

GEM Yorkshire and Humberside ReachOut Research Bursary

Reflective Research Report

War and Peace: Researching how sensitive histories are approached in museum learning



**Shannen Johnson – Learning and Engagement Officer, The Peace
Museum**

Emily Elsworth – Former Education Assistant, Royal Armouries

Areas of Enquiry

How have the First World War Commemorations impacted on formal education sessions offered by museums in terms of content, practice and attitudes? What best practice models exist for teaching and learning about conflict and resolution exist nationally and internationally that museums can learn from?

How can this support and enhance museum teaching and learning about sensitive issues in relation to conflict and resolution, and the contemporary links to current society?

Contents

- Introduction
- Why teach sensitive issues at all?
- Overview of site visits and questionnaires
- Topic of Age
- Best Practice
- Teaching Remembrance
- Teaching the Holocaust
- Approaches to use in museum learning
- Conclusions and impact on practice

Cover Image: Weeping Window Poppies at the Imperial War Museum, designed by 14-18 Now.

Introduction

The centenary of the First World War has impacted the practice of learning teams within museums and galleries. Many have responded to the centenary with exhibitions, events and have developed new learning content to engage children, young people and families with the centenary and the heritage of the war. Whilst this has presented opportunities for children and young people to engage with this heritage, it has also opened up opportunities for debate and discussion around sensitive histories and issues that surround war and conflict more broadly. This is not something new; museums and galleries have long been places where such sensitive histories can be explored through learning content aimed at schools and families. But the centenary years have renewed interest and provided opportunities within this historical context. However, the centenary has also brought up questions around how war and sensitive histories surrounding conflict are presented. It could be argued that centenaries and commemorations surrounding war can often be portrayed as celebrations and shy away from tackling the true horrors of war. Therefore part of the aim of this research was to identify examples of best practice of how museums can approach the teaching of these sensitive histories in a balanced way.

From initial research, it became clear that the link between the teaching of sensitive histories and museum education practice is a relatively under-researched topic. There are bodies of work relating to the teaching of sensitive histories in schools, and often this research has highlighted the difficulties. It has also been argued that in general, the dynamics between education, war and peace have not been sufficiently researched¹. Author Hilary Robinson² has also pointed out the lack of books and work to engage young children with the difficult subject of the First World War. We therefore felt that this research would be useful for our own practice and others working within the museums and learning sector, but also we would bridge some of the gaps that exist between formal learning practice within schools and museum and heritage learning, particularly in relation to younger children.

For the purposes of our research, we chose to focus on formal learning programmes delivered by museums for KS2 pupils. This was because in our own current positions, this is the audience we work with most. We were also interested in looking at how such sensitive histories are approached with this younger age group.

We chose to use a range of different approaches and research techniques in order to find ways that sensitive issues can be approached through a balanced narrative. These included a questionnaire for museum educators (see Appendix 1), observing the First World War workshops at our own perspective museums and carrying out site visits to museums that teach sensitive issues.

¹ Introduction: Education, War and Peace by Gary McCulloch and Georgina Brewis

² Primary History 79, Writing books for young children about the First World War, 16.07.18

Why teach sensitive issues at all?

Before we discuss our research and outcomes, we would like to explore why museums, galleries and heritage sites should be aiming to engage and teach sensitive issues.

From our research, it became clear that there are many boundaries for teachers in relation to approaching sensitive histories. The Historical Association³ highlights that some teachers struggle with teaching sensitive issues as they are unclear as to where they should set boundaries, this is the case for both Primary and Secondary teachers. In a separate article, the Historical Association⁴ discuss the barriers to teaching sensitive issues including lack of resources, lack of subject knowledge and teacher avoidance as they do not feel that the issues are appropriate. Therefore museums can support teachers as they can have access to a wider range of resources in artefacts as well as specialist subject knowledge and provide unique learning opportunities for the pupils that allow them to effectively engage and understand such topics, particularly for younger children.

One of the profound viewpoints in recent research is the statement by Paul Bracey⁵ that events studied by younger pupils tend to be positive, such as the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, but there are more gruelling aspects of history that provide the richer opportunities for pupils learning history. He adds that the richest opportunities for children are those that include family, community, national and global history, something which the teaching of the First World War in both schools and museum allows for. Therefore this is something that both schools and museums should provide.

