

Young V&A hosts sustainable design workshop for students at 10 Downing Street, as part of Mrs Murty's Lessons at 10 initiative

On Friday 3 November, Young V&A's Learning and Engagement team, led by Head of Learning at Young V&A and V&A East, Catherine Ritman-Smith, delivered an inspiring creative learning session to 40 students at 10 Downing Street, as part of Mrs Murty's Lessons at 10 initiative.

Lessons at 10 is an initiative created by Mrs Murty, which aims to provide children with the unique opportunity to experience what goes on behind the scenes of the black door of 10 Downing Street. Each Friday, industry experts and special guests are invited to host an inspiring educational session for groups of school children from across the country at No. 10.

With play, imagination and design at its heart, Young V&A focused its lesson on empowering Year 5 and 6 students from Woodland Grange Primary School, Leicester, to become designers for the day, tasking them with creating sustainable transport solutions for the future.

To help spark imaginations and inspire creativity, students were given the opportunity to handle a selection of objects from Young V&A's extensive display of 2,000 objects at its site in Bethnal Green, including a micro-scooter, Space hopper, roller skates, moveable toys, skateboards, and more.

Working in small groups, students were tasked to select and draw an environment of their choosing – city, town, village, coastline, countryside – and challenged to design and create prototypes for a new mode of transport, which aims to protect people and the planet, using objects from Young V&A's collection to encourage thinking around how things are designed, made and used, and the ways in which design can be used as a tool for change.

Following the one-hour session of hands-on creative making, the students gathered for a group photograph outside the famous black door of 10 Downing Street with Mrs Murty.

Helen Charman, Director of Young V&A, Learning and National Programme, says:

"It is privilege to have been invited to co-host a lesson with Mrs Murty and bring objects from Young V&A's extensive collection to No. 10 today. In a fast-changing world, Young V&A seeks to help build young people's creative confidence, from ideas creation to problem-solving skills, and we truly hope students come away from the lesson feeling inspired by the power of creativity."

Catherine Ritman-Smith, Head of Learning at Young V&A and V&A East, says: “We have been blown away by the innovative designs and prototypes the students have created as part of today’s lesson at No.10. We really wanted the session to be an opportunity for young people to get up close to objects in Young V&A’s vast collection and to get them thinking about the ways design can be used as a tool for change. We hope the students feel proud and excited by what they have created today, and inspired to continue thinking about the ways in which we can help create a sustainable future.”

Mrs Murty, says: “It was fantastic to welcome Young V&A to Downing Street today and to see how pupils were inspired by Catherine and the team’s creative learning session. It was clear to see how excited the pupils were to learn more about the importance of design for a sustainable future. With the help of amazing organisations like Young V&A, Lessons at 10 is opening up Downing Street to the next generation and helping to bring education to life for children right across the UK.”

Situated in the heart of Bethnal Green in London, Young V&A is a museum for young people to imagine, play and design. Young V&A showcases the transformative power of creativity, displaying inspiring stories of children’s ingenuity alongside approximately 2,000 works from the V&A’s collections. Dating from 2,300 BC to today and from all around the world, objects are displayed in unique and imaginative ways to ensure Young V&A is packed full of serious fun and playful learning at every turn.

Notes to Editors

For further PRESS information about Young V&A, please contact press.office@vam.ac.uk or 02079422490. A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from pressimages.vam.ac.uk.

About Young V&A

Young V&A is a museum sparking creativity now and for the future. Created with 0-14-year-olds, it is a place for young people to imagine, play and design, and get inspired by a collection of 2000 toys, characters, objects and artworks from around the world and throughout history. Rooted in its local community with 150-year heritage as East London’s first museum, Young V&A works to energise young creators everywhere, as well as empower everyone to promote creativity for the next generation and support the teaching of art and design education for all.