

Leeds Open Doors Research Project



A project to examine the potential of museums and libraries in informing and inspiring Skills for Life teaching and learning

Open Doors Project aim

To create a learning resource for Literacy and ESOL students to be used in Leeds Central Library and Art Gallery.

Gem Research aim

To examine the potential of museums and libraries in informing and inspiring the teaching of English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) and literacy.

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1.0 Synopsis

This project proposed to develop a strategic partnership between Leeds Library Service and Leeds Museums Service to create four discreet resource packs, two for Literacy Students and two for ESOL students, with the ultimate aim of examining the possibility of museums and libraries in enriching and informing the ESOL and Literacy curricula.

The project worked with partners from the SFL sector to ensure the pack was developed and piloted with direct links to the subject curricula and by current practitioners.

The model adopted saw the library service taking the lead in the project, working in partnership with the museum service to allow them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the skills for life agenda, and creating access to partners and guidance that they would not have been able to access on their own.

“It’s made the students more motivated – it’s not just about sitting in class. It’s given them the feeling they’re allowed to go out and experience this culture”.

Thomas Danby College Tutor, Wendy Godden

The project formed one strand of MLA Yorkshire **Open Doors** project, aiming to demonstrate that “Museums, libraries and archives have an important role to play in engaging and retaining skills for life learners With the opportunity to switch adults on to learning through their own interests and passions”.¹

The project aimed to use the skills and expertise of staff from both sectors to inform the project, and guide the use of collections into specific areas of curriculum need.

The addition of the Leeds Skills for Life partnership, helped to add integrity to the project and inform the pilot sessions of the resource by working with eight tutor groups across the city, and employing two freelance tutors to develop and write the packs.

Through out this report, comments and quotes from students are used verbatim, and some errors in spelling and grammar may be evident.

The current interim resources can be downloaded from²: www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk.

¹ Information about the project, mission statement, case studies, resources and best practice models can be found on the Open Doors website at www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk

² The interim resource packs can be downloaded at: www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk

2.0 Aims and objectives of the project

The two main aims of the project were:

- To create learning / resource packs for ESOL and Literacy students to be used during sessions in the Central library and the City Art Gallery
- To develop a partnership model for museums and libraries to deliver to the SFL agenda



Project objectives

- To increase the use of libraries and museums and galleries by Skills for Life learners and their families in Leeds
- To provide activities for Skills for Life learners to undertake so that they learn more about what libraries and museums/galleries have to offer them and their families, and to improve their literacy skills in a new and exciting way
- To raise awareness amongst staff of Skills for Life learners, the existing provision available to support them, and what libraries and museums/galleries can offer this audience
- To provide training for library and museum/galleries staff in basic skills awareness (C&G 9295) and how to use and promote the new resource pack
- To strengthen the partnership between the library, museum and adult education providers and to encourage new innovative working relationships
- To increase the profile of libraries and museums as learning environments among Skills for Life providers and tutors

“I didn’t know you could get all of these things in here – I thought it was just about books”.

Futurepathways College, Literacy student

3.0 Project Development

3.1 Developing the Partnership

The initial creation of the partnership took place in summer 2005 with all three partners extremely keen to engage in this work. Leeds Library service were the lead partner in the project, working with the museum service and other providers to allow them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the skills for life agenda.

The project team met frequently and worked together with staff from both organisations and tutors to develop the pack and schedule the pilot sessions. The project duration was June 2005 – March 2006.

Sharing skills and developing strategic partnerships for future working were at the heart of the project, and ensured that the resulting material was not only relevant to the Literacy / ESOL curriculum and collections used within, but also ensured CPD opportunities were available to all involved.



The partners³:

Leeds Library Service

The lead partner in the overarching project, co-ordinating the development of the project and liaison with tutors. Libraries natural linkages and experience with the Skills for Life agenda ensured that staff already had a range of experience and partnerships developed to take on this role. The library also offered its front line staff a basic training course in working with skills for life students.

Leeds Museums and Galleries Service

Leeds Museum Service was keen to develop its SFL provision and saw this as an ideal opportunity to work in partnership with the Library service to develop skills and understanding. The City Art Gallery acted as the main foci for the packs development due to its close proximity to the Central Library.

Leeds Skills for Life Partnership

The Leeds Skills for Life Partnership Manager acted as the broker and central point of contact in the partnership. She was able to identify tutors to write the resources and other tutors and groups to pilot the packs.

³ For more information on the partners, please refer to section 9.0 Links

Freelance Tutors

Two tutors were employed to write the packs in conjunction with library and museums staff, mapping to the curriculum and developing discreet packages for both the library and gallery. These roles were fundamental in the creation of the resource.

Eight ESOL and Literacy college providers in the Leeds area

Made up of a range of students from across the cities colleges, these groups were fundamental in test driving the resources and inputting into the final versions.

Open Doors

The project was assisted by YMLAC **Open Doors** funding. The project aims to support opportunities for developing Museum, Library & Archive collections for new audiences, particularly in the Skills for Life area.

