

Learning through the Wonders of the Peak

Museum experts

Self-led visit, teachers' notes

Introduction

These sessions can be used for several different periods of history or to examine how we know what we know from museums, archaeology and the study of objects. The aim is to give children and young people the skills to become museum experts; acting as archaeologists, historians and curators, investigating the Wonders of the Peak collection. The resources are aimed at young people in Years 5 to 8.

Curriculum links

The main focus of these resources is history, specifically supporting children and young people to:

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- Understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed



- Gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

These sessions will support English and literacy at Key Stages 2 and 3, supporting pupils to:

- Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- Use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.

Resources

- Handling collections
- Question/prompt sheet
- Writing frameworks.

Session 1: How do we know what we know?

Aims of the session

- To develop research skills.
- To explore how we know what we know,
- How we can find out more information?

Curriculum links

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- Understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- Gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.



Resources

A3 or A2 sheets of paper and crayons
Sources pros and cons template
PowerPoint Primary and secondary sources in the gallery
Newspaper Article template.

KS2/KS3
Session 1: Sources

The aim of this session is to develop research skills, examine and evaluate sources of information

Curriculum Links	Activities		Discussion	Follow Up Activities	
<p><u>Best for: KS2/3</u></p> <p>Learning opportunities for:</p> <p>Understand historical concepts</p> <p>Understand the methods of historical enquiry</p> <p>Gain historical perspective</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Start with a hypothesis to prove or disprove about the history of the Peak District, for example:</p> <p>“There is little or no evidence of the Romans in the Peak District”</p> <p><i>Or</i></p> <p>“Celebrations and ceremonies played a large part in prehistoric life”</p> <p>Using large sheets of paper, working in pairs or small groups, children write in three squares:</p> <p>What we know for certain.</p> <p>What we think we know.</p> <p>How we can find out more.</p>	<p>Check how we know what we know</p> <p>List sources of information.</p> <p>Evaluate sources of information.</p> <p>Which can be trusted?</p> <p>Which cannot?</p>	<p>Primary and Secondary Sources</p> <p>Explain the difference between sources and interpretations in preparation for a museum visit.</p> <p>Which sources are most reliable?</p> <p>Which are easiest to understand?</p> <p>Discuss libraries, archives, museums, online information, documents and objects.</p>	<p>Whose voices?</p> <p>Exploring whose voices are heard in museums.</p> <p>Whose account of history do we see?</p> <p>Who owns history?</p> <p>Who owns a communities history?</p> <p>These are all very important questions and can be illustrated by referring to the Romans and Celts. The Roman version is the only one on available as a written record.</p>	<p>Create</p> <p>Write an account of an event that all of the children remember.</p> <p>What is similar, what is different, which version is correct? Which version most accurately represents the collective memory?</p> <p>What are the pros and cons of writing in this way, particularly if it is to be published?</p>

Getting started in the classroom

These resources will work with several time periods. There are separate themed resources. Handling collections are provided in the gallery with notes about each time period and descriptions of the objects, how they were made, who used them and when. Further information about many objects is also available online. Contact the team at the museum to find out more.

The Wonders of the Peak Gallery explores Time and Place. It has a number of features that are repeated to help pupils understand chronology, similarity and difference and to support them in framing questions.

How do we know what we know?

Start

Start the session by asking pupils to work in pairs or small groups. Introduce the theme of the session.

You can start the topic with a general introduction and discussion (using notes provided). If age-appropriate you may choose to start the session with a hypothesis or idea that you would like the children to prove or disprove, for example:

- There is little or no evidence of life in the Peak District before 43 CE
- Festivals were an important part of Prehistoric life.
- Life largely remained the same after the Romans came to the Peak District around 70 CE.

