

Labelling Matters

Key Stage 3-5

National Curriculum area:
Cross-curricular

Length of session:

60-90 minutes

Maximum group size: 32

Session Outline

What should we do with the labels in the Pitt Rivers that use racist or offensive language? What happened during the museum's past that brought about the creation of some of these labels? Who is being represented and who is representing when we use language to 'explain' objects and the people who owned them? These are some of the key questions that students will interrogate when they explore the relationship between labels, language and representation.

Students will study and discuss a range of museum labels in detail, looking at how labelling has evolved throughout the museum's history. There will be an option to debate what the museum should do with existing labels in the future.



Learning Outcomes

- To understand the relationship between objects at the Pitt Rivers Museum and how they are labelled
- To analyse and discuss some of the problematic labels in the museum written in the 19th and 20th centuries
- To understand how and why the objects were acquired by looking at the colonial history of the museum

Pre visit activities

Talk about what 'representation' means and how people are represented in museums.

Find who General Pitt Rivers was and when he lived.

Look at the Pitt Rivers website <https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk> to find out which parts of the collection you would most like to find out about.

Post visit activities

Look at <https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/labelling-matters> to read more about the project.

Visit at <https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/maasai-living-cultures> to learn more about self-representation.

Find out more about the recent changes and the removal of human remains from display <https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/human-remains-pitt-rivers-museum>



For further details and how to book visit:

www.prm.ox.ac.uk/learn