“It could be very interesting to see how people in England lived a long time ago”.

Thomas Danby College, ESOL Student

3.2 Creating the resource

Two tutors were employed on a freelance basis, in their own time, to develop the packs in conjunction with museum and library staff. This was fundamental in ensuring the resources were targeted at the needs of the curriculum, but represented the collections of the two venues. Finding time to work together with museum and library staff was often difficult for tutors and staff alike due to the varying hours worked by both.

3.3 Skills for Life training sessions

The Leeds Skills for Life Partnership offered all front of house staff the opportunity to take the C&G 9295 training qualification, providing basic skills awareness to learners will skills for life needs.

3.4 Piloting the resource

The resources were then piloted by eight tutor groups from across the city. The pilot was a key process in testing the packs and feeding the thoughts and ideas of both tutors and learners back in to the final resources. It also offered a unique opportunity to work closely with these learners and their tutors, to find out their motivations, needs, and interests for future planning, and partnership work.

3.5 Understanding the learner:

The research project closely followed the following two groups:

The literacy group were all native speakers between the ages of 16 and 18. All were paid to attend lessons and some were tagged and attending was a condition of this.

The ESOL class was a Level 3 group of mixed backgrounds such as long standing residents, young mothers, refugees, and many with extensive education backgrounds.

4.0 Mapping museum & Library collections to the Curriculum

The following table outlines an example of how the museum & library collections in Leeds have been made more relevant to tutors and organisations providing skills for life provision via the resource packs. By addressing curriculum needs and identifying areas of the museum or library collections that can inform and assist teaching in an easily accessible and practical way, helped to remove barriers to the audience.

ESOL Curriculum

Level: Entry Level 1

Key Skill: Speaking and Listening

National Standard	Museum example	Library example	GLO
Listen and respond to spoken language including simple narratives, statements, questions and single-step instructions	"What is your favourite picture in this gallery?"	"Can you find a book in your language?"	Knowledge & Understanding of the collections and how they relate to the learner. Enjoyment in finding images that are pleasing to the learner or finding books are available in their language.
Speak to communicate basic information, feelings and opinions on familiar topics	"What do you think about this object?"	"Do you like to read? Why / why not?"	Attitudes towards the collections and the use of objects / books.
Engage in discussion with another person in a familiar situation about familiar topics	Using a museum map, ask directions to a specific exhibition	Role-Play finding a book or their choice	Skills development of the use of language to navigate around the venue. Attitudinal change by becoming more confident and relaxed in the venue.

More in depth work on this area of mapping has been carried out by YMLAC and can be found at:

http://www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk/downloads/YMLAC_MappingToLiteracyCurriculum.pdf.

From these initial documents it is clear to see that there are huge potentials for using museums, libraries and archives in all area of the literacy and numeracy curricula.

5.0 Evaluation methodology

"I'm really surprised at what is in here".

Futurepathways College, Literacy Student

The evaluation applied the Generic Learning Outcomes and adopted three stages using the following methodologies:

1. Direct Interview
2. Group Interviews
3. Shadowing
4. Individual case studies

One Literacy group and one ESOL group was observed throughout the process.

5.1 Formative evaluation

Initial meetings were held with library, museum, and ESOL / Literacy tutors to establish a base line. These meetings began to formulate the potentials for working together and saw a sharing of skills between sectors, leading to the development of the initial pilot packs for use in the action research stage.



Students from one ESOL group and one Literacy group participated in an initial mind map exercise which helped to draw out their expectations and perceptions of museums and libraries, prior to their visits. The images throughout this report illustrate their experiences.

5.2 Action research

During this stage, eight tutor groups from across the Leeds region participated in piloting the resource pack.

The stage took the form of:

- Introduction to the library and gallery and brief brainstorm about expectations
- Introduction to the pack and feelings about its purpose and layout
- Pilot of the pack and exercises in the spaces
- Lunch and brainstorming session about the visit



5.3 Summative

The final stage of the evaluation saw individual one to one sessions with tutors and key partners in the project development to capture their thoughts and feelings, not only on the packs, but also the opportunities provided by the library and gallery as a free resource available to them and their students.

It also included the final brainstorming activity with students after their sessions within the gallery.

Ideally, this area of work would be continued to provide robust longitudinal information about learners' progression and tutor CPD. However, this was not the purpose or timescale of this report.

“I’m going back to college to talk to my colleagues about how we can do more of this”.

Futurepathways College Tutor, Jamie Sunter

5.4 The project aimed to deliver to all the GLOs:

- Knowledge and understanding – learning how libraries and museums work and discover what services are available
- Skills – learning how to use services such as joining the library, using the library catalogue and online services, developing communication skills with storytelling and advice on sharing books, developing literacy skills
- Attitudes and values – changing attitudes towards services, discovering that libraries are friendly and non-judgemental places, museums and galleries are relevant to all



- Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity – one of the key outcomes is to show that libraries and museums/galleries are enjoyable places to use and visit. The sessions will focus on fun activities that allow participants to be creative (reading and writing exercises, discussing illustrations and art work etc)
- Action, behaviour, progression – joining the library, confidence in using and visiting libraries and museums/galleries, showing progression through finding information on further training, widening reading experiences

6.0 Case studies

6.1 Case study tutor

Wendy had previously worked as library assistant and is an art historian. This project brought her three career interests together.

