*A1 Is referred to as [A1]*

1. *Is referred to as [A2]*
2. The kind of thinking behind the keywords, so to speak.
3. Uh huh.
4. So the questions will be somewhat general at the beginning, but that’s the whole idea. I mean, so starting with the natural beauty kind of setting.
5. Yeah.
6. Why were those kind of keywords picked?
7. Good question. I started with a lot of detail. So I I looked at the pictures themselves, and they are of animals and our natural sciences collections. So I started thinking, kind of, from the natural sciences angle. And I went into detail, listing what every animal was, what was in the picture. But then we spoke to [Colleague 1] last time, and I had a list of something like 50 or 60 keywords at that point. And he kind of said quality over quantity. So I got rid of those, and then thought about the angle that the audience might be coming from. And tried to make it a bit broader. And I came out with a list of 24 then.
8. Okay.
9. And I tried to think not just about the natural sciences angle. I tried to think about the photographers who would be interested in the exhibition. It’s a photography exhibition. But also that there would be other people where this would creep into their interest. So they might be out door-sy people. Who have just got an interest in wildlife. I’m not sure if wildlife is actually on there, though.
10. It is.
11. Yeah. And then your kind of outdoors. What else have we got on here? Yeah. There’s the competition element of it. And some people will just look for things like competitions. Because they’re interested in participating in things. So yeah, that’s it, really.
12. Okay. And did you exclude any keywords in the process of making this list? Were there any particular keywords you thought, “Ah, that won’t work”.
13. Yes. I can’t remember them all. I should have probably kept them. The initial keywords we’ve taken out. I’m not sure if they are too detailed. If you’re interested in beetles and dolphins they might be good keywords. But we were going for a smaller amount to start with. But the ones I did take out were the Latin names for the animals. Yeah. So I think there were one or two others, but they maybe fitted into some of these broader keywords, so I just took them out to get it under 25, really.
14. Yeah.
15. Sorry. I should have kept a list of them.
16. No. It’s not a problem. What kind of process did you follow selecting those keywords? Was it just a matter of sitting down and thinking about how the public might relate to them or other things like that? Or did you involve others in the decision-making process?
17. Yeah. So I involved the staff that were involved in the exhibition, so the curator of the exhibition and the natural sciences curators. And asked for their opinions. And they fed into this list. I also used our collections management database. Because there’s keywords behind the keywords, if you know what I mean, and I thought there might be some correlation, there might be some that fit a lot of these. And what else did I use? I looked at Twitter. And I looked at some trends. But I’m not necessarily sure that I did a very good job of that, and I should have done a bit more.
18. Okay. How did you do that? Through getting ideas through Twitter?
19. To be honest, I started with what I knew. I did it the wrong way around. I looked at these keywords and tried to kind of fit this exhibition into what was happening. But actually I should have looked at what was happening maybe a bit more and tried to fit these into that.
20. You mean the themes of specific objects and themes that are on display in the exhibition?
21. Yeah. Oh, that’s another thing that I’ve put in there, actually. These are the themes. I went to the exhibition and I walked through it with the curator of the exhibition. So portraits, miniatures, close up and head shots. I wouldn’t have thought of putting them in there until I went to the exhibition. Because I looked at all the objects individually and hadn’t looked at how they’d been grouped together for the exhibition. And then when I went there I realised that there were four main key themes. And if you’re a photographer, you’ll probably want to know about these.
22. Yeah.
23. I’ve gone off piste here a little bit. There’s not really much rhyme or reason. I just surfed a little bit!
24. Yeah. And the next thing I wanted to ask is from this list which keywords do you think are the most important? Or is it hard to rank them in terms of importance?
25. Yeah. This is what I’m kind of hoping this will do. That these keywords will then be used and it will rank them for us, basically. Because we’re at a really low starting point. I think they’re all very important. Maybe the “Museums, Culture and Art” is less important? I’m coming from our sector so I’ve put it in there. But the wider world might never look for that. They might not be interested in museums and it’s natural sciences, it doesn’t have to fit into that.
26. Yeah.
27. So, yeah, maybe “Museums, Culture, Art” leads to “Local”. Maybe. “Beauty” is very, very general. But I quite like that.
28. I have a curiosity question as well. Regarding [Artist 1]. Could you tell me a bit more about that?
29. She’s the artist. She’s the photographer.
30. Right.
31. She’s quite well known in the region. And she’s also active on Twitter. So if people are looking for her, it would be nice to kind of make sure that our content was in the mix as well.
