

Prompts for London Blogs

12/30 Architecture and Meaning

When we visit the British Museum, take photos of the space and record your reactions to it in a journal. Also, map the floor plan of the museum.

Does the museum architecture embody the “museum as monument” or the “museum as instrument?” If so, how?

12/31 Why do cultures make museums and how do museums shape culture? Seeing, thinking and writing in the museum.

After we explore the Enlightenment Gallery as a class, choose a partner and together select three objects on display in the gallery. Link these objects together with ideas presented in the Sloan essay and then assess the degree to which they symbolize enlightenment ideals.

1/2 How do museums get their stuff and what is the significance of it?

Choose a gallery in the British Museum that is not the Enlightenment Gallery. Explain how this gallery reflects the original mission of the museum.

Then compare an object in this gallery with an object in the Enlightenment Gallery. First, describe each object fully.

In what time period and with what objectives were the objects collected? See Macdonald for a range of motivations behind collecting. How do the collections help to explain why this museum is called the “British Museum”?

1/4 How do exhibitions tell stories? Collections, Objects and Meanings

Compare the Museum of London with the British Museum by describing the dialogue you think each museum intends to establish with its viewers. Use specific details from exhibitions to support your ideas. A few key terms from our McLean reading to use in your descriptions are temple, forum, resonance and wonder.

After you have considered these ideas in a general way, select an object in the Museum of London to compare with one of the objects you studied on Jan 2 in the

British Museum. In your comparison, first provide your audience with a full description of each object then respond to the following questions:

In what time period and with what objectives were the objects collected? See Macdonald for a range of motivations behind collecting.

How does the display of your selected objects demonstrate the dialogue you think each museum intends to establish with its viewers?

You will present this object comparison to the class on Jan 5 in the Museum of London.

1/6 Museums, History and Identity

As we explore the Imperial War Museum, both the architecture and the exhibitions, study the viewers in the museum. Describe the dialogue viewers seem to be having with the museum and with one another. Consider how what you see happening today serves the museum's mission.

Also, consider how the ideas conveyed in the dialogues you observe connect to the ideas conveyed in War Horse.

1/7 Identity Revisited

How is British identity rendered in one of the Imperial War Museum galleries? In your response to this question, consider object selection and arrangement, the readings for today, and your dialogue study from yesterday.