Prior to the project she was very positive about the potentials for using museum collections to inform the ESOL curriculum, and stated that *"it seems like a natural progression"*. However, even with these interests and background, using the library and museum within her teaching did not happen.

She piloted the packs in the classroom before the visit and used the worksheets as part of the topic the class were working on "Places to Visit". She said the resources were "relevant and interesting and built up to the visit to the library and gallery perfectly".

During the visit she felt there was *"so much to choose from"* it would have been better for the tutors to pre-plan the areas they wanted to look at, and guide the students around themselves.

The use of the packs back in the classroom seemed to be a big success. Wendy stated that she used them to teach Vocab, adjectives, and they created big discussions around the differences between such words as *"borrow"* and *"lend"*.



One section of the pack has even helped them prepare for the students next exam, looking at the alphabet and ordering words.

In terms of students' progression, Wendy stated that she thought *"it's made the students more motivated – it's not just about sitting in class. It's given them the feeling they're allowed to go out and experience this culture"*.

Wendy now hopes to continue to use the packs to inform her teaching and intends to offer students the opportunity to visit as part of their course.

6.2. Case study student

Anna had not visited the library or gallery in Leeds before. She took part in a mind map before the visit where she noted that she hoped to “*see something interesting*”. When she got back to class, she wrote a short essay about the visit and what she had learnt. The following are extracts of her work:

About the library:

“We found out that we can lend all these DVD’s, CD’s and VHS’s, but of course we have to pay for it... As far as I’m concerned it’s a good deal!....I found my favourite authors of books. Maybe some day I will be ready to read them again in the English Language, I wish that could happen.....I did enjoy this visit to the library because now I know where and what I can find there. A good thing for us is that we are allowed to use the computers for free!”.

About the gallery:

“Inside are lots of beautiful pictures of famous and less famous artists. I did like the first room where there are pictures with views of nature. Those views took my breath away. In that room, each of us chose the favourite view and had to describe it. Then we went upstairs where there are many pictures of impressionists. I like that kind of style because it makes me think a lot about the message of the artist. That day I got a chance to interpret a few pictures in my own way. It’s very interesting because sometimes you discover different messages of pictures than artists..... I hope to see once again these places and other galleries in Leeds as well”

Anna felt that the visit and use of resources had inspired her learning and made her feel more comfortable in the city she now called home.

“I hope to see once again these places and other galleries in Leeds as well”.

Thomas Danby College, ESOL student

7.0 Evidence mapped to objectives and Generic learning Outcomes

Objective	Generic Learning Outcome	Weak indicator	Strong Indicator	Method of evidence capture	Evidence
To increase the use of libraries and museums and galleries by Skills for Life learners and their families in Leeds	SFL learners understand that these places are available to them, and know how to access them. Learning how to use services such as joining the library, using the library catalogue and online services.	Learners will say they are aware of museums and libraries as places to learn and visit with their families and intend to do so	By April 06, learners involved within the pilot sessions will say they have visited a museum or library as a result of the project in their own time, and may even have joined the library service.	Focus groups with two pilot classes. Initial session mind map before they use the pack / visit the sites, and final session end March	Learners indicated at the end of the session that they had a good awareness of what was on offer. A couple of the students joined the library during the session and a number of others stated that they would be back to do so. When one student was asked if they would return to the venues they said "Maybe – now that I know what's here". Students were guided through using the computers, loan services, and family history library.
Sustaining the audience by offering regularly planned activity days	Positive attitudes towards Museums & Libraries as a provider of SFL resources and activity are created.	By April 06 a commitment by the library and museum service to develop regular planned activity will be in place	By April 2006 a 6 month planned session of events will be established for ESOL / SFL learners	Discussions with staff at both museums and library organisations	A readers group has been set up at the library for both ESOL and Literacy groups. Partnerships have been created with tutors who took part in the pilot and are now using the sites to regularly visit with new classes. Future plans for other resources have been developed. The museum service are developing links to build SFL into the planning of the museums activity over the coming year.
To provide activities for Skills for Life / ESOL students to undertake so that		The resource packs will be in development stage	2 resource packs will be developed for use in the classroom and on	Evidence of resource packs and web site downloads	A literacy and ESOL resource has been created for both the library service and gallery, piloted with tutors from surrounding colleges,

