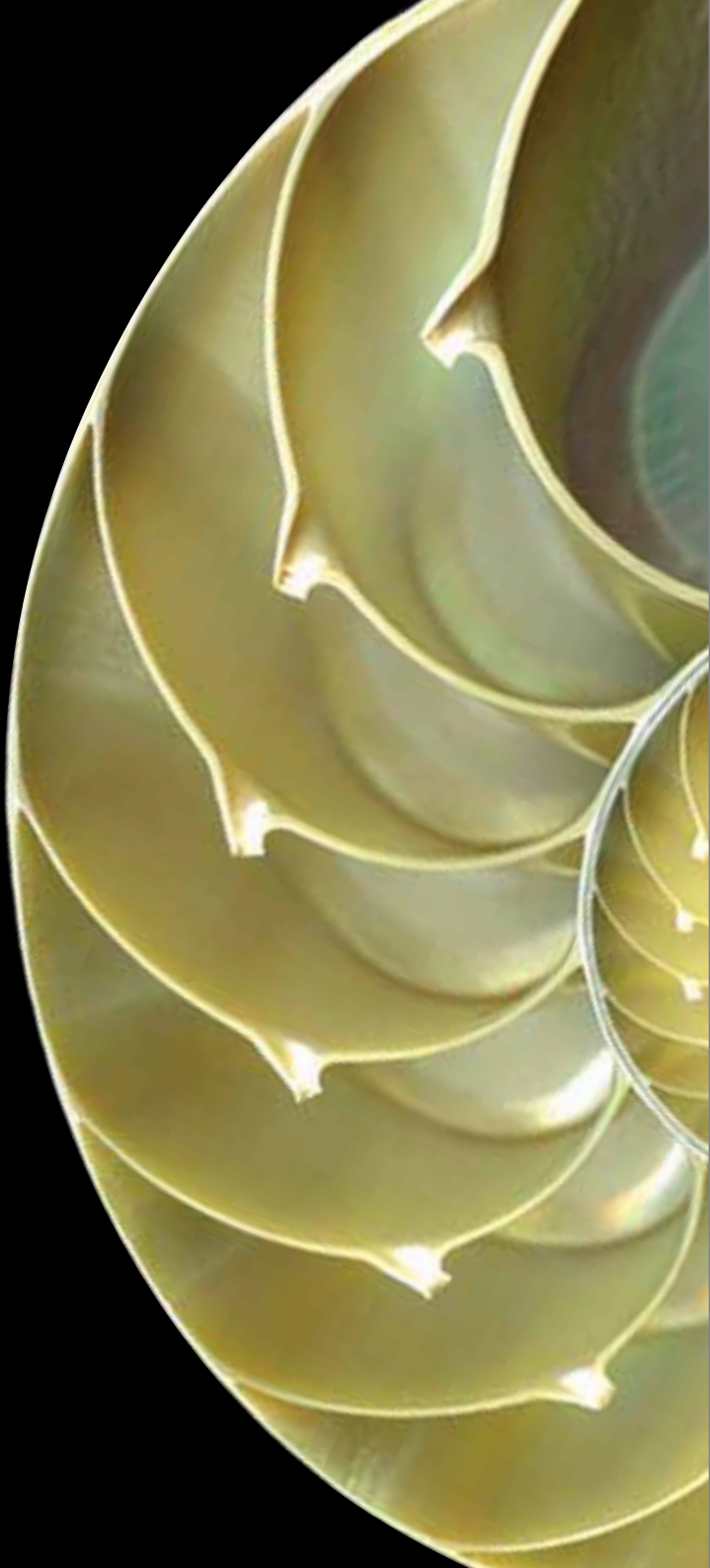
Need more advice?

To maximise the quality of your group's experience when visiting the Museum, please get in touch to tell us about the needs of your group. We can assist in making suggestions about access and inclusion for your students. We can also offer ideas about suitable galleries and interactives to help bring your visit alive.

Contact our Schools Liaison Assistant for advice and ideas at *schools@vam.ac.uk*
or 020 7942 2622

'Thank you. You have inspired us!'

Key Stage 2 teacher



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