Museums learning teams themselves can also face barriers in approaching sensitive histories within their learning programmes. Simon Stephens⁶ presents the debate that many museums face. Whilst “museums shouldn’t shy away from the horrors of war”, this can be a difficult balance when many museums (such as military ones) are seen as a family day out. This may lead to diluting of information or war presented as a game or family friendly fun. Therefore how do museum learning teams balance the need to tell the facts but not glorify war? Our research aimed to answer this debate, examining how museum learning teams strike a balance between approaching sensitive issues surrounding the teaching of war and conflict to young children, without diluting the information and providing an inaccurate representation.

This is something that both us face within our former and current work at the Royal Armouries and The Peace Museum.

³ Historical Association, Not sure where to draw boundaries when handling sensitive issues, 13.09.2009

⁴ Historical Association, Teach Report: Teaching Emotive and Controversial History 3-19, 04.09.2007, p4

⁵ Primary History 69, From Home to the Front: World War 1 (1914-18) in the primary school classroom, Spring 2015

⁶ Museums Journal Blog, War Stories. 13.02.13

Overview of Site Visits and Questionnaire

The sites we chose to visit were our own sites, followed by the Imperial War Museum (North and London), Leeds Museums and Galleries, National Army Museum and the Anne Frank House. Each of these sites, with the exception of the Anne Frank House, had developed First World War content and presented wider sensitive issues, such as the Holocaust, in both their exhibitions and education sessions. We observed workshops at the Royal Armouries and The Peace Museum as well as meeting with members of the Education teams from the Imperial War Museum North, Leeds Museums and Galleries, National Army Museum and the Anne Frank House.

The key findings of our questionnaire results echoed that of our site visits; in many museums new sessions had also been developed as a result of the centenary. Prior to 2014, UCL Special Collections only offered bespoke content relating to the First World War but now they have a First World War programme which has led to an increase in interest and this has been reflected in their bookings. Similarly, the Royal Armouries only had a First World War programme for Key Stage 3 before 2014. However, when the new National Curriculum was introduced the workshop 'Explore the Great War' was developed for Key Stage 2 with a focus on local history as WWI was no longer a named topic on the curriculum, but given the centenary years approaching it would certainly be a popular choice with schools. This initially had huge popularity in November 2014 but this has since decreased. UCL Special Collections and Royal Armouries will continue to deliver their new programmes after the centenary. Barnsley Museums have developed a bespoke First World War remembrance session that ran alongside a temporary exhibition. This was not a permanent workshop as they feel they have adequately covered this topic so rather than continuing the legacy they are focusing on other topics within their collection.

Topic of Age

The topic of age became a key theme of our research and our site visits. Whilst there is a caution to be had, there is an argument that there are many opportunities available for schools to consider emotive and controversial issues in history, and actually the 'range of opportunities is potentially greater below the age of 14 after which the demands of external specifications act as a barrier'⁷. Therefore museums should be supporting schools teaching younger children on sensitive issues.

However, not all museum sites we visited worked with younger children. The Imperial War Museum North stated that the programme that they now offer is suitable for children from Year 5 upwards and that they wouldn't approach these topics with younger age groups. This was due to the fact that they did not want to dilute the information they were providing, especially given that the museum itself was designed to immerse visitors in an experience that some find uncomfortable. Samantha Heywood⁸ discusses this in an article about the suitability of images for

⁷Historical Association, Teach Report: Teaching Emotive and Controversial History 3-19, 04.09.2007, p4

⁸ Samantha Heywood, Journal for Education in Museums, War, What is the Big Picture, 2002

exhibitions on war. She argues ‘war has no limits, but our visitors do’ and therefore museums need to strike a balance between not being shocking or gratuitous but without diluting the information. A way to do this is to frame such content in a thought provoking way and being explicit about the continuity between the past and present. This can be applicable to learning in museums too, and using techniques such as highlighting the local history aspect and relating it today can ensure it meets this fine balance.

Leeds Museums and Galleries support this approach and have delivered their ‘Beyond the Trenches’ workshop to playgroups all the way through to adult groups. They still ensure that the information that they provide is relevant to each age group by differentiating the artefacts and questions they use as part of the discussion. Both the Royal Armouries and The Peace Museum run KS2 programmes dealing with sensitive histories too. Age therefore is a factor that needs to be considered carefully, but if done correctly, any issues or concerns can be overcome and it can be incredibly rewarding for younger children’s understanding for sensitive histories, providing a good foundation for further learning as they progress through the curriculum.