they learn more about what libraries and museums/galleries have to offer them and their families			site, and downloadable from the web for tutors. Learners will say they are now aware of what the gallery and library have to offer.		and is accessible for download from a number of websites. Learners specified that they had no idea that so much was on offer and that they could access so many services in the venues. Several learners also stated that they would now feel more comfortable in returning to the venues with their families.
To improve the literacy skills of ESOL / Skills for Life students in a new and exciting way	SFL learners and tutors will view libraries and museums/galleries as enjoyable places to use and visit.	SFL learners will recognise museums and libraries are places they could visit in their spare time.	SFL student will say they have enjoyed using the museum & library, and use words such as "exciting", "Interesting", & "different".	Final interview of focus groups in April 06	Comments included: "That was a very interesting day". "I wish we had more time". "I'm really surprised at what is in here". "It took my breath away"
To raise awareness amongst staff of Skills for Life learners, the existing provision to support them and what libraries and museums/galleries can offer this section of the public	Tutors will understand the offer of museums and libraries in Leeds, and will also have an understanding of how to use them as a resource in their teaching.	Some tutors say they are aware of the role of Museums and Libraries in their work, but are unsure how to proceed	SFL / ESOL tutors say they are aware of the support museums & Libraries can offer them and show a commitment to using the pack	Focus group of 10 tutors taking part in the project March 2006	One tutor stated that they had used an exercise in the pack as preparation for the exam the learners were about to sit. Another, previous non-user, said: "I'm going back to college to talk to my colleagues about how we can do more of this". Tutors actually ended the pilot sessions by saying they would like input from staff, but to lead the sessions themselves.
To provide training for library and museum/galleries staff in basic skills awareness (C&G 9295) and how to use and promote the new	Staff will increase their understanding and skills of working with SFL learners and tutors.	Some staff participate within the training day	Delivery of a training day for Museum and Library staff, with a commitment to role out to all staff within the	The delivery of the training day. Post event questionnaires to determine impact	14 library staff and 2 museum staff participated in the training event. Plans are now underway for the museums and gallery staff to do the same and to imbed it in the induction process of staff.

resource pack			organisations.		
<p>To strengthen the partnership between the library, museum and adult education providers and to encourage new innovative working relationships</p>	<p>The partnership will be continued and progressed after the project.</p>	<p>A partnership will exist with potential to develop further, but with no concrete decision how by April 06</p>	<p>The library, museum, and 1 skills for life provider will work together to develop a successful pilot model of work in this area, with a commitment to develop further</p>	<p>Discussion with Library, Museums, and SFL staff</p>	<p>Through the partnership, an ESOL & literacy resource pack has been created by an ESOL and literacy tutor and piloted and developed by 8 other tutors and classes. The pack will be downloadable from the Leeds SFL website, the Leeds Library Website & The Leeds Museums website.</p> <p>Plans are in process for the museum service to develop SFL training as part of the induction package for new staff, are an active member of the open doors network, and have several project plans in development.</p> <p>The library service has already developed an ESOL readers group and is working on the development of a literacy group. They have developed strong links with several key providers in the city and have arranged structured visits.</p> <p>One issue is the end of contract of the key contact at Leeds Learning and the discontinuation of this post.</p>

For the learner

Objective	Generic Learning Outcome	Weak indicator	Strong Indicator	Method of evidence capture	Evidence
To increase the use of libraries and museums and galleries by Skills for Life learners and their families in Leeds	SFL learners understand that these places are available to them, and know how to access them.	Students are aware of museums and libraries within Leeds, and that they are welcome to visit	Students say they understand the offer provided by museums / libraries and can suggest possible reasons for them and their families to visit	Interview of 2 focus groups April 06	Several students said they hadn't realised that this was a gallery and that they could go into it. They stated that they would hope to return and bring their families.
To improve the learning process for these learners to ensure it is new and exciting	Attitudes towards these venues will be positive. Students will recognise this as an enjoyable experience.	Students will recognise libraries and galleries as a place to learn outside of the classroom.	SFL student will say they have enjoyed using the museum & library, and use words such as "exciting", "Interesting", & "different".	Final interview of focus groups in April 06	Comments included: "That was a very interesting day". "I wish we had more time". "I'm really surprised at what is in here".
Sustaining the audience by offering regularly planned activity days	Students will have the ability to continue to progress their learning at these venues.	Students are aware they can take part in further sessions at the museum or library	Students have booked to attend a follow up session	Final interview of focus groups in April 06	Several students joined the library during the visit and indicated they would return. Several students had to be dragged away from the gallery and said that they wanted to return to "see the rest".

<p>To excite and enthuse ESOL / SFL students to progress with their learning</p>	<p>Students will find the environment enjoyable and their learning more creative.</p>	<p>Tutors will recognise a change in learners. Students and tutors may also use the library and gallery more in the future, both as a group and independently.</p>	<p>Tutors will say they have recognised a substantial change in learner development as a result of us of the packs and visit.</p>	<p>Final interview of focus groups in April 06</p>	<p>"It's made the students more motivated – it's not just about sitting in class. It's given them the feeling they're allowed to go out and experience this culture". One tutor has already scheduled follow up visits with his class; an ESOL readers group has been created; at least five students joined the library during their visit with the intention of returning.</p>
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7.3 Coding to the GLO's

