

Writing a museum label in 10 steps

Each object in your classroom museum should have a **label** describing what it is, for museum visitors. Here is a list of things to consider when creating your object labels.

1. Write for your visitors/audience. Who are they and what would they want to know about the object? Use your label to get people to look more carefully at the object.
2. Write the most important information first , a title, the name of the object or artist, the date and place the object was created/discovered.
3. Now write a short paragraph describing or telling the story of the object.
4. Think about what it is that you want people to know about this object?
5. Then order the rest of information so that people who want to know more can read on.
6. Stick to the word count – a normal museum label has 50-60 words!
7. Admit if there are things that you don't know about the object – sometimes that can make it more interesting!
8. Add a bit of the 'human' perspective, like notes about, or quotes from the owner of the object. That helps visitors to connect to it more.
9. Write as you would speak in a conversation.
10. Plan your label carefully and rewrite it several times to get it right.

Double check your label – would you or your friend be interested to read it?

Great museum labels? – think about what is good and bad about these labels.

*This Iguanodon thumb spike
was a straight stabbing weapon,
while the sharp curved*



*Torvosaurus claw was used
to hold and slash. Both show
the long groove that
anchored the outer
horny sheath.*

Iguanodon and torvosaurus thumb spikes | CC BY-SA 4.0 | Wikimedia Commons

Sword with later hilt

1760-1800: This sword was one of the first artefacts donated to Pilgrim Hall. Tradition said that it belonged to Plymouth's military leader Captain Myles Standish.

This is not possible. The blade carried the Arabic date of 1149. When the Islamic calendar is translated to the western calendar, the date is actually 1774. When the sword was given to the Hall, the misunderstood date of 1149 was thought to connect to Plymouth's celebrated soldier Myles Standish with the legendary Crusades.

Longfellow referred to the sword in *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, as did novelist Jane G. Austen in her novel *Standish of Standish*.

Materials - Brass and Iron



Magpie | CC BY-SA 3.0 | Wikimedia Commons

This bird is a famous fortune teller and THIEF!

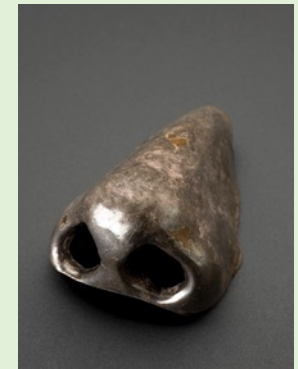
*Every English schoolchild knows that counting
Magpies will tell your fortune.*

*One for sorrow, two for joy, three for a girl
Four for a boy*

Five for silver, six for gold,

Seven for a secret never to be told.

THIS AN
ARTIFICIAL NOSE
FROM AROUND
1601-1800.
DID YOU KNOW?
YOU SWALLOW 1
LITRE OF SNOT
EVERY DAY.



Artificial nose, Europe, 1601-1800 Wellcome | CC BY 4.0