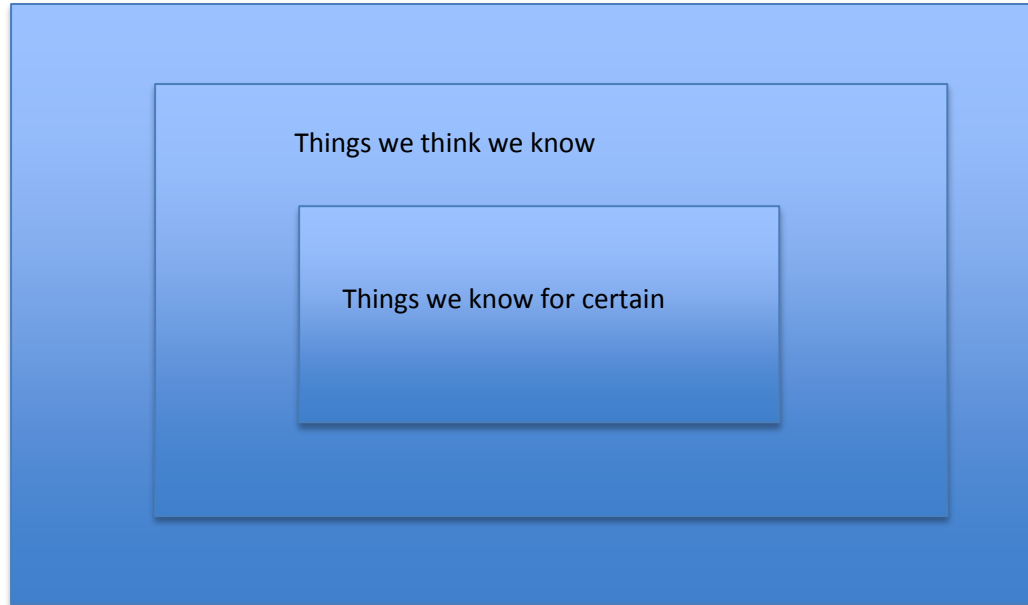
Activity: What do we know?

Give pupils a large sheet of paper and crayons. Ask them to draw a large square in the middle, surrounded by another large square. You can use more creative shapes, applicable to the period being studied, such as the chambers of a cave for Prehistory, a Roman villa if studying the Roman occupation.



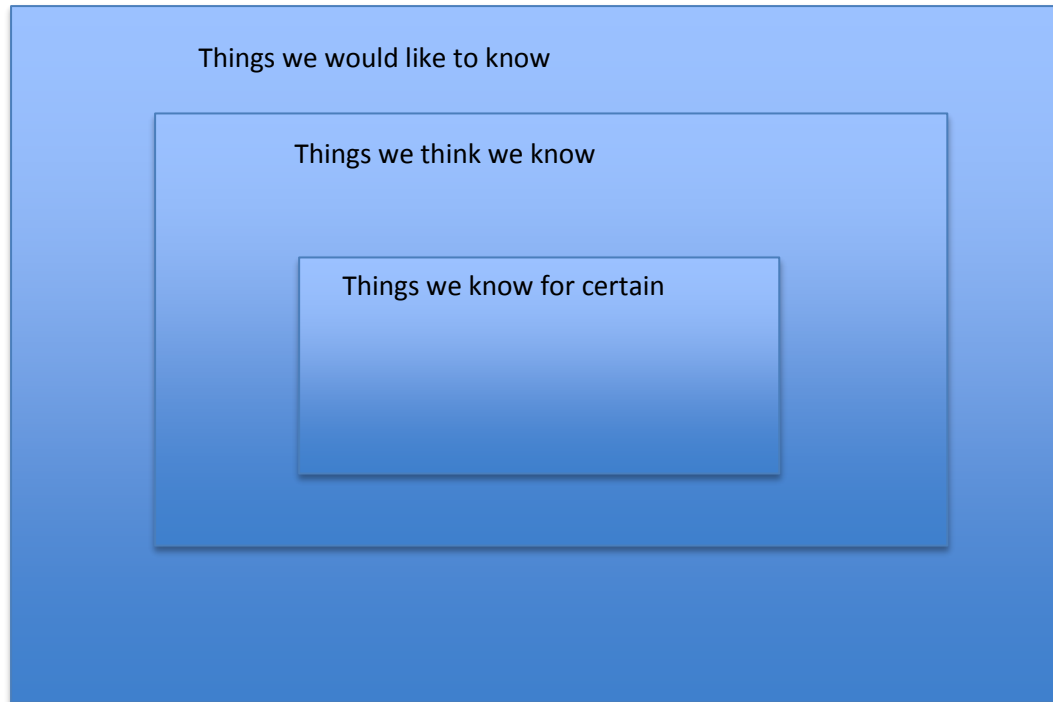
Give the children five minutes to discuss what they know **for certain** about the subject and to think about how they know this. Then get them to write down all the things they know for certain about the Romans in Buxton or the Peak District, for example, in the central square.

Ask for feedback and gather their thoughts, creating a central bank of information on the whiteboard.



Repeat the exercise, asking children to write down what they think they know in the next square.

And finally, ask them to think about and then write what they would like to know to in the outer square.



Activity

Next, find out how pupils know what they know. When developing the Wonders of the Peak gallery, museum staff questioned what they thought they knew about the collection. They worked with experts so that they could provide the most probable, engaging and informative description of items in the collection.