Best Practice

From close examination of current research, the results of the questionnaire and our site visits there are clear approaches that show best practice for the teaching of sensitive issues to children in Key Stage 2 both in museums and schools. We will begin with approaches museum educators can use in relation to the teaching of Remembrance and the Holocaust, followed by some broader recommendations of techniques and approaches that can be used across museum learning in relation to sensitive histories.

Teaching Remembrance:

Overall, we discovered that one of the best ways to approach the teaching of the First World War was to use remembrance as it can be a more appropriate way to tackle the sensitive issues surrounding WWI with younger children. During the centenary there has been a plethora of guidance for teachers on how to approach the centenary and remembrance is often the suggestion given when working with younger children. Any learning that takes place within the school environment can be consolidated in museums. However museums must avoid the approach of whitewashing the realities of war in order to make their exhibitions more family friendly and resort to clichés about the muddy trenches without examining the complex nature of the conflict and why it started⁹. This sometimes leads to an almost celebration of the war, instead of a commemoration with balanced narratives around war and peace. In addition, other criticism aimed at centenary commemoration has focused on the lack of representation of women and non-white soldiers. However,

⁹ Geraldine Kendall, Acts of Remembrance, Museum Association

Richard Smith argued that there is the danger that if museums and galleries do present these stories, they could present an “unproblematic, multicultural war”¹⁰.

From our site visits, many museums are taking this approach and working to avoid some of the more problematic elements of using remembrance as a gateway to wider discussions about the war. Leeds Museums and Galleries have been proactive throughout the last four years in working closely with schools to provide programmes that worked for them. Lucy Moore, First World War Curator, mentioned that the majority of the projects they have led have been influenced by the school's approaching them wanting to focus on a specific area of the war. This has included several remembrance projects.

The Peace Museum and National Army Museum manage to successfully teach about the First World War without ignoring the horrors of war. Both museums do this through focussing on the poppy, not just the red poppy but also the white and purple poppy. This allows for discussions to focus on those that fought in the war, the animals involved in war and the importance of peace, thus ensuring a balanced narrative between war and peace. The Royal Armouries have incorporated a new remembrance element to their workshop using circle time. This is a useful approach as this is something that children will be familiar with and as such their responses have always been well thought out and have allowed for greater discussions into different elements of the war.

The National Army Museum runs a remembrance themed workshop for KS2. The core purpose of the museum is to preserve and tell the history of the British Army, however they are keen to ensure that the context of Empire and the diversity of the British Army is not overlooked, and this is a key component of their learning programme. In their Poppies to Remember session they present the red, white and purple poppy but also introduce other manifestations of remembrance symbols that include reference to the sacrifices made by British Empire soldiers from across the globe. This is key for their local school audience in London which is diverse and therefore allows pupils to explore these multiple narratives and understand the complexities of this sensitive history. Their learning programme, supported by the galleries which explore the complex relationship between Britain and the Empire, ensures they avoid the danger outlined by Smith.

Teaching the Holocaust:

The idea of teaching the Holocaust to children in Key Stage 1 and 2 is something that teachers find daunting. This is a view highlighted by Martin Winstone¹¹ who points out that “it raises uncomfortable and complex questions about human behaviour to which there are not always obvious answers”. This means that this topic is often approached with Key Stage 3 but it is becoming more common for primary

¹⁰ Richard Smith in *Unthinking Remembrance? Blood swept lands and seas of red and the significance of centenaries*, 2015, p77

¹¹ Primary History 77, *Is There a Place for The Holocaust in the Primary Curriculum?*, 20.10.17

teachers to teach about the Holocaust. The Holocaust Educational Trust has provided teachers with support for teaching this topic to a younger audience and a key way for this to be done is through the Kindertransport¹². Similarly to studying evacuees during the Second World War in Britain, the Kindertransport provides a relatable way to approach this sensitive issue. In fact, Darius Jackson¹³ points out that is an important subject to approach with children as it addresses issues around migration, refugees, diversity and persecution which are issues that are still relevant today. This is an approach that The Peace Museum have used successfully in their Education programme and one that the Royal Armouries are beginning to use in their new Second World War workshop introduced in September 2018.