Generic learning Outcome	Evidence	Percentage of learning
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I didn't know they had all these newspapers • I didn't know you could get all of these things in here – I thought it was just about books • At least I've learnt something now • I did enjoy this visit to the library because now I know where and what I can find there • I didn't know that it was so big (the gallery) • I didn't know this was here (the gallery) 	24%
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL tutor, Wendy stated that she used the packs to teach Vocab, adjectives, and they created big discussions around the differences between such words as "borrow" and "lend". • One section of the pack has even helped them (the students) prepare for the next exam, looking at the alphabet and ordering words. 	8%
Attitudes and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was better than I thought. • I usually come in and feel out of place – I'll feel happy to come back • I'm really surprised at what is in here • It's made the students more motivated – it's not just about sitting in class. It's given them the feeling they're allowed to go out and experience this culture • It's very interesting because sometimes you discover different messages of pictures than the artists 	20%
Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the art gallery, I liked the sculptures • That was a very interesting day • I wish we had more time • It's been a really good day – this is what makes it worthwhile • I've been really pleased watching them get into it 	28%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are having their eyes opened to what's here – it's very rewarding • I did like the first room where there are pictures with views of nature. Those views took my breath away 	
Action, Behaviour, Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's made the students more motivated – it's not just about sitting in class. It's given them the feeling they're allowed to go out and experience this culture • I'm going back to college to talk to my colleagues about how we can do more of this • I hope to see once again these places and other galleries in Leeds as well • I've joined the library and got a book • I want to know more about this picture – where can I find out? 	20%

7.4 Explanation of the mapping documents

All the objectives set out in the original project plan have been achieved, which in itself, signals the success of the project.

The areas where the objectives were most strongly met were:

- In demonstrating the improvement in tutor awareness of the venues as a free resource for teaching and learning – particularly by previous non-users, several of whom have already become repeat visitors
- The improvement of learners' awareness of what the venues had to offer to both themselves and their families.

Evidence of distance travelled by all involved, not just learners, is present against all objectives and strongest again in terms of attitudinal change.

Finally, unexpected outcomes included tutors feeling confident at the end of the pilot sessions to say they would like a more “hands-off” approach from the library and gallery staff, remaining as a port of call whilst planning their visits and tailoring their lesson plans, rather than directing the visit; the excitement of literacy students in using the Local History section of the library – a real opportunity for cross-sectoral partnerships in engaging this audience; the needs of learners in this area of work in terms of provision for external factors such as crèche facilities; and the almost instant take up of tutors in bringing learners for repeat visits.



Coding to the Generic Learning Outcomes allows us to quantify the learning that has taken place, and analyse where the project was strongest and areas for development. In percentage terms, the learning was evenly spread across four of the GLO's. As expected, enjoyment, inspiration, and creativity was the area where most learning happened, closely followed by an increased knowledge and understanding of the venues and collections, and what they had to offer.

However, this was closely followed by attitudinal change and changes in activity and behaviour. These were vital core components of the project, to begin to work with SFL providers and learners to open up the venues and collections to this new audience, and inspire tutors to use them in their teaching. This is also where we saw most distance travelled, particularly with Literacy learners who entered the buildings uninterested and unengaged, and left saying they were surprised at what they found, how comfortable they felt, and that they hoped to return.

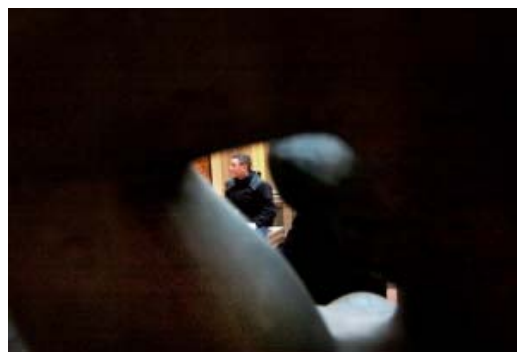
Skills development was less prevalent, but this was to be expected from the outset and emphasis of the project, but is perhaps an area for future emphasis in terms of demonstrating progression.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 Learners

Learners were sometimes unaware that the library and gallery existed, and only a few had actually visited any of the spaces. The mind maps drew out that they expected to *"be inspired and interested"* in the collections, but that they had little expectation as to why or what they would see. They were extremely enthusiastic about both the materials used in the classroom as a pre-visit warmer, and looking forward to the visit itself.

Issues concerning transport and childcare cropped up as issues which could prevent learners attending the sessions, particularly in terms of the ESOL classes.



The real buzz during the literacy library visit happened in the local history section. A member of staff was on hand who provided a great insight into what was available and what could be researched. The students were able to look at objects and images and *"really get stuck in"*. The relevance of the collections to where they lived or had lived seemed to really inspire the students. This offers a real potential for partnership working between museums, libraries and archives where themes overlap and have such obvious interest to the audience.

The lack of chairs and the quiet atmosphere in the gallery were a put off to this group though. They felt it only added to their feelings of intimidation and said a couple of chairs and some music would really help.

There were some fascinating comments during the sessions, particularly in response to interpreting the paintings in the gallery. One student even ended up talking to an elderly visitor and spent 15 minutes wandering around the gallery discussing the pictures and their feelings about them.

