

# Teacher's Gallery Guide



Proud to be part of

**MANCHESTER**  
1824

The University of Manchester

# Welcome!

We look forward to welcoming you to Manchester Museum!

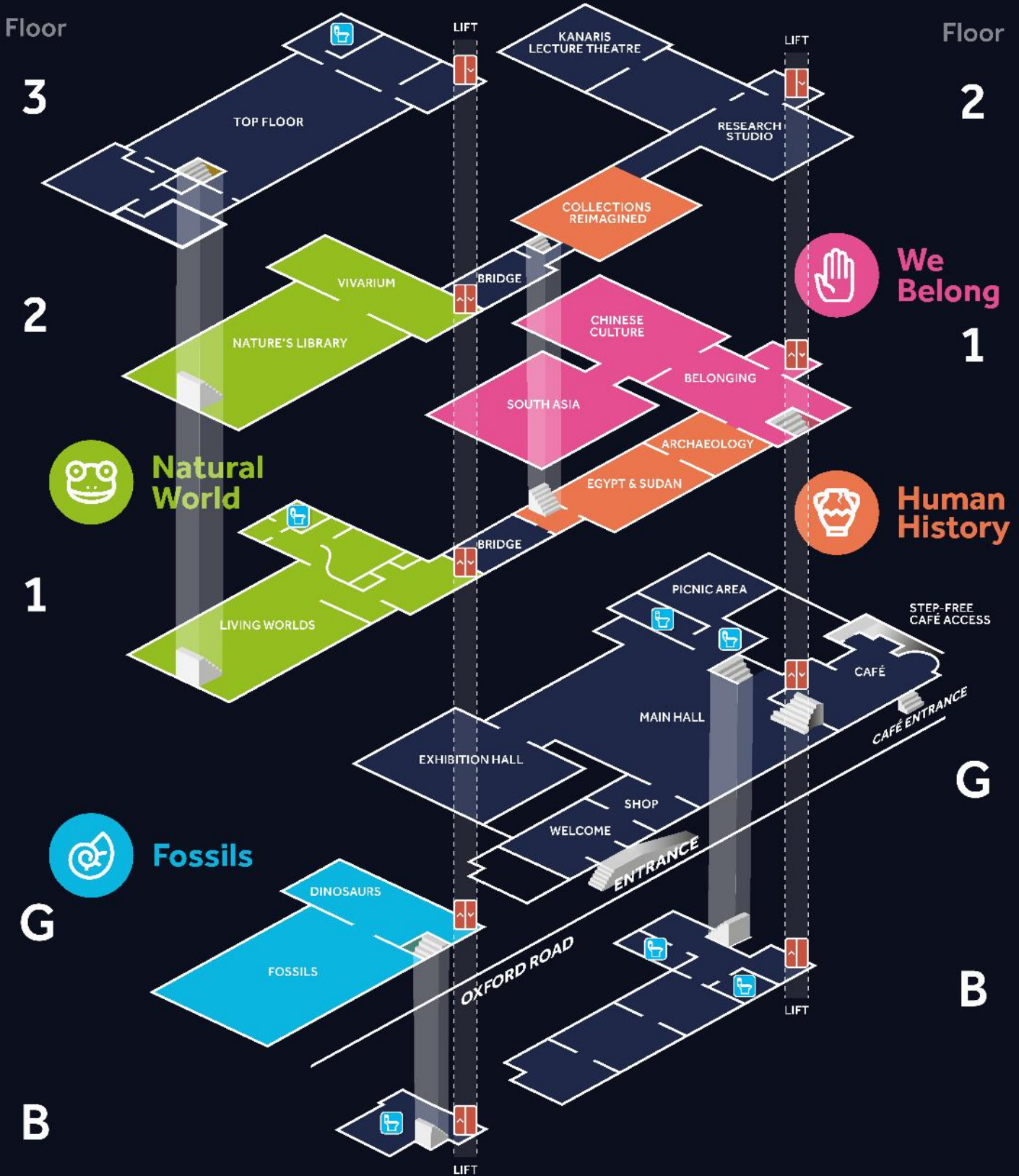
This Teacher's Gallery Guide has been produced for teachers, adult helpers and other group leaders who will be supporting pupils and students during a museum visit. You will find information about each gallery including:

- Gallery Information: a brief overview of the gallery
- A 'hidden gem' object: selected by staff and accompanied by an image
- A series of 'Question Prompts' that you may wish to use with your group to encourage further discussion
- 'Curriculum Links' for different key stages
- Notes on the space and content: details of any content or features of the physical space that you may find useful to know about in advance.

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# Museum Map



Floor

Floor

3

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2

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**Natural World**



**We Belong**



**Human History**



**Fossils**

STEP-FREE  
CAFÉ ACCESS

LIFT

LIFT

LIFT

LIFT

BRIDGE

BRIDGE

LIFT

LIFT

OXFORD ROAD

ENTRANCE

CAFÉ ENTRANCE

TOP FLOOR

KANARIS LECTURE THEATRE

RESEARCH STUDIO

COLLECTIONS REIMAGINED

VIVARIUM

NATURE'S LIBRARY

CHINESE CULTURE

SOUTH ASIA

BELONGING

ARCHAEOLOGY

EGYPT & SUDAN

LIVING WORLDS

PICNIC AREA

EXHIBITION HALL

MAIN HALL

SHOP

WELCOME

DINOSAURS

FOSSILS

STEP-FREE  
CAFÉ ACCESS

# Key to Museum Zones for Schools

To make it easier to plan and timetable your visit around our much-bigger museum, we have grouped the galleries into 'Zones'.

The Zones bring galleries together in themed areas that will make sense for children to explore at a similar time.



## We Belong



We Belong includes the Chinese Culture Gallery, the South Asia Gallery, and Belonging. Together, these galleries explore human relationships with nature, Manchester's relationship with the world, and themes of identity, faith, self-expression, celebrations, and more.



## Human History



In Human History you will find our Egypt & Sudan collection – including the mummified remains of a lady named Asru – as well as Archaeology from around the world and changing displays exploring how we interpret 'Living Cultures' collection.



## Fossils



Fossils includes our much-loved Fossils gallery (with Stan the T-Rex!) as well as the new Dinosaur Gallery, where you can meet April the Tenontosaurus. It's great for topics on rocks and fossils, or evolution.



## Natural World



In Natural World, discover animals and plants in the Nature's Library and Living Worlds galleries, as well as live amphibians and reptiles in the Vivarium.

## Welcome Area Information

When you enter the museum you will be greeted in the brand new Welcome Area. On display you will find Maharajah, the impressive skeleton of an Asian Elephant who walked from Edinburgh to Manchester in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before joining the infamous Belle Vue zoo.

You will also see a Japanese Incense Burner that stands over 7 feet tall, painstakingly cleaned by Manchester Museum's Conservators and Volunteers.

### Hidden Gem- The Japanese Incense Burner

This incense burner might look old but it was actually made in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for a display, to illustrate older practices.

The carvings tell different stories and include witches and dragons from traditional folklore, to European fruit bowls.

The incense burner made its way from Japan to Manchester at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, before going into storage for over a century!



### Question Prompts

What do you think you will see during your visit?

What can you tell about the museum from just what you have seen so far?

What are you most excited to see?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science, Art & Design, History  
KS3- Science, Art & Design, History

### Notes on this space and its content:

*This area can be busy at peak times, so may be overwhelming for students with sensory challenges. There is a large elephant skeleton on display.*

## Golden Mummies of Egypt Information

The Exhibition Hall is a place to explore the richness of our world; past, present and future. Golden Mummies of Egypt is the opening exhibition and a one-of-a-kind cultural experience. This exhibition offers unparalleled access to our Egypt and Sudan collections, featuring more than a hundred objects and eight mummies. Golden Mummies of Egypt presents a rich perspective on beliefs about the afterlife during an era when Egypt was part of the Greek and Roman worlds.