Museums are in a position to support schools and teachers in delivering high quality education that deals sensitively with the subject of the Holocaust. Jonathan Lear¹⁴ (www.teachprimary.com/learning-resources/view/teaching-difficult-subjects-the-holocaust) suggests photographs as a way to introduce the topic and see how much knowledge the pupils already have. However, he warns that photographs which only portray the atrocities and tell us nothing about the people should be avoided. Museums can provide this expertise and support through using their collections to support teachers with this delivery. The aim of any Holocaust education work done should be to ensure that the victims are not dehumanised and seen only in the context of the horrors committed against them. Museums can offer pupils the opportunity to engage with real objects and sources, connecting them to the real people to create a deeper understanding of the subject and its impact.

We saw this in action on our site visit to the Anne Frank house. One session they run for Dutch schools is aimed at elementary school (which in England is lower level of secondary) which is a source based activity using suitcases. The pupils have to use resources to work out who the person is and their story in relation to the Holocaust. They also run a foreign school workshop called the Ordinary Day, where pupils discuss what they would do when they wake up, and then they are given cards with anti-Jewish restrictions on so they can understand how much their daily lives would be impacted. This session was particularly aimed at 15-16 year olds and hopes to show pupils the impact of isolation and how it can be relevant today in relation to bullying in schools. They are keen to not simplify the experience of Jews under the Nazi regime to simply bullying, but show how on such a mass scale the impact it can have. Otto Frank felt that the site should never be about pitying what happened to Jewish people, but instead learn the dangers of mass scale isolation. However, the education work of the Anne Frank House is aimed at older children; they do not offer these sessions for the equivalent of KS2.

¹² James Griffiths, The Kindertransport: teaching challenging history at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, 08.06.17

¹³ Primary History 79, So why did they go into hiding? Anne frank in her historical and social context, 16.07.18

¹⁴ Jonathan Lear, Teaching Difficult Subjects: The Holocaust, 12.01.11

Approaches to use in museum learning

Artefacts:

Object handling is a core component of museum education. It is also a technique suggested to teachers by the Historical Association to employ when teaching emotive and controversial history; teachers should aim to use high quality resources which stimulate and inspire pupils in independent enquiry¹⁵. Object handling is something that museums can offer to schools, which isn't something they can do within schools independently. Object handling can provide both of these opportunities; the opportunity to feel and connect with objects from the past is a unique learning experience for the pupils, giving them a wider and deeper understanding of topics, but also presents the opportunity for independent enquiry whilst investigating the objects and uncovering their stories. This is supported by Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism as he "argued that concepts...are acquired through interaction"¹⁶. Rather than only providing photographs and abstract historical concepts for children to grasp these are actual objects for the children to see with the purpose of providing a way for children to engage in the learning of history. It is also an inclusive approach as "handling artefacts is a fun activity for visual, kinaesthetic or auditory learners"¹⁷, ensuring all types of learners are included.

The use of artefacts was an integral element of the programme at the Royal Armouries, The Peace Museum, Leeds Museums and Galleries and the Anne Frank House. The Royal Armouries uses objects to show the role of men, women and children in the First World War to help them understand more about what life would have been like for those living 100 years ago. By having children's toys they are able to draw contrasts from their lives to children in the First World War. This was an approach shared by Leeds Museums and Galleries who used a range of objects, photographs and documents in their 'Beyond the Trenches' workshop to encourage discussion about the war.

Artefacts used on site, can be even more powerful and engaging for approaching sensitive histories. By putting historical events into context it encourages "pupils to connect with the past, ask questions, gather knowledge, develop a deeper understanding of life and grow emotionally"¹⁸. The most prominent site for this is the Anne Frank House, who are able to use the fact that their museum is on the site where Anne Frank hid for two years during the Second World War.