The literacy group were initially uninspired by the whole visit, consisting of 16 – 18 year olds who were quite happy to say they'd rather be doing something else. However, the majority of them began to change their attitudes during the visit with comments such as:

"It was better than I thought"

"I usually come in and feel out of place"

"In the art gallery, I liked the sculptures"

"I didn't know you could get all of these things in here – I thought it was just about books"

"I didn't know they had all these newspapers"

"At least I've learnt something now"

The ESOL group were far more enthused by the whole visit from the start, but again were surprised to see the range of collections and resources on offer. On the whole, they were surprised to find books in their own languages, reference sections and English to other language dictionaries, a music library, and such a wealth of collections on offer in the gallery. Their comments included:

"That was a very interesting day"

"I wish we had more time"

"I'm really surprised at what is in here"

"Skills for life isn't just something to add on. It's something you can integrate into the whole organisation and hit all priorities with".

YMLAC Skills for Life Manager, Abi Hackett

In terms of the pack itself, students felt that the images in the resource were really useful during the visit, but sometimes posed more questions than answers. For example, one student wanted to know more about a picture, but there was no way of finding out the information. This may highlight a need for further interpretation material either included in the packs or on hand in the gallery.

The overarching experience for all learners was positive. From the students in the two evaluation pilot groups, 75% commented without reticence that they had enjoyed the experience and had a greater understanding of what to expect in both venues, and 55% commented that they would feel more comfortable in returning for another visit and intended to do so. For future work in this area, practical issues such as childcare, seating, and ambience should not be underplayed, and equally the differing needs of the two types of audience groups should be addressed separately. It may even be worth researching the possibilities of arranging late night opening, music, and more comfy couches for Literacy groups and younger audiences!

8.2 Tutors

Two tutors were followed through their experience of test driving the packs. These were extremely successful, if a little rushed. They were directed by the partnership staff and delivered as a visit package.

The tutors felt that the resource packs were very good and relevant to their teaching, however they wanted more control in deciding which parts of the pack to pick out and teach during the visit. They felt that having an education officer to talk to prior to the visit would be more valuable than having them on hand during the visits themselves.

The tutors stated that some of the pack was only suitable for sitting down and that they would probably use it more for in classroom teaching pre and post visit.

However, they felt that the visit was fundamental to their teaching and the students learning, but that emphasis on the visit was to give students an idea of the resource and what was available to them, rather than any specific learning objectives relating to curriculum, with the added benefit of them being able to use pre and post resources from the pack to link to back in the classroom.

One tutor was able to identify clear progression in the use of the packs to develop her students work and attitudes, commenting that *"It's made the students more motivated – it's not just about sitting in class. It's given them the feeling they're allowed to go out and experience this culture"*, and that she had been able to use one of the resources to prepare them for their next exam.

Another tutor, based just across the road from the library and gallery, had never used them as a resource before. He has now scheduled the visits into his lesson plans for each new cohort of students that he teaches as an introductory session and with a follow up visit further through their course. His initial thoughts on the day were *"I'm going back to college to talk to my colleagues about how we can do more of this"* and *"It's been a really good day – this is what makes it worthwhile"*.

Links with individual tutors across the pilot sessions have made a real difference to numbers of visiting SFL groups. Several tutors have passed the message on to colleagues and staff have seen repeat and first visits from a number of S4L groups.

Overall, the response from tutors was overwhelmingly positive. They felt that this was a free resource they had previously under used, due to time and knowledge constraints, and that the resource packs had been created specifically to enhance their teaching by incorporating the collections and venues. They felt that by doing the hard work of making the curriculum links and classroom exercises for them, it made it much easier for museums and libraries to become a part of their teaching.

Future planning in this area should develop potentials for a training day for ESOL and Literacy tutors in using museums, libraries and archives within their teaching, advocacy events for policy makers and key stakeholders to disseminate the resource and findings further.

8.3 Staff

Feedback from library staff has been incredibly positive with individuals stating that their involvement within the project has made them feel more confident about this area of work, more likely to develop programming for this audience in future, direct contact with tutors is building confidence for future work, partnerships and consultation, and that the work is now having a direct influence on book stocks.

On a strategic level, this project is part of bigger development of widening participation for the library service. A need was identified to develop resources for both ESOL and literacy users and this project has been successful in fulfilling those needs. The creation of the key partnership with Leeds Learning has been instrumental in this work, and worries about the expiration of the post at the heart of the work are being addressed. Future work is now in the planning stages with the creation of regular reading groups for both users and a potential district wide pack for ESOL and Literacy users on how to use their local library.

“People are having their eyes opened to what’s here – it’s very rewarding”.

Library worker, Shirley Hughes

From the museums perspective, the project provided a hands on introduction to working with this audience and as a direct result, the service now send a representative to the open doors network, have a working relationship with the Leeds Learning Partnership, are considering ways to tie in with local activities of the library and adult learner providers during adult learners week, and are considering how to incorporate SFL awareness into new staff induction and training programmes.

