

Repatriation of Museum Objects Debate

* Cut out the list of statements below which put forward reasons for/against returning artefacts acquired unfairly or illegally during the colonial era (repatriation).
  + For each statement, decide whether it is for or against repatriation.
  + Which statements do you find convincing and why?
  + Can you think of any other reasons that support your view?
  + Hold a class debate using the statements below and other arguments for or against decolonisation of museum collections. Take a class vote at the end of the debate.

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| “Museums get millions of visitors each year which gives lots of people the chance to see these objects are learn about them” |
| “In many cases, white male colonizers took artefacts that they did not have permission to take. Like any stolen goods, they should be returned” |
| “Many collections are now digitised, so no matter where you are in the world, you can view them online. We don’t need the ‘real thing’ anymore” |
| “Think about tourism and the amount of money it brings in!” |
| “Decolonisation and repatriation of our museum collections offers a way to apologise for past behaviour”. |
| “National treasures taken without consent should not be in displayed in a museum of another country” |
| “If we start returning artefacts, where will it end? We won’t have anything left to display!” |
| “Our museums are more advanced here and we can keep the artefacts safe and stored correctly. They might not be so well looked after in the country they came from.” |