- How can pupils check what they know?
- How do they think the museum staff checked what they thought they knew?
- What sources of information are available to them?

Ask pupils to discuss this in their small groups and then write down ways they can check what they know.

Gather feedback and discuss the pros and cons of each method.

How can pupils and young people check information is reliable?

Focus the pupils on the reliability of sources, particularly when using the Internet. Point out types of websites, who owns the website, if it is a museum, library or reputable source like Buxton Museum, English Heritage or the National Trust. Signs like gov.uk or org.uk etc. Also talk about experts used by the museum in the development of the gallery. How did the museum know who to contact?

Activity

What are the pros and cons of different types of sources?

Source	Pros	Cons

When developing the Wonders of the Peak Gallery, museum staff who worked with a whole range of specialists including archaeologists, geologists, historians, forensic archaeologists, numismatists, palaeontologists, designers, copywriters and illustrators to make sure they were able to tell the stories of the objects well.

There is a quiz at the end of this resource matching museums expert job titles to their work.

Sources and interpretations

Next introduce the difference between sources and interpretations.

A source (or primary source) is a first hand account of an event, or something that was created during, or close to, the time being studied. It could be an arrowhead, a pot, a tile, a painting or a video. The handling collection contains some primary sources (original artefacts) and some replicas.

An interpretation (or secondary source) provides information about the past but was not created at the time being studied. A reference book is a secondary source. A website could be a secondary source.

Browse the images in this section. Many of these items are in the Wonders of the Peak gallery. Which are sources and which are interpretations? How do we know?

Activity: Whose voice?

To illustrate the importance of evidence, ask pupils to think of a memorable event at school; it might be sports day, a play, a visit or a party. Select one event and ask pupils to make a short list of what they remember, without talking to anyone.

Ask them to feedback what they remember about that event. They will probably remember different things. Gather their feedback in short sentences. Ask pupils to put the events in order. Is this an accurate account of the day for everyone?

Extend by asking pupils to write down their memories of the day for a newspaper article. Template provided.

Share /display the accounts and ask pupils to vote for one article to be published in the local newspaper.

They must be able to say which they would choose and why.

Do all of the pupils agree with the selected article?

How can they ensure the account of the event is accurate and/or that it reflects the views of everyone involved?

Why does it matter if some voices aren't heard?

This is a very important question for museum professionals as they are telling the stories of whole communities. There is a further session on interpretation to explore this idea more fully.

Challenge

How can pupils make their voices heard in the telling of community stories?

Research a local story and upload it to the Wonders of the Peak:

<https://www.wondersofthepeak.org.uk/challenges/schools-of-the-peak-museum-challenge/>

Newspaper article template
Features of a news story
A good news report will include the following
A headline that sums up the report in a way that catches the reader's attention
The five Ws
Who is the report about
What happened
Where it happened
When it happened
Why it happened
Comments from witnesses or the people involved
Comments from experts

Session 2: How do we know what we know?

Preparation for a visit to the Wonders of the Peak gallery

Aim of the session

- Detailed exploration of primary and secondary sources
- How we can learn from objects
- Learning object handling skills in preparation for a visit to the museum

Curriculum links

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- Understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
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Resources

Clipboards
Handling collection



KS2/3
Sessions 2 and 3: How do we know what we know?

The aim of this session is to explore sources and techniques to learn from them. Prepare for visit to the museum

Curriculum Links	Activities			Plenary	Follow Up Activities
<p><u>Best for: KS2/3</u></p> <p>Learning opportunities for:</p> <p>Understand historical concepts</p> <p>Understand the methods of historical enquiry</p> <p>Gain historical perspective</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Preparation for a visit to the Wonders of the Peak Gallery</p> <p>Recap sources and interpretations.</p> <p>Explain that pupils will visit the museum, look at the displays but also handle some objects especially selected for them by the museum team. This session will provide advice and guidance on learning from objects.</p>	<p>A word about handling objects</p> <p>Explain that all of the objects in the museum will be important, precious, valuable and/or delicate. The class should set rules on object handling and write notes to advise others on how to handle objects safely. They can check their rules with museum staff.</p>	<p>What can we learn from handling collections?</p> <p>By questioning objects we can find out much more.</p> <p>Consider three stages</p> <p>Questions to describe the object.</p> <p>Questions to make deductions about the object.</p> <p>Questions to draw conclusions about the object.</p>	<p>Feedback</p> <p>Feedback or share feedback on the handling collection.</p> <p>Ask the pupils to create child friendly labels for their objects.</p> <p>Pupils can search the gallery for objects that are similar or different.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Write top tips for object handling</p> <p>Ask pupils to produce a short video telling others how to handle objects safely.</p> <p>Describe favourite objects in no more than ten words.</p> <p>Draw favourite object</p> <p>In pairs can pupils do this back to back and see if their partner can guess what their object is?</p>

Getting started

When the pupils visit the Wonders of the Peak gallery they will look at sources: objects that have been discovered over time. The handling collections are made up of original objects and replicas. The objects have been carefully chosen to relate to different parts of life during the period the pupils are studying.