At times, they found interacting with the project more difficult. The over arching reason for this was staff shortages and at times this proved very frustrating for them. However, the museum service was completely engaged in developing the packs and delivering the pilot sessions and now hopes to use this project as a spring board to develop further work in this area.

Museums and libraries should be a natural place for tutors to turn to add value to their teaching. However, meeting the needs of this agenda is not easy. We should not assume that museums are ready to deliver. There are still big training needs; issues in helping museums understand the links and relevance of this area of work; and issues with working with a new audience. MLA Yorkshire is beginning to develop solutions to these problems by developing partnerships with organisations such as PdNet to provide quality training to address these issues⁴.

Both museum and library staff felt that the project was successful and achieved its aims and more. There are already key projects underway to develop and sustain this work from both services and SFL visits are already on the increase. Skills for life training is being cascaded through the services to ensure it becomes

⁴ Abi Hackett, Skills for Life Manager, YMLAC

part of all staffs job descriptions. The next stage for both domains should be to cement the partnership by developing a forward plan around this area of work; to build a network of SFL contacts for future project work and consultation; and to address the need for a museum expertise knowledge base in this area as part of the hub museums business plan.

8.4 These main conclusions can be drawn

1. Direct curriculum links and practical exercises in resource packs are essential
2. Partnerships are key – including the potential model for museums and archives to work with a lead library partner on SFL development
3. SFL learners and tutors find the resources and venues are interesting, informative and enjoyable when made relevant to their needs
4. Museum and library collections provide ideal material to develop both pre and post visit work
5. The group visit and class work provides students with an insight into these venues and gives confidence for future visits



6. Tutor development in managing the visit and use of packs should be facilitated, but not directed, by museum and library staff
7. Consideration of learners needs should not be under-estimated e.g. Crèche facilities
8. Dissemination of the resource to the wider SFL community should be factored into planning – tutors are often unaware of the museums and libraries as teaching environments or unsure how to use them
9. SFL should be something that all staff own and have training in – not just a dedicated officer.
10. Potentials for hubs to be drawn out as key leaders in SFL provision mapped to their business plans “Widening participation” remits should be explored.

8.5 Key Project Outcomes

1. 75% of learners enjoyed the experience and left with a feeling that they knew more about the venues and what to expect
2. 55% of learners commented that they hoped to return to the venues in the near future
3. 16 museum and library staff participated in 9259 SFL training course
4. 64 SFL learners and 10 SFL tutors participated in the pilot activity and attended a taster session
5. 1 ESOL readers group has been set up as a result of the project
6. 4 repeat, or “knock on” visits have taken place
7. All project objectives were achieved

8.6 Summary

The Open Doors in Leeds project proved to be a successful partnership for learners, tutors and staff. It highlighted the wealth of potential available for museums and libraries to work together to address the audience needs and enrich the ESOL and Literacy curricula.

The range of learning evident and progression travelled by all involved, demonstrates a robust project model for working in this area, with essential cross sector and cross domain partnerships at its heart.

A recent conference in the North of England highlighted the work being undertaken by museums, libraries and archives towards the SFL agenda. The range of work demonstrated the relevance of museums and libraries to inform and impact on this agenda, but that the barriers to involvement on the part of museums and libraries, such as staff training, capacity, and making the links, should not be underestimated.

As a result, a key recommendation of this research would be the need to invest in sector specific SFL training for museum and library staff, and the development of high level advocacy tools to level in funding and support.



9.0 Links

The interim resource packs can be downloaded from:

www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk

Open Doors

Open Doors is a project aimed at supporting museums, libraries and archives to develop new audiences, particularly in the Skills for Life arena. The project is funded and managed by Yorkshire Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and further information can be found at:

www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk

Leeds Museums & Galleries

Leeds Museums and Galleries are a hub museum offering a range of provision for a wide ranging audience. You can find out more by visiting:

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Discover%20Leeds%20Museums%20and%20Galleries%20/page.aspx?style=>

Leeds Library Service

Leeds central Library is beginning to develop strong links with the Skills for Life providers in the region. You can find out more about its service at:

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/learning/libraries/Central%20library/menu.aspx?style=>

Leeds Skills for Life Partnership

The parent body of the Skills for Life network, Leeds Learning, "brings together the public, private, community and voluntary sectors to work together to achieve success, encourage improvement, and tackle and overcome problems for the benefit of all citizens now and in the future". More information about the network can be found at:

http://www.leedsinitiative.org/default.asp?initiativeIdentifier=200299_887249172&subSectionIdentifier=20021127_492260159&expand=true

Examples of Museum ESOL provision in the UK:

National Museums Liverpool

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/projects/engaging/>

Natural History Museum

http://www.talent.ac.uk/uploads/contributions/1221_Natural%20History%20Museum.doc

The Science Museum

http://www.talent.ac.uk/uploads/contributions/1216_cover%20pg%201.doc

ESOL policy and curriculum information:

Knowledge for life – How museums, libraries, and archives contribute to the Skills strategy

A hard copy can be obtained from your regional agency or downloaded from www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk

Information about ESOL qualifications can be found at:

<http://www.qca.org.uk/7423.html>

The ESOL curriculum can be found at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/curriculum_esol/

The Adult Literacy curriculum can be found at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/curriculum_literacy/

To register with the Skills for Life network visit:

<http://www.skillsforlifefnetwork.com/>

Information on the new accreditation process RARPA and training courses can be found at:

<http://www.niace.org.uk/Conferences/TrainingCourses/RARPA-training-courses.htm>

The citizenship curriculum and links can be found at:

<http://www.niace.org.uk/projects/esolcitizenship/Home-Eng.htm>

Information about the Citizenship test can be found at:

<http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk/>

Appendix A: Checklist for developing Skills for Life provision in museums & libraries

Based on the research carried out in Leeds⁵, the following outlines a model for developing ESOL provision inspired by museums and museum collections. Further information can be found at www.ymlac-skillsforlife.org.uk



Step 1: What are your objectives?

- a) What do you want to achieve?
- A resource pack
 - A workshop
 - Self-guided trails
 - Tutor notes
- b) Why do you want to develop this are of work?
- Audience development
 - CPD for staff
 - Enhanced learning for SFL students
 - Core element of the organisations business plan
 - Funding available for this are of work
 - Lack of provision within your organisation for this audience
- c) Who will you work with and why?
- Your local library service
 - Local community college
 - Skills for Life partnership
 - Freelance tutors



- d) What resources do you have / will you need?
- Will it be built into work plans?
 - Will you need extra members of staff
 - Will you need additional funding?
 - Crèche facilities
 - Funding for transport / refreshments?
- e) How will you know you've succeeded; what evaluation techniques will you use?
- What will success look like?
 - Will you work with students and tutors?
 - What framework will you measure success with? (RARPA, GLO's.....)



- f) How might you build on this work in future? Is it sustainable?
- Will the partnership be sustained?
 - How will the resulting resources be accessed?
 - How will people know about the resources?

⁵ GEM Bursary in Partnership with Open Doors, Leeds Central Library, Leeds Museums and Art Gallery

Step 2: Partnership development

It's vital to share skills when developing SFL provision. Not only does it ensure the resulting resources are robust in terms of the curriculum and museum / library collections, but it also shares the workload.

Your region may have a skills for life network, but if not you will have a local college offering SFL provision. Your regional agency may be able to advise you on contacts or projects already underway.

You should set up the partnership and ensure all aims and objectives of each member are clarified and build into the action plan.



Step 3: Action plan, timescale and budget

- a) What is the time scale?
- b) What is your budget allocation and who will manage it?

Draw up an action plan and ensure the whole partnership is in agreement.

Appoint a project manager (this can be a CPD opportunity for a current member of staff) and ensure that regular catch up meetings are scheduled during the life-time of the project.

Step 4: Evaluation and action research

Ensure that you draw up an evaluation plan at the beginning of the project. This can then be used to measure success and inform future planning.

The template at 6.1 can be used to map against the GLO's and provide a full project overview of success.

You should build a pilot stage into your project to allow time for developmental work and ensure the resulting resource is both relevant and practical.

Where possible you should work with learners, tutors, and sector staff to gain a balanced view of the impact of the project. Ideally you would want to gain an understanding of learner progression, although this can often be both difficult and impractical.



Step 5: Next Steps and dissemination

The final evaluation results should be drawn together and discussed with the project team. It should also be shared where possible with all tutors and learners involved in the pilot and development of the resource.

You may wish to disseminate the results more widely to both sectors.

At this stage, an action plan for future working and embedding this work should be drawn up and clarified.

Appendix B: Background to ESOL in the UK

The past year has seen a shift within ESOL provision in the UK. Over the recent years the creation of a core curriculum alongside the literacy and numeracy curriculum, a citizenship curriculum, a qualification structure for tutors, and the beginnings of a strategy to follow student progression, the sector now has the makings of an infrastructure into which museums and libraries can place themselves.

ESOL students themselves tend to be drawn from the following audience:

- Refugees
- Asylum seekers
- A member of a settled community, possibly a UK resident for over twenty years, who has not yet engaged with the language either written, spoken, or both.
- New skilled workers arriving in the UK for work purposes but with development needs in ESOL

As such, the pressures facing these students should not be underplayed. For example, issues faced by students stated by many of the tutors included:

- Finding a place to stay or moving house
- Child care issues
- Worries about safety
- Financial problems
- Communication issues

These all need to be factored into planning when developing resources and partnerships with and for this audience.



The linkages between the ESOL and Literacy curriculum have become evident. This is particularly true when looking at the most recently developed Citizenship Curriculum. The emphasis is on creating a learning journey for students to encounter the language at the same time as gaining an understanding of what it is to be British and live in Britain.

The core curriculum provides a detailed overview of standards and again makes it possible for museums and libraries to map their provision and collections to this to show relevance.