### Hidden Gem: Statue of Bes

Bes is the Egyptian god of children and childbirth, as well as music and merriment. Often depicted as a benevolent dwarf, this statue shows him comically dressed as a Roman soldier; showing how multi-cultural Egypt and the Mediterranean were during this time.

Bes' presence in The Golden Mummies of Egypt is particularly important, as this exhibition contains the mummified bodies of children who may have felt an association with Bes before their untimely deaths.

### Question Prompts

Do you think that it is right for museums to have dead bodies on display?

Would you like for your body and coffin to be looked at in a museum?

Has your understanding of mummies changed since visiting this exhibit?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- History

KS4- Classical Civilisations

Post-16- Classical Civilisations, Ancient History

### Notes on this space and its content:

*Low lighting and audio / film. Mummies are the main focus of this gallery, and while no human remains can be seen there is a lot of discussion of death and commemoration. Quotes and captions include some racist language and ideas from Victorian Egyptologists.*



# Belonging

## Belonging Gallery Information

The Belonging Gallery draws on collections and multiple cultural perspectives to reflect on how we come to know what belonging means for ourselves, other people, species and places. Using comic art by local, national and international artists, you will find stories – both old and new – about how humans, animals and plants have lived harmoniously with one another and in different landscapes. In cases where they no longer do, the gallery offers illustrative examples and hopeful insights into how we might make new harmonies in the future.

### Hidden Gem- Manchester Bee

The bee is a Manchester icon, but its artistic representations can be different to the bees we have in our entomology collection. Which one do you think is the Manchester bee? Find this display under the bee comic, and go through the questions with your students. They will soon realise that the Manchester icon is really an amalgamation of a few different bees, and there is no 'real' answer!



### Question Prompts

What does 'belonging' mean to you?

Who do you think belongs in a museum?

How would you use a comic to tell a story- maybe about yourself, someone you know, or your favourite object?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Art & Design, Geography, History, English

KS3- English, Art & Design, History

KS4- Art & Design, History

Post-16- Art & Design, English Literature, Geography

### Notes on this space and its content:

*Taxidermy animals are on display. The comics on display contain emotional messages around identity and belonging. Images of spears and warfare- battle contexts. Discussion of colonialism, abandonment, and refugee experiences.*



# Chinese Culture



## Chinese Culture Gallery Information

The Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery draws on historical and contemporary links between Manchester and China, and offers a wide range of Chinese perspectives. This multilingual gallery highlights personal stories of migration, friendships and collaboration, to inspire empathy and build understanding. You will find fine porcelains, exquisitely carved jades, beautiful textiles, ancient bronzes and impressive natural history specimens.



### Hidden Gem- Plate

This decorative plate shows the moon goddess *Chang'e* holding a rabbit and floating amongst the branches of a tree. This is likely the Moon Rabbit from Chinese folklore; an immortal being who is known for brewing the elixir of life.

If you look up at the moon, you can make out the outline of the rabbit with a pestle and mortar in the moon's craters. There are lots of rabbits in our gallery in celebration of Lunar New Year.

### Question Prompts

What did you know about Chinese culture before visiting the gallery?

How has your understanding changed?

Did you feel any connections to the stories or objects in the galleries?

How are the people represented in the gallery similar to you, or people you know?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science, History, Languages, Art & Design, RE

KS3- Art & Design, Design & Technology, Geography, History, MFL

KS4- Biology, History, Citizenship, MFL

Post-16- Chinese Language & Literature

### Notes on this space and its content:

*There are videos with sound and moving images plus low lighting throughout. Taxidermy animals are on display. There are images of breastfeeding. Content includes accounts of experiencing racism and references to the pandemic. Content documenting war. Geo-political tensions and drugs are also mentioned.*





# South Asia



## South Asia Gallery Information

The South Asia Gallery presents a compelling, contemporary take on South Asian and British Asian history and culture. It is the first permanent gallery in the UK to celebrate the experiences and contribution of the South Asian diaspora.