A word on handling objects

Buxton Museum and Art Gallery has handling collections for teachers to use on Prehistory, the Romans, fossils, ancient animals, and other subjects. The handling collections have an overview of each era and detailed description on the objects. **Call the museum in advance to check if there is a handling box available for you visit.**

By handling objects, pupils can make a connection with the past. All of the objects chosen are robust enough to be handled. Some objects may be precious, old or delicate and must be handled carefully. Museum staff may be available to explain how they handle objects in their work.

Before the visit ask pupils to think of rules for safe object handling. These should cover the following:

- Check that their hands are clean; if they are not, suggest they wash and dry them thoroughly. To get the point across that hands may not always be as clean as pupils might think, pass around a blank sheet of white paper. After just one or two rounds it starts to look creased and a bit dirty. This is a very simple way to explain that handling objects can cause damage.
- Before you start, make sure the surface or table you are working on is clean and clear. It is safer for pupils (and adults) to be seated when handling objects; if someone is standing and drops an object it is likely to be damaged.
- It is also safer to handle objects with two hands. If gloves are required, give the pupils two gloves not one. The gloves at the museum are latex free but check for allergies and make doubly sure with the museum.

Ask the pupils to create rules for object handling. They could even create a short video on how to do this safely for other visitors to the gallery.

The main purpose of object handling is to encourage pupils to develop skills, to use adjectives to describe objects, to make deductions about what the object might be and to draw conclusions about what object can tell us.

Activity: Handling objects

This activity can be framed by explaining the pupils will work as museum collections experts to try to understand more about the objects. To find out more about the objects, they must think of good questions to ask.

First ask what sorts of questions could they ask to help them **describe** the object? Here are some prompt or questions to use to summarise or for feedback.

- What does it look like?
- What does it smell like?
- What does it feel like?
- What colour is it?
- Is it old or new?
- Is it valuable?
- What is it made from?
- Had been changed or mended?
- How heavy is it?
- Is it decorated?
- Does it make a sound?

- Is it damaged?
- Are any parts missing?

Next ask what can they **deduce** from their observations of the object? Again ask for questions.

- Who might have owned it?
- Who might have made it, worn it, built it etc.
- How might it have been used?
- How old is it?
- Where did it come from?
- How was it made?

Finally, they will focus on what they can **conclude** from their investigations.

Before handling objects, ask the pupils to write down or suggest questions that will help them to find out enough to make deductions about their object. Feedback and together select five to ten questions to help with investigations.

Explain that open questions (What, When, Where, Why and How) open up discussion and possibilities.

Closed questions (Is it? Does it?) narrow down the possibilities which can be helpful in identifying an object for example.

Ask the pupils to put their questions in order of the most helpful for museum staff or archaeologists.

Challenge

List five to ten questions that pupils think are key to finding out about objects.

Write a story from the perspective of the object. What has it seen? Who owned it? Where has it been? What happened to it? How does the object view the world?

Session 3: How do we know what we know?

In the gallery

When the pupils arrive at the museum, staff will welcome them and talk to them about how people of all ages use the gallery. The Wonders of the Peak gallery is open and encourages exploration, discussion and conversations. It is very clear what can be touched and where pupils can go.

The gallery explores two main themes, Time and Place. When pupils first go into the gallery ask them to have a quiet moment just to take in their surroundings and to be aware of other people who might be in there. Allow them five or so minutes to explore the gallery, work the themes and how the gallery is designed to work.

Activity

When in the gallery, ask pupils, in pairs, and see if they can find examples of sources (in their area of study). Ask them to write these down (clipboards are available), photograph or draw them.

After about ten minutes ask pupils to come back together and share their findings.

Next they will look for examples of interpretations. Can they remind each other what an interpretation might look like? (Labels, interpretation boards, video, books, replicas).

Again allow a short amount of time to look round the gallery and then ask for feedback.



Activity

Gather pupils in the central area. This is their opportunity to handle real objects from the museum and find out more about them. This is an opportunity for them to use their questions to find out more.

Hand out the objects to small groups of pupils. Ask them to examine the objects carefully and then write down answers to their questions.

