

CREATIVE CAREERS

Getting started in museums and galleries

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Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens Comedians Learning Plan

Learning Plan for Comedians exhibition

Exhibition dates: 4 April – 21 June

Creating a learning plan is a great way to keep focussed on your target audience and document what events you are organising for them. It demonstrates how the learning team have responded and interpreted the exhibition for different groups.

After reading this plan check out Sunderland's Events Evaluation Report to see if they achieved all their objectives.

Key Audiences

The learning plan for the Comedians exhibition will focus on developing formal and informal learning opportunities for young people aged 11 – 19, as outlined in the interpretation plan. These audiences will be engaged through partnership working with schools, partner museums and informal learning providers such as Children's Services. The exhibition will also support work with existing core audiences at our venue including Key Stage 2 schools, families and adults. For each section below, generic learning outcomes have been identified.

Exhibition Resources

The exhibition resources will be designed to engage young people through fun activities and role play.

Stage Area

A Comedy Club style stage area and props will be developed within the exhibition space. These resources will include:

- Stage area flooring (at floor level for safety)
- Props including: pretend microphone, glasses, wigs, hats costume and sound effects linked to different generations of comedians in the exhibition, e.g. The Goons, Monthly Python, Ken Dodd, Tommy Cooper to Harry Enfield, Reeves and Mortimer and Absolutely Fabulous.
- Comedy club style tables (x 2) and chairs (x 6)
- Red velvet curtains for backdrop
- Joke books and comedy 'scripts' in holders
- Mirror, coat hooks and prop baskets
- Visitor feedback wall with vinyl questions including: Who is your favourite Comedian? What makes you laugh?

The purpose of the stage area is to encourage audiences, particularly young people, to engage with the exhibition themes through dressing up and role play. It has been observed in previous exhibitions such as *Family Album* and

Popstars that visitors enjoy sharing these activities with friends and family. The activities encourage intergenerational learning and discussion and act as prompts for visitor interaction with the portraits and feedback.

The interactive area will be designed to address interpretative themes in the following ways:

Comedy styles

Famous scripts and jokes will be available in the Comedy Club area to encourage visitors to explore different comedy styles. For example absurd humour in the Monthly Python Spam sketch, stereotypes in Absolutely Fabulous and Harry Enfields' teenager and the political stand up routines of Ben Elton. Themed props including hats, wigs, glasses and clothes will support this exploration.

What makes people laugh?

Visitors will feed back their thoughts on a series of questions via the Comedy Comments feedback area. Questions will include: what makes you laugh? Who is your favourite comedian? Does humour change over time? Blank comments cards will be available for visitor comments.

Signifiers of humour

Themed props, costumes and comedy catchphrases will help visitors identify individual comedians and their signifiers. E.g. Tommy Cooper's fez and Ken Dodd's tickle stick.

Family Trail

A comic book style family trail featuring comedians in the exhibition will engage young people and families with the exhibition themes. This will be devised by a visual artist.

Family Learning Activities

The family learning programme for Comedians will take place during holiday periods and weekends. The focus will be on intergenerational learning through sharing experiences of comedy and what makes people laugh. These activities will be funded from Sunderland Museums learning budget.

Krafty Kids:

The museum runs monthly craft sessions for families. These will be themed to link with exhibition.

Saturday 18 April

Make a funny comedy prop!

Saturday 16 May

Create your own joke book

Easter Holidays:

Wednesday 8 April

Make clown bookmarks with the Sunderland Embroiderers Guild

Wednesday 15 April

Clowning workshop with Magic IF

Whit Half Term:

Wednesday 27 May

Laugh a Minute

Bring your favourite jokes to the museum to share and help us to make a Sunderland joke wall. All ages.

Saturday 30 May

Funny Fun Run

Join in a fancy dress fun run in Mowbray Park, in the style of a Benny Hill chase with comedy games, music and entertainment. This event supports Sports Saturday as part of National Family Week. All ages.

Young People

Comedy taster sessions will encourage young people age 11 – 19 to participate in the exhibition learning programme. These will be advertised through youth groups and the City of Sunderland Youth Development Group. These activities will lead up to a Comedy Festival event in May with performances by young people for their friends and families. The sessions will take place during holidays and weekends to allow greater uptake by young people.

Whit Half Term

Whit Half Term Comedy Festival for Young People

The festival will be aimed at engaging young people aged 11 – 19. Young people will be given the opportunity to work with actors to develop stand up performance skills. The project will be developed in partnership with City of Sunderland Youth Development Group.

Comedy Music workshops

Young people from Sunderland Music Workshops project will work with a musician to create their own funny songs.

Stand Up Comedy workshops (4 days)

Young people will work with actors from the Magic Improvisation Foundation to develop stand up comedy routines. This will lead to mini performances in the comedy stage area and a final big performance at the Comedy Night.

Saturday 30 May

Comedy Night

This night will be led by Magic IF and include a mixture of stand up, music and improvised comedy by young people from different exhibition projects.

Training Event for Youth Workers

Youth workers are often the gatekeepers for young people accessing museums, however many youth workers have never worked in museums or with museum staff and can't see the possibilities and benefits of developing this area of their work with young people.

A training event for youth workers will be held, showcasing the project work undertaken for Comedians exhibition by the young people and youth workers in Sunderland. This event will be evaluated and then rolled out to other youth workers via the Regional Museums Hub next year.

Formal Learning

Schools Programme

The links made with Key Stage 3 will be cross curricular in approach, including a teacher INSET to develop teacher's skills.

Key Stage 3 Comedy Performance Workshops

Pupils will work with a comedy writer to develop sketches and poems, which will be recorded into podcasts for a mini radio show. The workshop will explore poetic writing and sketches including the work of Spike Milligan and the Goons.

Literacy and IT

Key Stage 3 Art Workshops

Pupils will explore the light and dark faces of comedy, exploring feelings and relationships through portraits, including discussion of manic depressive and bipolar disorders in well known comedians including Stephen Fry and Kenneth Williams.

Art and Citizenship

Key Stage 4 or BTEC Student Project

Comedy workshops with Magic Improvisation Foundation

Drama students will work with actors from the Magic Improvisation Foundation to develop their improvisation skills. An improvisation performance will be developed for the Comedy Night in May. This will be a five week project starting in April.

Teacher INSET

A teacher INSET will take place at Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens in early May to showcase cross-curricular approaches to portraiture for Key Stage 3. This session may also be supported by in-school staff-room workshops led by museum staff, which have proved successful at other Tyne & Wear Museums venues. This is a positive way of building relationships with art teachers and links that last beyond the lifespan of the exhibition.