This multilingual gallery has been designed and built with the South Asia Gallery Collective, an inspiring group of community members from Manchester's South Asian diaspora with a unique spirit of collaboration and co-production.

### Hidden Gem- Tabla

The tabla is an important South Asian instrument, with origins dating back to 5th century. This tabla belongs to Ustad Alla Rakha, one of the most important and respected tabla players of his generation. He began his career in radio, before making film soundtracks in the 1940's, and inspiring up and coming musicians, The Beatles, in the 1960's.



### Question Prompts

How do you relate to this gallery?

What does this make you think about your own identity?

This gallery was made by a collective of 30 community collaborators.

What differences have you noticed between this gallery and the others in the museum?

Are there any objects whose stories have surprised you?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science, History, Languages, Art & Design, RE

KS3- Art & Design, Citizenship, Design & Technology, Geography, History, MFL, Music

KS4- Art & Design, Geography, History, MFL

### Notes on this space and its content:

*There is a central space with audio visual content playing. The exhibition includes discussions of colonialism, accounts of Partition, descriptions of war, and accounts of experiences of racism. The pandemic and covid-related deaths are mentioned. Climate-related catastrophe is explored in the gallery.*



## Archaeology Gallery Information

The Archaeology Gallery asks important questions about who narrates the past, with interventions addressing pressing social challenges. For example, you will hear the voices of young people who have experienced forced migration – perspectives that interrupt and challenge traditional presentations of ancient cultures, such as Roman Britain and ancient Assyria (modern-day Iraq).



### Hidden Gem- Word Square

Excavated in nearby Castlefield, this is one of the earliest representations of Christianity from northern Roman Britain, dating to 182 CE.

While we only have a part of the Word Square, archaeologists have worked out that it would have originally been inscribed with five Latin words, including the Lord's Prayer. Therefore, this might have been used as a secret symbol, demonstrating belief in Christianity at a time when the Christian Church was being oppressed by the Roman authorities.

### Question Prompts

What does an archaeologist do?

Why should we study the past through objects, not just written words?

Look out for the 'interventions' spread throughout this gallery. How do they add to your understanding of the displays?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- History, English

KS3- History, English

KS4- History,

Post-16- Classical Civilisations, English, Ancient History

### Notes on this space and its content:

*Discussion of displacement and forced migration. The gallery mentions war and its impacts. Historic individuals discussed who held problematic opinions around race, gender, and sexuality.*



# Egypt & Sudan



## Egypt & Sudan Gallery Information

Learn the stories of the people we now call *ancient Egyptians*; a diverse population who lived in north-eastern Africa from around 3000 to 30 BCE (Before Common Era). The museum's outstanding collection of Egyptian and Sudanese objects – one of the largest in the UK – illustrates both everyday life and preparations for the afterlife.

### Hidden Gem- Limestone Drawing (Ostrakon)

This drawing shows an ancient Egyptian funeral. You are looking at the shaft of a tomb, with the burial chamber at the bottom and mourners at the top. Inside the burial chamber, you can see a person dressed as the god of mummification, Anubis. This small drawing tells Egyptologists that people would act like the gods during Egyptian funerals; something that we wouldn't know about otherwise!



### Question Prompts

Do you think that these objects belong in Manchester, or in Egypt?

How did seeing a mummified body make you feel?