Eyewitness Testimonies and Personal Stories:

Eyewitness testimonies provide a unique and memorable learning experience, which is at the very core of the museum learning experience. The Imperial War Museum

¹⁵ Historical Association, Teach Report: Teaching Emotive and Controversial History 3-19, 04.09.2007, p5

¹⁶ Alfrey and Durell, How children think and learn, 2003

¹⁷ Primary History 54, Primary History, Artefacts Handling at Brunel's SS Great Britain...touch, look, listen, smell – but please don't taste!, 09.08.09

¹⁸ Steven Jolly, Primary History 74, This is no ordinary story...this is our story: Teaching the First World War in the primary school, 27.10.16

Meet the Veterans programme is a brilliant example of this. It allows pupils to meet and talk to a real-life veteran. It allows pupils a sense of freedom in their approach to learning, provides opportunities for independent enquiry, a key component of good practice outlined in the Historical Association report. It is a memorable and unique learning opportunity that museums can provide to schools and is where museums can excel at supporting learning showing museum education's role to provide a more holistic approach to learning with wider experiences that go beyond just the classroom and curriculum based learning. Meet the Veterans also helps challenge stereotypes and narratives about war and conflict by providing the opportunity for pupils to see beyond the uniform or a title, and see the real people and their lives beyond their role of job, helping the pupils form a connection and a deeper understanding of the issues. This can also go beyond school education work done by museum educators and feed into family and lifelong learning too.

Personal stories, being re-enacted by museum educators or through the use of collections are also a powerful tool museums can use to engage younger pupils in sensitive histories and can be used if the original eyewitness testimony is not possible. Paul Bracey¹⁹ mentioned the power of personal stories as they can provide rich learning opportunities, engaging pupils with real people. This shouldn't just include celebratory stories, but also stories of war and conflict too. Within the constraints of the primary classroom it can be difficult to use personal stories given the pressures from the National Curriculum, however, in the museum setting children can become immersed in these stories and therefore gain a powerful learning experience from them. Museums can connect the tangible assets in their collection, the objects, to the intangible assets, the stories and memories, which can be used to connect pupils to these sensitive issues in meaningful and impactful ways. The diary of Anne Frank house is a prime example here and is used as a narrative throughout the site but also this is often used by teachers in primary schools to introduce the topic of the Holocaust to KS2, connecting the children to Anne's story and using it as a lens to examine today's world, focusing on sensitive topics such as persecution and tolerance.

The Royal Armouries uses the stories of three people from Leeds that lived during the First World War and the fact that they are real people created a greater impact on the children as they are able to find out what happened to them a hundred years ago. This approach was also highlighted by UCL Special Collections as they approach the teaching of sensitive issues through discussion and use first hand experiences and stories through their archival documents.

The Peace Museum uses the stories of animals from the First World War which is a more age appropriate way to discuss some of the true horrors of the war without diluting the information, to encourage pupil's to think about the importance of peace. The same workshop also includes reading the Hilary Robinson book 'Where The Poppies Now Grow' which is an effective way of finishing the workshop as the story

¹⁹ Primary History 69, From Home to the Front: World War 1 (1914-18) in the primary school classroom, Spring 2015

allows the children time to reflect on what they have covered throughout the workshop.

Using the local area:

When the new National Curriculum was introduced in 2014, the First World War was taken off the curriculum for Key Stage 2. However, it is still possible to teach the First World War at this age if approached through using this as the local area study. Steven Jolly²⁰ highlights the importance of using the local area to help children engage with this topic. This includes using the gravestones of those who died in the First World War. Whether through a visit or just a photograph this can highlight to the children the idea that people who lived where they now live went and fought in the war. Museums can play a key role in this; using their collection that relates to the local area to inspire teachers and pupils. Barnsley Museums (from our questionnaires) aim to do this, and link the local history element of their programmes to health and wellbeing agendas too.

Providing opportunities for additional learning:

Many of the sites visited and researched supplement and enrich their school learning programmes through opportunities for additional learning, either in the classroom or with parents and carers at home. This is key when approaching sensitive histories which may lead to difficult and complex conversations after the session, which could lead to emotional responses if not dealt with sensitively. The Anne Frank House provide an aftercare package for teachers to equip them with the tools needed to deal with such responses.

Other sites have extended their sessions into longer term projects. North Lincolnshire Museum Service worked with local secondary schools, who visited the museum across 3, 1 day sessions over 7 months, with work done in schools in between, researching local stories of the soldiers. This longer term learning provides many opportunities for independent enquiry and engagement with the museum, and also allows a deeper understanding to form within the pupils.

Many of the sites visited have tours available which can be used by teachers or parents to engage their children with the themes of the collection, giving them confidence to approach the sensitive histories their collections represent. The IWM tour guide is particularly useful here and contains a section on how parents/teachers can approach these sensitive topics by providing opening questions and guidance on how to respond.

