



## A study investigating the use of social media for enhancing the museum learning experience



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### Description:

The study presented in this round table session examines the case study of how school visits to museums can be enhanced with the use of social media tools (e.g. Twitter). It is specifically concerned with the potential of web 2.0 technologies for extending the museum learning experience and facilitating the meaning-making process. It draws on Falk and Dierking's (2000) Contextual Model of Learning and considers evidence of meaning making from students' online posts and activity on-site.

**Research Framework:** Contextual Model of Learning (Falk & Dierking, 2000)

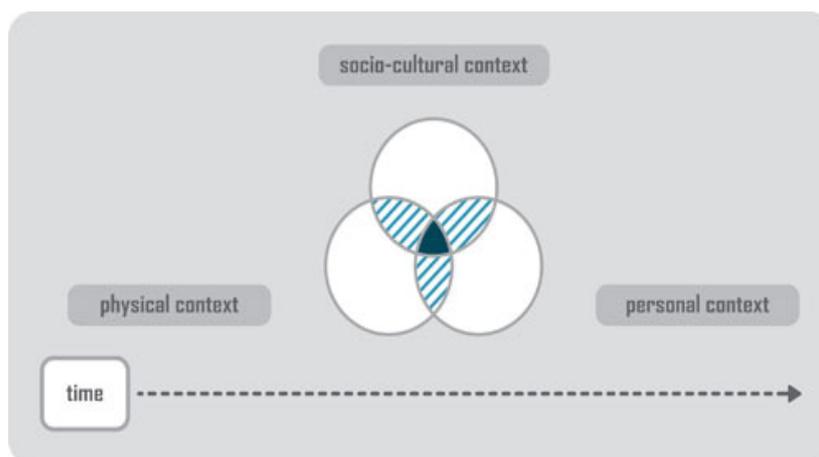


Fig.1 Contextual Model of Learning

### Research Questions:

How can museum spaces, artifacts and social media tools be used to create participatory learning experiences which are engaging and meaningful? How do young people's interactions on social media help them to engage meaningfully with museum content and make sense of their experiences? How are individual postings translated into meaningful learning trails which may have dialogic potentials?

**Research Methodology:** Case Study Method

**Research techniques:** pre/post questionnaire, observation data, semi-structured interviews, self-report videos about the visit, online posts, meaning maps, audio files during the visit and others

**Site:** Museum of London (<http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/>)

**Participants:** A Year 9 History Class (13-14 years old)

### Preliminary Analysis

Interpretation of the visit through 1. a descriptive numerical analysis of the tweets 2. a representation of the online discourse as a semantic network of posts (De Liddo et al., 2011) 3. the participants' personal accounts after the visit (semi-structured interviews)

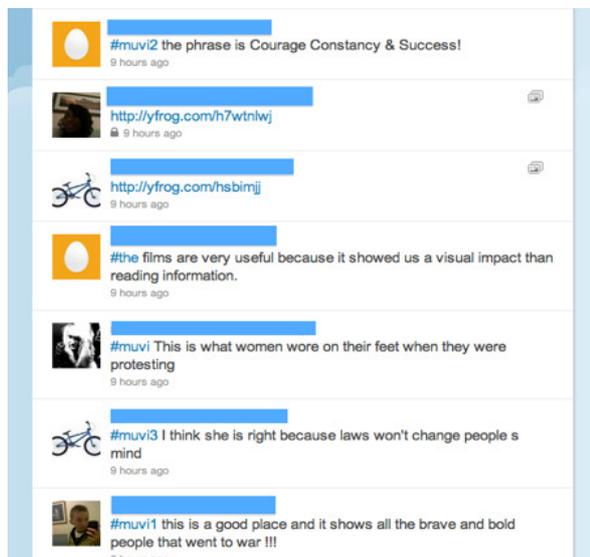
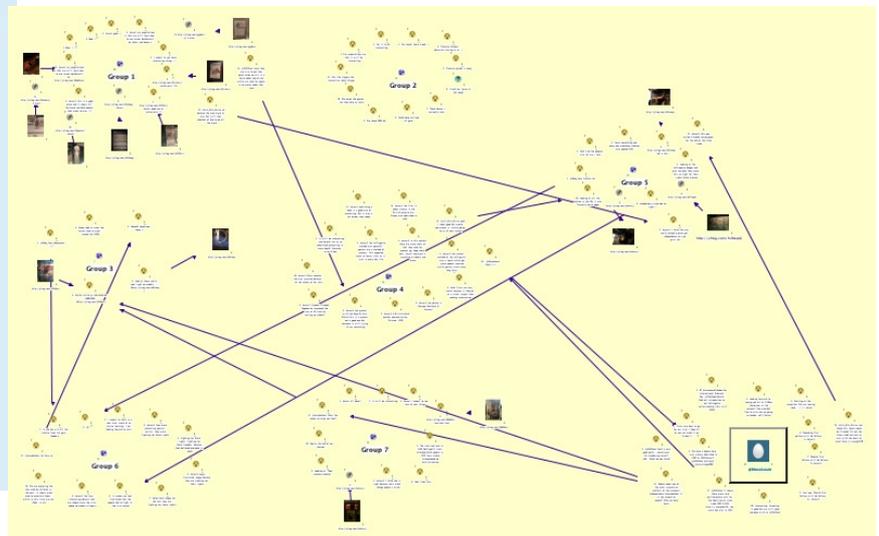


Fig. 3 Map of the tweets



## Initial Findings

- **Engaging and enjoyable experience**

(“...it was a lot more enjoyable because it was really focused and you could actually learn about something...”)

- **(Invisible) interaction among the participants**

(“You know about the Black Panther? Cos when we were at the museum I tried to find it, I couldn't find it...and then I saw the pictures and 'Ohhhh, that's what it is!' So, then I learnt about this thing”)

- **Creation of an opinion space**

(“I like that...cos you go to see other people's opinions...I mean, like, if you look at something, as I look at something, I see different things, so you can see how they interpret it”)

- **Creation of an 'inter-connected' space**

(“We were in groups, but I was feeling connected with other groups, so we were all sharing ideas over internet...we were really into it...”)

- **'Archive' space**

(“Without technology you wouldn't have remembered it and looking back at them when you can”)

## Questions for round table discussion:

Is there a role for social media in museum learning? How best to support visitor-generated content and enhance the quality of the online interactions? How to create a connection between shared experiences when visiting a museum and shared experiences via the internet? What is the nature of the relationship created and supported by web 2.0 technologies in facilitating learning among young people? How to create 'spaces' (offline and online) and conditions for young people to participate and learn?

## References

- Falk, H., J. and Dierking, D., L. (2000) *Learning from Museums. Visitors Experiences and the Making of Meaning*. AltaMira Press: Walnut Creek
- De Liddo, A., Buckinghamshire, S., Quinto, I., Bachler, M. and Cannavacciuolo, L. (2011) Discourse-centric learning analytics. In: LAK2011, 1st International Conference on Learning Analytics & Knowledge, 27 Feb-01Mar 2011, Banff, Alberta