Do you think that dead people should go on display in a museum? What reasons can you think of, for and against it?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- History

KS3- History

KS4- Classical Civilisations

Post-16- Classical Civilisations, Ancient History

### Notes on this space and its content:

*Death features prominently in this gallery, as many objects were taken from graves. Unwrapped, mummified human remains are on display, as are coffins. There are also mentions of historic racism.*



# Collections Reimagined



## Collections Reimagined Gallery Information

The objects on display in the museum are not just here to be looked at. Through our programmes and outreach work, collections are used in ways that are rarely the purpose for which they were originally intended.

Collections Reimagined focuses on how the museum, our partners, and global living cultures, still use the objects that we have on display.



### Hidden Gem- Zulu Beads

These beads represent how museums have changed over time. Since collectors took them from KwaZulu Natal communities at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these beads have remained in the museum without any detailed information about where they came from, who they belonged to, and their meaning.

Staff at the museum are now working with international partners to explore the stories that these beads carry, and to share them with visitors.

### Question Prompts

Do you think that all of the objects in the museum should be used by everyone, or should they all be in cases to be looked at, or a mix of both?

What would you do with an ancient Egyptian shabti in your school?

### Curriculum Links

*KS2- History.*

*KS3- History, Geography*

*KS4- History, Geography*

*Post-16- Classical Civilisations, Ancient History*

### Notes on this space and its content:

*This gallery is located directly above Egypt and Sudan, so coffins are visible if looking down.*



## Vivarium Information

It is unusual for a museum to care for live animals, but Manchester Museum has done so for over fifty years. The Vivarium offers a unique opportunity to see rare and beautiful creatures, and to watch conservation in action.

The Vivarium is recognised worldwide for its conservation work. A recent success story, and a landmark moment in the museum's history, was the captive breeding of the variable harlequin toad (also known as *Atelopus varius*).

### Hidden Gem- Magnificent Tree Frog

Look closely at some of the tanks and you might spot a small, oblong shape. This is the magnificent tree frog resting; in the wild they do this in rocky places.

On top of the head, these frogs have a large gland that is used to secrete a toxin that deters predators- but thankfully, is harmless to humans!

These frogs are not endangered, but due to their small range and our limited understanding of the species, they are vulnerable, and therefore, it is important that we continue to learn more about them.



### Question Prompts

Do you think that we should stop animals from going extinct, or should we leave them to look after themselves?

Why do you think the Vivarium looks after frogs, rather than other animals?

How else can a person learn about animals, apart from going to university and becoming a scientist?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science, Geography

KS3- Biology

KS4- Biology, Chemistry

Post-16- Biology, Geography, Environmental Science

### Notes on this space and its content:

*There are live animals including snakes, frogs and lizards. Discussion of endangered and extinct animals, the climate crisis and oppressed communities. There are images of destroyed habitats.*



## Nature's Library Gallery Information

The museum's natural history collections include zoology, entomology, botany and earth sciences, and you will find all of them in this gallery. With objects from corals to crickets and plants to platypus, Nature's Library focuses on the ordering work of museums. It shows how the collection is organised behind the scenes and why there are so many objects.

### Hidden Gem- Cordyceps fungus on a caterpillar

Who knew that you could find zombies in a museum? Cordyceps is a type of fungus that burrows into their host, generally an insect or arthropod, and slowly begins to take over its cells with its own. Once inside, the fungus begins to interrupt the animal's brain processes, giving its own instructions for movement. The host is forced to move to higher ground, before the fruit of the fungus erupts from its head to share its spores with new, unsuspecting, hosts.



### Question Prompts

Why do you think some animals are taxidermied, and some are skeletons?

Why might it be important to have plants and insects conserved?

What stories have you learnt about in this gallery?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science, Geography

KS3- Biology

KS4- Biology, Chemistry

Post-16- Biology, Geology, Environmental Science

### Notes on this space and its content:

*There are lots of taxidermy animals and skeletons on display throughout this gallery.*



## Living Worlds Gallery Information

Living Worlds displays natural history specimens in a series of themed cases, each exploring different ways in which we relate to and engage with the natural world. You will find some of our best-loved animals here – a Siberian tiger, a polar bear and the skull of Old Billy, the longest-living horse in the world. If you look up above you, you'll also see the skeleton of a sperm whale; this has watched over the gallery for over 130 years.



