Theory of Knowledge - Decoloniality

Pitt Rivers Museum

Key Stage 3-5

National Curriculum area: History, Ethics, International Baccalaureate, Theory of Knowledge

Length of session: 60-90 minutes

Maximum group size: 32

Session Outline

This session uses key objects and their history to understand and unpack terms such as coloniality, epistemicide and cultural appropriation.

Through looking in detail at Native American and First Nations objects, students will gain an understanding of the history of the objects, how they were used by the people who made and owned them, and they will hear what they mean to the ancestors of those people today. They will find out about assimilation and its connection to the acquisition of Pitt Rivers collections through the voices of Native American and First Nations peoples.

Students will handle Haida objects to learn about how the museum continues to work with Haida peoples. They will gain an understanding of some of the issues faced by Haida peoples as a result of colonialism.

Learning Outcomes

- Learn what cultural appropriation is using a specific case study to understand how it can be damaging and unethical
- Learn what assimilation is and understand how it connects to the way in which many objects in the museum were acquired
- Handle Haida objects and learn how the Pitt Rivers museum continues to work with Haida people to foreground their voices and perspectives

Pre visit activities

Discuss key terms that are connected to epistemology such as; certainty, values, culture etc.

Become familiar with the geography of the North American continent.

Find out about current issues that have affected some Native American and First Nation peoples.

Post visit activities

Find out more about Haida Gwaii and climate-related issues affecting the islands.

Watch boarding school testimonies online.

Discuss other examples of cultural appropriation in society.

For further details and how to book visit:

www.prm.ox.ac.uk/learn