

Museums at Night

By Sarah Gudgeon

1. Read

Museums are a great place for a night out. Well, for a week in May or October they are. The Museums at Night Festival is organised twice a year to encourage museums, art galleries and historical sites all over the UK to organise interesting and fun events in the evening. Teenagers or young adults sometimes forget about these fantastic places, especially the smaller ones in their home town. This means that some towns risk losing a part of their local history and traditions. Encouraging and welcoming visitors into museums and other exhibition centres in the evenings when people don't have to study or work can help to make these venues part of the community. So what can you do in museums when it's dark outside?

Well this year, you can see what life was like for a Victorian housekeeper or listen to a talk about skeletons for example. You can even make your own scary pumpkin or go on a ghost walk. Make sure you look at the website www.museumsatnight.org so that you can choose the best event for you and your friends. Just don't go too close to Halloween Night – that could be really scary!



2. Answer the questions.

- a. How often is the Museums at Night Festival organised?
- b. Which organisations participate in the festival?
- c. What can happen to small towns if people don't use the museums?
- d. Why is it a good idea to organise events in the evening?
- e. What can you do at the festival this year?

3. Write a list of events that you would like museums in your city to organise:

4. Webquest. Visit this website www.museumsatnight.org.uk.

- a. Are any of the events from your list on the website?
- b. Choose one event that you would like to go to and say why.

Example:

I would like to go to the TorchLit Stories event at the Palace Green Library in Durham because I love listening to scary stories!



Teacher's Notes

1. Pre-reading: Ask students to imagine what they think happens in a museum after closing time. If possible, show them a clip from the film, 'A Night at the Museum' starring Ben Stiller.

2. Answer the questions.

- a. Twice a year; in May and October
- b. Museums, art galleries and historical sites.
- c. They could lose their local history and traditions.
- d. People are free; they're not at school or work.
- e. See what life was like for a Victorian housekeeper, listen to a talk about skeletons.