A GUIDE TO THE V&A FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND COLLEGES

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The Home of Creativity
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WHAT COULD A BICYCLE INSPIRE YOU TO DESIGN?
This chair—the first to be made of tubular steel—is regarded by many as the most important piece of furniture of the 20th century. The metal frame was inspired by the frame of Marcel Breuer’s bicycle.

The V&A is the home of art, craft, design and performance. From Bauhaus to Bowie, Mackintosh to McQueen, it is packed with creativity and ideas just waiting to be unlocked and it’s all free for you and your students to explore!

‘It was one of the best gallery days we have been to and one which truly gave so many benefits to the pupils!”

Art & Design teacher

For advice about your visit email schools@vam.ac.uk or call 020 7942 2622
The V&A is organised in five major themes – Asia, Europe, Materials & Techniques, Modern and Exhibitions.

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

Europe
Includes galleries focusing on art and design from medieval times and the Renaissance, as well as British art and design from the Tudors to the Victorians.

Materials & Techniques
Explore one material or type of art or design. Investigate making processes in detail, including architecture, ceramics, jewellry, furniture and sculpture.

Modern
The Modern section focuses mainly on the 20th century and includes displays dedicated to Arts and Crafts, Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Modernism and Postmodernism. There are also objects on display by contemporary designers.

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 interactive displays which allow students to explore themes through replica objects, games and digital interpretation. There are also atmospheric period rooms throughout the galleries and a spectacular Renaissance garden with an indoor fountain.

To find interactive displays, look out for the symbol on the map.

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

The Peacock Sconce, Alexander Fisher, about 1899

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KEY GALLERIES FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

The following galleries explore historical and contemporary art and design, making and manufacturing processes.

Architecture
- Level 4, Rooms 127–128a
  Key designers: Norman Foster, Arup Associates, Sir Charles Barry, Jorn Utzon, Sir Christopher Wren
  Key themes: Style, structure, materials, function, climate, urbanism

Ceramics and Glass
- Level 6, Rooms 135–146
- Level 4, Rooms 129, 131
  Key makers: Robert Dawson, Ken Eastman, Clare Twomey, Bernard Leach, Pablo Picasso, Edmund de Waal, Wedgwood, Dale Chihuly, Max Jacobs, Peter Aldridge
  Key themes: Making techniques, 20th century studio, architectural factory, British, international and contemporary

Sculpture and Casts
- Level 1, Rooms 16a, 26–27, 46a
  Key artists: Giambologna, Michelangelo, Bernini, Rodin
  Key themes: Memorial, religious, figurative, architectural

Fashion
- Level 1, Room 40
  Key designers: Catherine Walker, Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel, Christian Dior, Jean Paul Gaultier, Alexander McQueen, Vivienne Westwood, Biba, Ossie Clark
  Key themes: European fashion from 1750 to present day, including society, couture, the male wardrobe, bright young things, anti-establishment, radical fashion

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KEY GALLERIES FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

Paintings
- Level 3, Room 48a
- Level 3, Rooms 81, 82, 87–88a
Key artists: Raphael, Constable, Degas, Gainsborough, J.M.W. Turner, Rossetti and Ingres
Key themes: Miniatures, portraiture, landscapes

20th Century Design
- Level 3, Rooms 74, 76
Key designers: Edward Johnston, Marcel Breuer, Charles Eames, Ettore Sottsass, Alessi, Tom Dixon, Ron Arad, Jonathan Ive, Tejo Remy, Jeroen Verhoeven
Key themes: Internationalism, innovation in design, popular culture, Modernism, Postmodernism

Furniture
- Level 6, Rooms 133–5
Key designers: Frank Lloyd Wright, Thonet & Sons, Thomas Chippendale, George Brookshaw, Eileen Gray, David Kirkness
Key themes: Design styles, making and manufacturing (joinery, 3D printing), materials
Opens December 2012

Jewellery
- Level 3, Rooms 91–93
Key designers: Fabergé, Tiffany, Cartier, Lalique, Wendy Ramshaw, Peter Chang
Key themes: Fashion and court jewellery, the great 20th-century jewellery houses, gentlemen’s accoutrements

Britain 1500–1900
- Levels 2, 4
Key designers: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, William Morris, Augustus Pugin, Christopher Dresser
Key themes: The story of British design from Tudor to Victorian times, including furniture, wallpaper, textiles, sculpture, ceramics and glass

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**KEY GALLERIES FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS**

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**Photography**
- Level 1, Room 38a, Level 3, Room 100

*Key artists:* Julia Margaret Cameron, Cecil Beaton, Robert Frank, Adam Fuss, Floris Neusüss, Bill Brandt, Diane Arbus, Irvine Penn, Man Ray

*Key themes:* Documentary photography, fine art photography, portraiture

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**Theatre & Performance**
- Level 3, Rooms 103–106

*Key practitioners:* Shakespeare, Edward Gordon Craig, Julie Taymor

*Key themes:* Set, costume, make-up design, process of performance, theatre companies, theatrical movements, performance history

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**Asia**
- Buddhist Sculpture: Level 1, Rooms 17–20

*Key themes:* 2nd to 19th-century works in stone, gilded metal and lacquered wood

- South Asia: Level 1, Rooms 41, 47a–c

*Key themes:* Textiles, sculpture, furniture, jewellery, paintings from the Mughal, Rajput and Deccani Courts

- Islamic Middle East: Level 1, Room 42

*Key themes:* Textiles, tiles, carpets, ceramics, architectural woodwork

- China: Level 1, Room 44

*Key themes:* Temple and worship, living, ruling, eating and drinking

- Japan: Level 1, Room 45

*Key themes:* Ceramics, lacquer, textiles, prints, sculpture

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**Other Key Galleries**
- Medieval Renaissance, Levels 0, 1, 2
- Cast Courts, Level 1, Room 46a
- Prints & Drawings, Level 3, Room 90
- Tapestries, Level 3, Room 94

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Head of the Buddha, Thailand, 1200–1300
THINGS TO FIND IN THE MUSEUM

Read on to find out about some of the strange and wonderful things hidden among the collections for your students to uncover.