Conclusion

From our research, we have come to some conclusions about how the First World War Commemorations have impacted on formal education sessions offered by museums but as our research continued, we broadened our research to look beyond

²⁰ Steven Jolly, Primary History 74, This is no ordinary story...this is our story: Teaching the First World War in the primary school, 27.10.16

WWI and look at how museums are approaching the sensitive and emotive histories around war, conflict and peace.

In terms of the Centenary it has led to more sessions being developed for KS2 pupils and younger to engage them with the history of the war and its impact. Teachers have been inspired to approach the subject, and many museums have offered their expertise and support of their collections to engage with this history in a sensitive and reflective way, providing unique and memorable learning opportunities and the scope for independent enquiry.

In terms of the legacy of the commemorations on learning in museums it has opened up a wider discussion around how such topics are taught and approached. WWI has taught us that museum education can go beyond the clichés of teaching the trenches and what the war was like, to a more cross-curricular approach which especially at primary age, can provide teachers and pupils alike with the tools and resources to engage with sensitive topics and histories in meaningful and impactful ways. Multiple narratives are crucial here which provide balanced approaches to the teaching of the war, and also effectively make connections to the world today. In terms of how museums can create new content in relation to popular topics perhaps the IWM learning style is a good model; sessions that are designed in a way so they can be adapted for different topics as requested by teachers, that work across all of the sites, ensuring a workable legacy which is overall a more sustainable way to approach a learning programme.

In terms of an extended legacy, beyond the commemoration, museums can use approaches utilized and developed to teach about WWI and apply them to other issues surrounding sensitive histories, including the Holocaust and issues of diversity and prejudice which are relevant to the modern world.

How this has influenced our practice?

This has had a significant impact upon our practice. From just our initial observations at The Peace Museum and the Royal Armouries, we were able to highlight areas where our workshops already provide a balanced narrative and areas where this balance has not been achieved. For example, 'Explore the Great War' at the Royal Armouries had a session on remembrance, however the activities themselves meant that remembrance was not the focus and instead the focus became about dressing up in period costume. This balanced has now been addressed with activities that bring remembrance to the forefront of the session.

At The Peace Museum, to coincide with the opening of the temporary exhibition 'A Flawed Peace', The Peace Museum developed a workshop focussed around the Christmas Truce aimed at Key Stage Two. The workshop challenged pupil's ideas of what really happened during the Christmas Truce using first-hand accounts of soldiers to do this.

The Royal Armouries, had successfully delivered a workshop on the First World War which included personal stories and object handling. Due to the strengths of this

workshop, a workshop of the Second World War, which had been requested a significant number of times by primary school teachers, was developed using the same format. One of the stories that they chose to tell was that of a child of the Kindertransport. There was initially going to be a timeline of events leading up to the Kindertransport in 1938/39 which included Kristallnacht. Whilst the timeline did not provide too much information on this event, after visiting the Anne Frank House, it was decided that it would not be appropriate to mention this in a fleeting way without providing pupils anymore context, artefacts or time for independent enquiry and it was therefore taken out.

Finally, this has also had a profound impact on Emily's career. From the findings of this project she has chosen to move back into working within primary schools. This will enable her to share these findings with schools and create strong links between primary schools and the support that museums can provide when teaching sensitive histories.

Overall, a key way in which this project has influenced our practice is that it has strengthened our view that sensitive histories can be taught to any age group, if approached carefully. Prior to carrying out this project, we both approached teaching topics such as the First World War and the Holocaust (using the Kindertransport) in our museums to children in Key Stage 2. Despite a few of the sites we visited stating that these were topics they would not approach with younger children, we feel that there are a plethora of ways to teach them without diluting or changing the facts. Therefore, sensitive histories should be approached with children in Key Stage 2 as there are number of key themes and issues that are relevant to them that can be drawn from those sensitive histories.

We would like to thank the following for their support and assistance in completing this project:

- *GEM Yorkshire and Humber*
- *GEM National*
- *Imperial War Museum North Learning Team*
- *Leeds Museums and Galleries*
- *Anne Frank House*
- *National Army Museum*
- *The Peace Museum trustees*
- *Royal Armouries Education team*

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

GEM ReachOut Project – Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended for museum and heritage professionals working within learning and education teams that deliver sessions relating to topics surrounding war, conflict, resolution and sensitive issues, with a particular focus on the First World War. The research is being undertaken by Shannen Lang, Learning and Engagement Officer at The Peace Museum, and Emily Elsworth, Learning Assistant at Royal Armouries and the project has been granted support by GEM YH.

