

Curious stories and sensory experiences - how do they measure up?

Emma Morioka, Historic Royal Palaces
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Historic Royal Palaces

“Help everyone explore the story of how monarchs and people have shaped society, in some of the greatest palaces ever built”



Learning & Engagement

EXPLORER
PROGRAMME
0-19YRS

UNCOVER
PROGRAMME
FOR ADULTS

BIG EVENTS
FOR ALL AGES

PUBLISHING

Digital

On-site, off-site, online

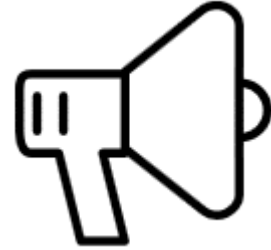
Audience champion



Research and evaluation

Quarterly KPI Reporting:

- ✓ Reach
- ✓ Quality
- ✓ Learning Impact
- ✓ Value



180+ projects

12,000+ responses



**“Everything that can be counted
does not necessarily count;
everything that counts cannot
necessarily be counted”**

Albert Einstein



Curious Stories

3 year project

Tri-Borough & Funded

Increase impact among
low attainment



Curious Stories: aims



Use the unique spaces and stories of Kensington Palace to develop children's literacy and communication skills



1. Use historical stories, objects, drama and craft to build vocabulary, narrative and writing skills

2. Improve communication and collaboration skills through role play and costumed interpretation

3. Support parents and carers to encourage their child to develop vocabulary, narrative and communication skills



Curious Stories: theory



1. Decoding

2. Comprehension

3. Pre-reading

4. Pre-writing



- listening to stories
- experiencing stories
- talking about stories
- making up stories
- recognising letter shapes
- identifying words and print

'Talk 4
Writing'
(Pie
Corbett)



1. Imitation

2. Innovation

3. Independent application



Curious Stories: the story



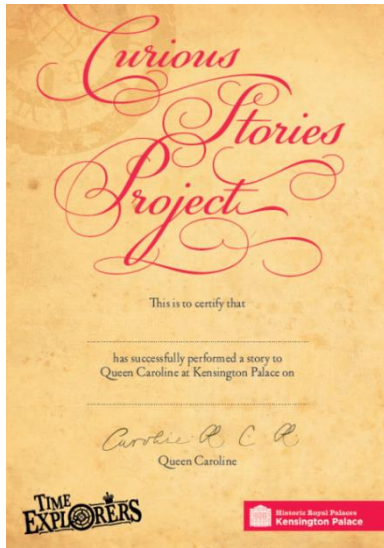
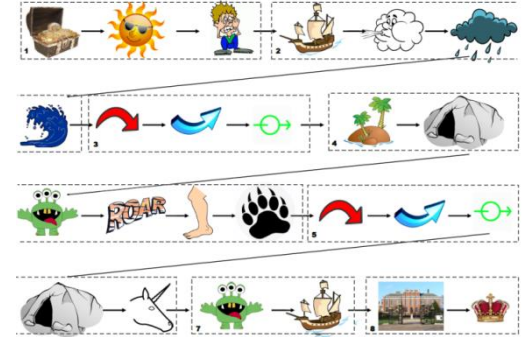
Curious Stories: what happens



Teacher
CPD



7 x
facilitated
sessions
with
children



Plus: Classroom resources



2 x facilitated
sessions with
parents/carers



Supported by the Story game

Celebration
Event at
Kensington
Palace



Curious Stories: early research and evaluation



1. Pilot testing and formative evaluation

Qualitative Research:

- Session observation
- Brief discussions with teachers, parents and facilitators pre and post session
- Follow up telephone interviews

Quantitative Research:

- Self-completion questionnaires for children and parents/carers

2. Story game formative evaluation

In-home interviews: setting the scene

Test and play

In-home interviews: follow-up

3. Story game user development and testing

In-lab user testing and development



Curious Stories: evolving the research and evaluation



Quantitative impact: 2 test schools, multiple students,
teachers and parents

Testing against a control setting: 1 x control school



Curious Stories: evolving the research and evaluation

Research Methodology

Pre-testing:

- EERNI: Expression, Reception and Recall of Narrative Instrument
- CELF: Expressive vocabulary task from the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals assessment
- Teacher assessment

Post-testing:

- Re-tests of EERNI and CELF (compare scores)
- Free-writing task (Year 1 children only)
- Teacher assessment

Other:

- Teacher questionnaire on views of CS programme
- Semi-structured telephone interviews with up to 20 parents

Curious Stories: what we have learnt to date about measuring impact

Selecting and managing the sample

Finding the Control School

Recruiting sufficient numbers for the Control

Causation and correlation

Logistics

Working with different school assessment tools



Sensory Palaces

A health and wellbeing programme for people living with dementia and their carers



Images © Historic Royal Palaces

Session structure

Welcome



Refreshments and
introduction in Community
Room



Visit to the Palace (story
with sensory elements)



Group activity in the
Community Room



Close and feedback



Sensory Palaces: early research and evaluation

Research and evaluation objectives:

- Test new session formats to determine the best content and format for the programme going forwards
- Measure the learning and wellbeing impact of the Sensory Palaces sessions



Sensory Palaces: early research and evaluation

Discovery

- ✓ Support participants in their exploration of the stories of the palace

Measures: evidence that stories are included and accessible and participants speak about the stories.

Participation

- ✓ Promote participants' sense of belonging and confidence

Measures: participants feel inspired to try new things, feel more confident and engaged with the sessions. Mood was improved.

Transformation

- ✓ Enhance participants' sense of wellbeing

Measures: demonstrated improvement in (psychological) wellbeing for people living with dementia and their carers, either in one-off sessions or across a programme of events.



Sensory Palaces: early research and evaluation - UCL Toolkit

UCL Toolkit

- Dr Linda Thomson & Dr Helen J Chatterjee
 - Levels of wellbeing from participation in museum and gallery activities
 - Psychological rather than physical and social wellbeing
 - Self-reported changes in mood and emotion
 - Trialled across the UK
-
- ✓ A flexible tool
 - ✓ Sector-specific
 - ✓ Tried and tested



Challenges

- Completing the questionnaire
- Relating feedback to wellbeing rather than commenting on the session itself
- Time
- Resources
- Protecting the experience
- Small sample sizes



Sensory Palaces: early research and evaluation

Research Methodology

Monitoring

Collect statistics:

- Attendance,
 - Repeat visits
- Numbers of participants and carers

Audiences

Measurement of Participant wellbeing (UCL Toolkit)

Observation

Semi-structured evaluator observation of individual sessions

Post-session

Semi-structured interviews with :

- Participants
- Volunteers
- Support workers
- Facilitators



Session observation & feedback from volunteers



Reflective feedback from learning producers



Sensory Palaces: what we have learnt to date about measuring impact

Finding the
right
audience
feedback
tool

Need time
and
resource

Finding a
structured
observation
tool

Clarity on
outcomes

Having a
comparison

With thanks to Willis Newson, Dr Linda Thomson, Research Associate of University College London, The Alzheimer's Society and all those who participated in the evaluation process



Final reflections

1. Read and learn
2. Find the right partners
3. Use a meaningful framework
4. Be systematic, but flexible
5. Don't just rely on one tool



Any questions?

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