

From Joyce's death mask to Bono's sunglasses: a look around the Little Museum of Dublin's grand curiosities

Level 1: Elementary

1 Warmer

a. Discuss the following questions in pairs.

- How often do you visit museums?
- Which is your favourite museum, and what do you like about it?

2 Key words

a. Find the words from the wordpool in the article. Then write the words next to the correct definition.

hit	rates	displayed	funding	lend
exhibition	decade	capital	accessed	collection

1. money that a person gets to help with a project or event _____
2. to give something to someone for a short time _____
3. the main city of a country _____
4. possible to enter, see or use a place or event _____
5. a group of things that belong together _____
6. a very popular or successful thing _____
7. says how good something is by giving it a number or score _____
8. things shown in a public place for people to look at _____
9. a period of ten years _____
10. put somewhere where people could see it _____

b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity.

1. The museum _____ some old photos from the 1950s.
2. Can you _____ me your pen for a minute?
3. The new song was a big _____ on the radio.

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4. The staff room can only be _____ by teachers.
5. Alice visited a(n) _____ of modern art last weekend.
6. I have a big _____ of coins from different countries.
7. My brother often _____ the movies he watches.
8. We received extra _____ to help build the school library.
9. London is the _____ of England.
10. I haven't seen Nicky in a long time, like over a(n) _____.

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Fergal McCarthy

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- 1 Some museums around the world don't only have important items in them – they also teach us something about the past. The Frick Collection in New York and Marcel Proust's bedroom at the Musée Carnavalet in Paris are two examples. The Little Museum of Dublin is another.
- 2 The idea for the museum came from a man called Trevor White. He asked Dublin city council to lend him a building back in 2011 to open the first museum dedicated to the city. He had a great idea, but no collection, so he asked the listeners of a popular radio show to look for any items that they had that were connected to the Irish capital.
- 3 More than 1,000 exhibits flooded in; from a pair of Bono's sunglasses to a ticket for the only Dublin concerts the Beatles played, in 1963. All the items were carefully organised according to the decade they came from and displayed in the museum's rooms.
- 4 The museum became a hit with locals and visitors, and more than a million people have taken the guided tour of the exhibits over the past 14 years. Tripadvisor rates it as the third best visitor attraction in Ireland, and the 12th best in Europe.
- 5 I often find myself there, early on a Sunday morning. In the U2 room, I like to pick out the band members from a black-and-white class photo at Mount Temple, the school where they first met as schoolboys. This photo, just like this museum, makes me feel that the past can still be accessed.
- 6 As visitor numbers increased, the museum got funding to grow. After a year of work, at a cost of 4.3 million euros, the museum reopened on 5 June with a new library and a new exhibition of important women.
- 7 In 1988, Dublin celebrated its founding all year long. For many Dubliners, these events changed how they felt about their hometown. Trevor White also notes the start of his love for Dublin to this time. Everything he has done at the Little Museum of Dublin shows the love he has for the city.

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3 Comprehension check

a. Choose the correct option (a, b or c) according to the information in the article.

1. According to the author, certain museums ...
 - a. have expensive things in their collections.
 - b. help visitors learn about the past.
 - c. are built in old and important buildings.
2. Trevor White put together the museum's collection by ...
 - a. buying things from different shops in Dublin.
 - b. asking people for items connected to Dublin.
 - c. getting things from other Irish museums.
3. The items in the museum are displayed by ...
 - a. their importance to history.
 - b. their connection to famous people.
 - c. the time period they come from.
4. The museum is successful because ...
 - a. it is one of the best places to visit in Europe.
 - b. lots of people are interested in the history of Dublin.
 - c. more local people visit than tourists.
5. The work on the museum included ...
 - a. moving to a larger building.
 - b. adding new rooms.
 - c. replacing the original collection.

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6. The 1988 Dublin celebrations were important because they ...
- a. started the idea for the Little Museum.
 - b. brought millions of tourists to the city.
 - c. changed how residents viewed their city.

4 Key language

- a. Find the phrasal verbs from the box in the article. Then write the phrases next to the correct definition.

according to

connected to

dedicated to

flooded in

pick out

- 1. gave a lot of time or attention to something _____
- 2. came quickly in large numbers _____
- 3. to choose something or someone from a group _____
- 4. related to something or someone _____
- 5. based on what someone says or what something shows _____

- b. Complete each sentence with a phrasal verb from the previous activity.

- 1. My project is _____ the local community and its history.
- 2. The teacher asked the class to _____ their favourite animal from the list.
- 3. The museum is _____ the history of the city of Athens.
- 4. _____ the map, the art gallery is just around the corner.
- 5. After the radio show, hundreds of emails _____.

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5 Discussion

a. Discuss these questions.

- Do you think museums should ask people to give them items, or should museums buy their collections? Why?
- Would you like to visit the Little Museum of Dublin? Why or why not?

6 In your own words

a. If you were to choose one item to give to a local museum in your hometown or city, what item would you choose and why? Write 120-150 words explaining your choice.

Consider:

- what the item represents about your local area or personal connection to it
- why it would be meaningful for future visitors
- how it reflects the character or history of your community

b. Share your essays with your classmates.