### Hidden Gem- Paper Cranes

In this case you will find a piece of rubble from the atomic blast in Hiroshima, alongside a Demoiselle crane, surrounded by origami paper cranes.

The paper cranes represent those folded by Sadako; a young girl who contracted leukaemia after the bombing in Hiroshima.

### Question Prompts

This gallery used to have a large, Benin carved tusk on display, which is now going to be repatriated (sent back) to Nigeria. What do you think about museums sending objects back to where they came from originally?

Do you think that these animals were killed, or died of natural causes?

What do you think the point of this gallery is?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science, Geography

KS3- Biology, Chemistry

KS4- Biology, Chemistry

Post-16- Biology, Environmental Science

### Notes on this space and its content:

*Taxidermy animals are on display, as well as some animal skeletons. There are plaster models of human skulls and a human skeleton on display. References are made to war and suffering, and trophy hunting of animals.*



## Fossils Gallery Information

This is where you will come face-to-face with prehistoric giants like Stan, the cast of a Tyrannosaurus rex. All dinosaurs, except for some bird species, became extinct 66 million years ago. The story of our changing world is woven throughout the displays. From a 300-million-year-old fossil tree to a fragmented rock showing the moment the asteroid hit Earth, and Ice Age animals found at Creswell Crags, the objects hold the key to understanding evolution, climate change and even outer space.

### Hidden Gem- Spider Preserved in Amber

This spider is preserved in 40 million year old Baltic amber: many people automatically think of Jurassic Park when they see it! While DNA does not survive for long enough for scientists to really clone dinosaurs, specimens like this do tell us a lot about creatures that would otherwise, rarely become fossilised.

Amber is fossilised tree resin, usually from the Cretaceous and Tertiary periods. The sticky resin became a trap for small creatures, like the spider, before being buried in sediment, for millions of years.



### Question Prompts

What is a fossil?

Stan, the T-Rex, is a plastic reproduction of a dinosaur as the fossil is in a private collection. Do you think that Stan is a real dinosaur?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science

KS3- Chemistry

KS4- Chemistry

Post-16- Geology

### Notes on this space and its content:

*Gallery can become very noisy. A large, possibly intimidating T-Rex is prominent in the gallery. There are skeletons on display as well as large models of extinct creatures.*





## Dinosaur Gallery Information

This gallery will help you to develop the skills that palaeontologists use to learn about the history of life on Earth. By studying different fossils, you will be able to look closely, connect, explain, and wonder in order to understand the fossils on display and imagine what life was like over 60 million years ago. April, the real Tenontosaurus skeleton found in Montana, USA and dating to over 110 million years' old, sits at the centre of the gallery



### Hidden Gem- Dinosaur Egg

This is the egg of a dinosaur called Hypselosaurus and dates to the Upper Cretaceous period, about 70 million years old! Hypselosaurus (meaning 'highest lizard') was a Titanosaurian sauropod that lived in France.

In 1846, Hypselosaurus eggs were the first dinosaur eggs to be discovered, after previously being mistaken for giant bird eggs.

### Question Prompts

April, the Tenontosaurus in the middle of the gallery, used to be displayed in the wrong position. Why do you think that it is important to show animals as they would have been when they were alive?

What is more 'real' - a fossilised dinosaur (like April), or a plastic cast of one (like Stan)?

### Curriculum Links

KS2- Science

KS3- Chemistry

KS4- Chemistry

Post-16- Geology

### Notes on this space and its content:

*A short film depicting the extinction of the dinosaurs may be upsetting for some. Small models may appear scary to younger audiences. Artwork depicts dinosaurs hunting, including some bloody imagery.*