Ask what else can they do to understand more about the object?

When they have looked at objects pass them around to other pupils.

Plenary

Ask pupils to feedback their thoughts on each object.

When they have provided their feedback, using the notes, tablets and app, share the information about the object. What was it used for? Are there any special stories behind the object etc.?

In the gallery, pupils can look around to find objects that are similar to see if their detective work was correct.

Challenge

Draw your favourite object.

Describe your favourite object in no more than ten words.

Session 4: How do we know what we know? Future archaeologists

Aim of session

- To explore the work of archaeologists to support understanding of how we know what we know.
- Consider the evidence left by different generations.

Curriculum links

Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses

Understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed

Gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

Resources

Pens, paper, card, craft material,



KS2/3
Sessions 4 and 5: How do we know what we know? Future archaeologists

The aim of this session is to explore primary sources and techniques to learn from them. Prepare for visit to the museum

Curriculum Links	Activities			Plenary	Follow Up Activities
<p><u>Best for: KS2/3</u></p> <p>Learning opportunities for:</p> <p>Understand historical concepts</p> <p>Understand the methods of historical enquiry</p> <p>Gain historical perspective</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Museums are full of objects that are either made or found in the landscape. Ask pupils to consider the objects they have with them today as archaeological finds.</p> <p>Which would survive for 1,000 years and why?</p> <p>Which materials can the pupils see in the gallery?</p>	<p>What objects can tell us about people</p> <p>Ask the children to choose five favourite objects. What might an archaeologist make of these items if he or she were to find them in the future?</p> <p>Gather feedback on objects.</p> <p>Focus on materials and how the objects work.</p>	<p>Oldest objects</p> <p>What do the oldest objects in the gallery have in common (they are made from durable materials that do not corrode).</p> <p>What is missing?</p> <p>There will be few obvious examples of clothes, materials, liquids, plants, food.</p>	<p>Alternative gallery</p> <p>If children could travel back in time, what objects would they choose to bring back to the museum?</p> <p>Why are the objects useful for showing how people used to live?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Create a game based on the objects in the gallery. This could be a dice game. Use two dices one with six materials and one with six eras, roll the two dice and find objects from that time and in that material</p>

Future archaeologists (in the classroom or in the gallery)

ASK pupils to think about the items they have with them today.

Which would survive for 1,000 years? Why? Which parts won't survive? This should lead to a discussion about materials.

Ask pupils to choose their five favourite things. If an archaeologist were to find these five items in 1,000 years time what could they tell about the person who owned them?

- How will people in the future know what the items we use now were used for?
- How will they know what was precious to us?

Gather feedback on a variety of objects from smart phones to photographs, to toys.

Toys can be used to look at time in a child's life, what they play with at what age, creating a timeline of a child's life.

Summarise

The short answer to the question is that archaeologists can never know for certain but people carry out research and make their best guesses at what an object might be used for.

In the gallery

What do the oldest objects in the gallery have in common? The oldest object in the gallery is the Hopton Hand Axe found near Carsington in Derbyshire.

Why have they survived?

Ask pupils to think of objects that might have been used by people in the past that are not in the gallery. Why aren't these things here?

Challenge

The alternative gallery

If all objects and materials survived, what other objects would you be able to see in the gallery?

Which objects would children like to see in the gallery from the time period being studied?

Dice game or spinner

Create two spinners with eight sides. Put eras onto one (Prehistory, Roman, Anglo Saxon, Viking, Medieval, Tudor, Georgian, Victorian) on the other list materials. Pupils have to find an object from the era made from the material. Materials might be stone, horn, lead, Blue John, fabric, fur, pottery, paper. The museum has more objects from some eras than others. Why?

Find objects from this time made from this object.

What do you do game

When developing the new gallery, staff at the museum worked with a range of experts.

Can the children match the job title to what that person might do.

Create labels, cut up. Put the job titles into a box or bag and then lay out all of the descriptions on a table or on the floor. Ask the children to pick out one job title and then find its match.

Archaeologists
Finds out the past from objects and sites
Archivist
Looks after historical documents. Makes sure they are stored and displayed properly
Conservator
Looks after the physical condition of the museum's collection
Curators
Manage and grow collections

Exhibition designer
A team of people redesigned and built the Wonders of the Peak Gallery. They worked with an exhibition designer.
Historians
These people carry out research, looking at sources to make sure they understand what objects are.
Interpretation manager
This person finds ways to share the museum's stories
Geologist
These people study rocks and fossils
Artist
Creates works of art that are shown in museums and galleries
Front of House Staff
Greet visitors when they arrive at the museum