

DISASTER HAS STRUCK



WE NEED AN
EMERGENCY MUSEUM

The Emergency Museum was developed by Steve Dearden and The Writing Squad, examples used here are by pupils from Manchester Communication Academy and Writing Squad writers.

Disaster has struck...

The trip has been cancelled / The museum has been closed / There has been a flood / A fire, a plague of bees, the staff are all on strike.

How are we going to find out about ourselves? History is lost. How will our children, our children's children, our children's children's children find out about us? How will aliens learn about life on earth?

There is only one answer
AN EMERGENCY MUSEUM.

NOW.

Who can make the emergency museum?
Only you!

*Can we let you into a secret?
To be honest we prefer emergency museums to real ones – no big dusty rooms, no interactive displays that are out of order, no actors dressed up as people from the past, no black and white photos of old stuff, no little labels too small to read!*

*JUST YOUR THINGS... JUST YOUR LABELS...
JUST YOUR STUFF... ALL ABOUT YOU!*

OK enough. You get the picture.

How to make an Emergency Museum

Step 1

First we need objects, all museums have objects, where can you find objects? In your pockets, bags, drawers (especially the back of them), cupboards (especially cupboards you never look in), under the stairs, under your bed, in the shed, in the car glove box, anywhere (ask first if the object isn't yours.) Bring all this together and this is your COLLECTION!

How does it look? Who is it about? Whose story does it tell?

Step 2

What's missing? Labels. All museums need labels. INTERPRETATION! Don't worry, we don't mean the labels need to be in French, we mean YOU WRITE THE LABELS. YOU ARE THE EXPERT! And the great thing about being the expert is you decide whether to tell the truth or make it up.

So write a label on a piece of paper or card for each object – tell it's story, what it is called, where it came from, do you know where it was made, what is it made of, who does it belong to, what is it used for, are there any interesting facts about what has happened to it (if not make them up) You are the expert, only you know the truth.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES FROM PREVIOUS EMERGENCY MUSEUMS



HUBBA BUBBA

Insert materials and year

Hannah's conditions means that she can't eat or drink, but she can have a little chewing gum now and again. She only likes Strawberry Hubba Bubba, because others taste way too strong on a palate of nothing else! She has some chewing gum to cheer her up on a bad day, or simply to try and trick her stomach into stopping grumbling when she's hungry.



Grandfather's Wallet

Leather, 2019

After her grandfather, who she'd been very close to, passed away suddenly last year, Isabella asked to keep something of his. She took his wallet because she can carry it with her all the time, and because it reminds her of him – particularly because he was quite clumsy and it makes her laugh that there's a pocket with a hole in it that she can't use, because things drop out.



Rescue Remedy Comfort and Reassure drops

Exp Aug 2023

Alice bought this herbal remedy on recommendation of her mother, Kathryn, after a period of prolonged sleepless nights while studying at University in 2018. She began to use the drops again during her first month working in her new job, in order to cure symptoms including heart palpitations, trembling hands, and stomach cramps.



Homeless Man Emoji

Moulded Acrylic and Paper, 2019

This keyfob is owned and was made by Kameron showing an emoji of a homeless person. It was created with the help of Sainsburys during their visit to the school. There is a small crack in the casing, thought to be caused by Kameron and his friend throwing the fob on the pavement.



La Cuillère (The Spoon)

Stainless Steel, 1992

Owned by the Howard family from 2007 – 2019. It is said the spoon is from France yet it may be of German or American origin. Its last known use was for a citron (lemon) yoghurt while at school.

Step 3

You have made a great Emergency Museum, we hope you have shown people round.


But what happens if you have your own flood, your own plague of bees [insert your own disaster here] or people just want their stuff back?

DOCUMENTATION, to preserve your museum for our children, our children's children, our children's children's children and those aliens.


So get a camera or your phone out, take a picture of each object and it's label. Now you have a CATALOGUE and your museum is saved for posterity and all those aliens/children.

But don't wait for them to come along, you can share your museum now, with people you live with, with friends online by posting your objects and labels on your social media or building a museum website, and you send them to us, we love see people's Emergency Museums, curator to curator.

We would love to see and share your museums and hear about the emergencies that inspired them. To share them with us, please post them on social media with the hashtag #igniteyorks.

 Twitter: @igniteyorks

 Facebook IVElgnite

 Instagram: igniteyorks

Good Luck

The Writing Squad provides workshops, 1-1 support and investment for young writers. Our free two year programme is for writers aged 16-21 who live, work or study in the North of England.

After that we continue to offer our writers support as they begin their careers. We help them establish themselves as individual artists, collectives and start up companies. We link writers and activists with the literature industry and independent sector, while encouraging them to produce and distribute work themselves.

Our support is rigorous and long term, shaped by the constant renewal of their needs, ambitions and circumstances. We are a community of artists who make new work together and support each other's development.

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About Ignite

Ignite Yorkshire works with 14-25 year olds with a mission for to ignite a revolution in how Yorkshire's industrial heritage is viewed, understood, enjoyed, and looked after by young people. We take inspiration from the industrial past to develop skills for the future.

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Ignite Yorkshire is a partnership project co-ordinated by We Are IVE Ltd and supported by National Lottery Heritage Fund through the Kick the Dust programme.