32. Yeah.
33. Yeah. And she’s tweeting about things. And I know that when we start actively tweeting more about Natural Beauty, and putting things on Flickr, that she’ll be in there as well, having that conversation. So think it’s important that we include her.
34. Okay. Yeah. That makes perfect sense.
35. The main thing about the exhibition was that it’s all about her interpretation of the object in a very different way to what we would look at them. So, yeah. And then the photography competition comes off the back of that. Where the public can take their own photos and submit them. And that will form the second part of the exhibition next year.
36. Yeah. Yeah.
37. Yeah.
38. That’s the one that closes in September, right?
39. Yes. That’s it. Yeah.
40. Okay. Now I also have still a question about the Natural Beauty part. I have a series of questions regarding how you think the public might use those keywords. So did your decisions regarding those keywords link up to what you were thinking perhaps how some parts of the public might relate to those? You know, like for example [Artist 1] obviously would perhaps resonate with aficionados of photographic exhibitions.
41. Yeah.
42. And then regarding other keywords, was there such a thinking behind it as well?
43. I try to have quite a big emphasis on the sciences angle of it. Because I think there’s a real momentum in terms of science and social networking at the moment. And so all the kind of science; animals, insects, birds, fish, the specimens, those kind of wildlife, I tried to think about that angle. Because I do think, I know it sounds awful, but science is popular at the moment. And it’s quite cool.
44. So which kind of publics do you think might relate to those? Do you have specific interest groups in mind who might relate to those keywords?
45. The photographers, the scientists. Joe Bloggs public a bit more these days. Because it is more popular. And then the outdoors and wildlife people. Maybe the gardeners. Maybe the ramblers. Maybe the bloggers about wildlife and science. That’s probably about as far as my thinking went.
46. And in what context do you think these keywords relate to those publics? I mean, do you think it’s strictly in the range of the exhibition? Or might it go beyond that?
47. I would hope it would go beyond. Because they’re really quite broad. Instead of taking all of these individual objects, I say objects because that’s what we call them, and we’ve grouped them into animals, insects, birds and fish. And I would imagine that people would use those in their tweets and their searches. I don’t know. I’m not sure if I’m getting the question properly, to be honest.
48. No. It’s perfectly on target.
49. You can see the definite groups, though. You’ve got the photography, the camera this year. You have got some of the museums. I mean, specimen, for example, is probably more science and museums related than Joe Bloggs or wildlife. Yeah. I’m not sure about “Eggs”. But we’ve got quite a lot of shots of eggs in there.
50. Yeah. But you’re right, I mean, these key words in the process of looking for them we obviously get refined. Some might have results, or they might not. So of course it’s not something definitive, by any means. I mean, this afternoon we’ll have the chance to talk about that more, I imagine.
51. Yeah.
52. So then we can go to the “My Learning” keywords. So very much kind of similar questions to start with. What led to the picking of those particular ones?
53. That would be me! Okay. Well I guess My Learning is a website for teachers and for learners. And it’s based on museum collections. So it’s kind of based on museum objects. The stories behind those objects. How they relate to the curriculum. Drawing something out of them that is relevant to teachers. So looking at Twitter in particular, there’s two communities that I see it fitting into, and the first is teachers. I see that teachers are quite active on Twitter. There’s a lot of teaching-related Twitter accounts with a lot of activity, who do similar things to us, so promote their own resources, basically. A lot of it based on seasonal, topical things. Things in the news that you can relate to the curriculum. That sort of thing. So there’s really big players in that kind of arena. And then our other side is our museum side, and how we fit into museums and arts and culture. We’ve got content from how many museums? 300-ish? 200?