Areas of Enquiry

How have the First World War Commemorations impacted on formal education sessions offered by museums in terms of content, practice and attitudes? What best practice models exist for teaching and learning about conflict and resolution exist nationally and internationally that museums can learn from?

How can this support and enhance museum teaching and learning about sensitive issues in relation to conflict and resolution, and the contemporary links to current society?

How will your responses be used?

Any responses will assist with our areas of enquiry and the project will culminate with a reflective research report that will detail the research activity, methodologies, outcomes and impacts of the research and practical recommendations and solutions for museum learning professionals in relation to the teaching of such topics. Findings will be presented at a GEM Yorkshire Study Day in spring 2019 and possibly at other events.

All responses will be confidential. However, for the purpose of our research, it is important that we know which institution your answers are based upon, as we are looking for examples of the kinds of sessions run, the topics covered, and examples of best practice. We will ask for name and job role, but this can be left blank. There are 10 questions and it should take around half an hour to complete.

Questionnaire:

Name:

Job Role:

Institution:

1. Did your institution develop any new workshops or learning content in response to the First World War Commemorations, or expand on any existing content? Please provide some detail as to the nature of this content.
2. If First World War content was offered prior to 2014, has there been an increase in bookings or popularity during the four year commemorations? Provide figures if possible.
3. If the content was introduced during the commemorations, how has its popularity compared to other workshops and content on offer?

4. Is your institution planning on continuing or adapting current First World War content to ensure a legacy after the centenary? If no, why?
5. Has the First World War Commemorations increased willingness or openness to delivering sessions and content in relation to issues surrounding war, conflict and resolution?
6. Do you think your workshops and content offer a balanced narrative in relation to conflict and resolution? If so, how? If not, why?
7. How do you approach the teaching of sensitive issues surrounding conflict and resolution?
8. How do you approach the teaching and presentation of the sensitive issues presented within your collections to children and young people?
9. Do you feel your workshops and content represent and address the sensitive issues your collection may present in an effective way?
10. How do you ensure your workshops are relevant to the modern world and issues today?

Appendix 2: Bibliography

Appendix 2: Bibliography

Alfrey and Durell, How children think and learn, 2003

Geraldine Kendall, Acts of Remembrance, Museum Association

Historical Association, Not sure where to draw boundaries when handling sensitive issues, 13.09.2009

Historical Association, Teach Report: Teaching Emotive and Controversial History 3-19, 04.09.2007

Introduction: Education, War and Peace by Gary McCulloch and Georgina Brewis

James Griffiths, The Kindertransports: teaching challenging history at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, 08.06.17

Jonathan Lear, Teaching Difficult Subjects: The Holocaust, 12.01.11
www.teachprimary.com/learning-resources/view/teaching-difficult-subjects-the-holocaust

Primary History 54, Primary History, Artefacts Handling at Brunel's SS Great Britain...touch, look, listen, smell – but please don't taste!, 09.08.09

Primary History 69, Paul Bracey, From Home to the Front: World War 1 (1914-18) in the primary school classroom, Spring 2015

Primary History 74, Steven Jolly, This is no ordinary story...this is our story: Teaching the First World War in the primary school, 27.10.16

Primary History 77, Martin Winstone, Is There a Place for The Holocaust in the Primary Curriculum?, 20.10.17

Primary History 79, Andrew Wrenn, For whose God, King and country? Seeing the First World War through the South Asian eyes, 16.07.18

Primary History 79, Darius Jackson, So why did they go into hiding? Anne Frank in her historical and social context, 16.07.18

Primary History 79, Hayyan Bhabha, World War I: widening relevance in the modern world, 16.07.18

Primary History 79, Hilary Robinson, Writing books for young children about the First World War, 16.07.18

Richard Smith in Unthinking Remembrance? Blood swept lands and seas of red and the significance of centenaries, 2015

Samantha Heywood, Journal for Education in Museums, War, What is the Big Picture, 2002

Simon Stephens, Museums Journal Blog, War Stories. 13.02.13.