Did you know there are clay pots that you can actually eat?
Ceramics, Level 6, Room 145
Find out about their healing properties in the Ceramics galleries.

Would you consider a tongue scraper a piece of jewellery?
Jewellery, Level 3, Room 91 mezzanine
There is also a spoon for digging out ear wax in the Jewellery gallery!

Where would you find Shakespeare, Peter Pan and Kylie in the same room?
Theatre & Performance, Level 3, Rooms 103–106
Take a star-studded stroll around the Theatre & Performance galleries.

Have you ever seen something so big inside a room that you can’t see the top of it?
Cast Courts, Level 1, Room 46a
Go back in time and view a life-size cast of Trajan’s column. Discover how this giant replica was made.

Did you know you can take photographs without using a camera?
Photographs, Level 3, Room 100
Find out about camera-less photography in the Photography gallery.

Where can you find a dress that is more than two metres wide?

Fashion, Level 1, Room 40
Discover the court dresses that used up to 1000 metres of thread.

Mantua court dress, England, about 1753
ACTIVITIES TO DO IN THE MUSEUM

Artists, designers and practitioners often use unusual starting points to develop ideas. Use these warm-up activities in any gallery in the Museum to encourage curiosity and creativity. These activities are designed for Art & Design, Design & Technology, Drama, Performing Arts, English and Media Studies. Some of the activities require A4 paper and pencils.
FOR ART & DESIGN AND DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS

**Manipulate**

Be inspired by the shapes and textures around you to create something 3D.

**Activity**

Choose an object that is interesting because of its shape or form and then construct part or all of it in 3D. Capture the shapes and textures of the object by tearing, pleating, crumpling and folding paper until you have a 3D form.

**Tinker**

Re-invent objects by playing, meddling and mixing things up.

**Activity**

Find an object you find intriguing or unusual. Make a bold and detailed drawing of it. Once you have finished, fold your paper in half and half again and again. Use the lines to make neat tears. Rearrange your drawing like a jigsaw puzzle or muddle it up with someone else’s to tinker with the original artwork or object.

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Teapot, designed by Marco Zanini, 1983

Screen, designed by William Eden Nesfield, 1867

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

Look at objects from different perspectives.

Activity
Choose a large-scale object that you can walk around. Make a quick line drawing of it from one viewpoint. Then walk around and stop in another position, turn your page and make another drawing of the same object. Keep moving around the object until you have explored it all the way around.

Contrast

Find opposites, contradictions and objects that repel each other. Force them together in a design experiment.

Activity
Choose two objects that are completely different. Draw half of the first object on one side of the paper. Fold the paper over and draw the other half of the other object underneath.

— What have you created?
— Now that they are one, does it make you think about the original objects differently?

Collect

Curate, select, and covet your own collection of curiosities from the objects around you.

Activity
Fold your paper in half and half again and then again and then again! Now select eight objects to draw into the boxes you have created to curate your own cabinet of curiosities.

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

Articulate

Choose an object and describe it in detail to someone who can’t see it.

Activity
Get into pairs. The first person should choose an object in the gallery to describe without the second person seeing it. Then stand back to back. The second person should try sketching the object from the first person’s description. Then swap round.
FOR DRAMA, PERFORMING ARTS, MEDIA AND ENGLISH STUDENTS

Move
Explore objects through movement.

Activity
In pairs, find an object and discuss how it might move if it could. Create six linked movements to explore a physical representation of the object. Share these movements with the group.

Vocalise
Give a voice to artefacts.

Activity
Find an object that intrigues you in some way. If it could make a sound what would it be? Work on a sound that can be repeated like a loop using only your voice. Combine all the sounds in your group and perform them to produce a ‘soundscape’ of the gallery.

Re-imagine
Be inspired by your surroundings to create a setting for a performance.

Activity
Choose a gallery to explore. Walk around it and take in the atmosphere of the space and the objects. How much natural light is there? Is it noisy or quiet? Are the objects made of similar or different materials? What are the main colours or tones? Now use the gallery to re-imagine the staging of a performance. What style or genre would it be suitable for?
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 complimentary exhibition ticket for a pre-visit if they are making a group booking to an exhibition.

Talking Design
Watch Talking Design to get tips on how to explore and analyse objects before visiting the Museum. www.vam.ac.uk/designforlife

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 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 session 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. This 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.

Please contact our Schools Liaison Assistant who will be happy to discuss the type of visit and session that would be appropriate 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.

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

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 offer ideas about suitable galleries and interactive 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 for a fantastic trip and an educational experience’
D&T teacher