



Wonderful Things - Learning with Museum Objects

By Julian Vayne

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This is a book about the learning potential of objects - whether they're rare artefacts in museum collections, or found objects discovered at a local car boot sale. This book grows from the simple fact that learning by engaging with objects can be a powerful experience. Whether you're a museum or gallery professional, a schoolteacher, an interpreter, or simply intrigued by this method of teaching, there will be something here for you. Wonderful Things is packed with bright and tested ideas - often in the form of games - which will help people of all ages relate to, understand and explore museum objects. After an exploration of the process of learning from objects, the book puts these principles into practice, in the form of over 50 easy-to-set-up games, designed to facilitate creative interaction with objects. Although in themselves straightforward, many of the games can have surprisingly powerful and stimulating results, impacts and implications. Each game has been tested out and refined in practice many times, and guidance is provided to ensure each game both runs smoothly and provides the best possible learning outcomes. All the games are ideal for use in classroom or museum settings, and most are easily adapted for use with all educational ages, from 5-18. However, some can also successfully facilitate interaction with adults; and the more complex, drama-based games have been used in psychotherapeutic work and with older people for reminiscence. Wonderful Things is designed for use with a wide range of specialist staff - including educators, interpreters, designers, curators, gallery "explainers", guides and volunteers - in museums, galleries, science centres, historic houses and sites, parks, and zoos. Praise for Wonderful Things: "A practical combination of inspired ideas tempered with practical experience. The holistic approach is refreshing and anyone working with artefacts should find this an indispensable read. I thoroughly enjoyed Wonderful Things!" Kate Osborne, Learning & Skills Officer, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, UK

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Wonderful Things - Learning with Museum Objects By Julian Vayne Bibliography

- Rank: #3475299 in Books
- Published on: 2012-03-10
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.99" h x .41" w x 5.00" l, .43 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 194 pages

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