54. More now. Yeah.
55. Maybe about 300 cultural institutions. Museums, libraries, archives have content on our website. So they have an investment in the website as well. These contributors. And we feed into other museum-y type stuff. Like digital museums, things. And other activities that museums are doing. So I see them as two areas and two fairly different conversations that we’re feeding into. So the museums community and then schools and teachers as well. So that’s where the keywords have come from. And I guess most of them fit into those categories. But some of them are quite active, so things like “Explore”, “Story”, “Activity”, “Engage”, “Interactive”, and these are the kind of words that I see just from following our own feed. So similar organisations and from seeing what other people are doing. And I notice that when I tweet, these are the words that I’m trying to use to get people involved. And I don’t know how much teachers use them, or how much they would search something like that, but that’s the reasoning behind them. And then things like “On this day”. So sometimes we relate things to something that’s happened historically on that date. So it’s all about trying to relate content we have when we’re trying to share it with people. It’s trying to relate it to something topical. So that’s why that’s on there. “Teaching”, teachers again like I said. “Class”, “Topic”, I should have “Curriculum” on there really. But I don’t. But again words specifically related to teachers and how they might look for content. And then “Heritage”, “Galleries”, “Culture”, “Art”, “Museums”, that’s the other side of it.
56. Okay. And in choosing those keywords, how did the process go on? Did you consult with other people?
57. To be honest, a lot of it was just what came into my head when I sat down and thought about it. I’m the main tweeter on this account. So this is just from thinking about, I guess, what I think people are looking for and what the conversations we need to be in are. Whether we’re in them or not is another thing, but these are just the things that immediately came to mind within those two categories. So our peers, our contributors, the way we fit into museums and then the audience, I guess, that we’re trying to reach as well.
58. Can I interrupt there? My learning is Teachers’ Panel. So a group of teachers that feed into the website to make sure that we’ve got the right content on there. That it’s written in the correct way, etcetera. But they’ve been really busy at the moment with the big project, the Marks & Spencers archive project. So we haven’t wanted to ask them additional stuff. And I think probably we would have asked them about the words they would use in a search, and I think maybe we will ask them, because we’re meeting them at the end of April.
59. Okay.
60. And we’ll have a full day there. Where we do things like this. We’ll have activities with them and look at resources. So I think we’ll add this to the agenda. And go through that with them then. It’s just we haven’t been able to beforehand, have we? Because they’ve been so busy.
61. Uh huh.
62. Okay. Okay. Perfect. And did you exclude any keywords from this list for some reason?
63. Well, “Curriculum”, because I wanted to put that in and I forgot. Not really. I guess I was thinking that there are two subject areas on here, which is science and history. I could have filled it with other curriculum areas, but I’m kind of tapping into the fact that like [A1] said we need to be involved in current conversations. So like [A1] said, there’s a lot of talk about science. At the moment it’s National Science and Engineering Week this week. So Twitter is full, well my feed is full, of people talking about science, and talking about how they’re going to get kids excited about science this particular week. That’s what I was talking about with making things topical. So that’s maybe why science got on there. And some of the other curriculum areas, that I could have just listed, haven’t made it on there. The other one is history. Being that a lot of the contents from museums, a lot of our content, fits into the history curriculum. So that’s kind of why that’s on there. And then “Arts” and “Art” as well. There was no deep thinking behind that, other than what I know from the website, what I know we have. When people are having conversations about history and science and things we have a lot of resources we can feed into that. That’s maybe the reason why some of the other subject areas didn’t make it onto the list.
64. Okay.
65. I don’t feel like we’re as relevant to those conversations. I think those were the only things that I actively excluded. Everything else we got to writing it and it was a list.
66. Oh, okay. So things that are on the school curriculum but don’t really resonate with the core activities of the Museum Discovery Centre, basically?
67. Well, because my learning is not specific to here. My learning is a national website. So when I talked about the 300 contributors, that’s 300 museums, art galleries, libraries, some of which are Yorkshire based but a lot are more wide-ranging. And they’ve all given us content. Which we post on the website. So it is a more national resource than a localised thing. But I guess just because a lot of the content we’ve worked with is museum object, it naturally fitted more into history conversations and science conversations when you look at rocks, archaeology, geology, that sort of side of museums things. It fits into a lot of other things as well, but they were just the main things that I thought of.
68. We could have gone into a lot of detail with this if we hadn’t been trying to stick within 25 keywords. Because for example there’s areas of the resources that we know fit directly into the curriculum. “Houses and Homes”. Key Stage 2 teachers teach that. Well, until the recent changes to the curriculum, teach this every year to every class, or to every Year 2, 3 class, is it?
69. Yeah.
70. And we know that that’s a really well used resource. And it’s a topic that they would probably search, “Houses and homes”. Also, “Tudors”. Also, “Greeks”, “Romans”, “Egyptian Mummies”. And we could have gone into so much detail, because there’s so much content on there. It’s just we didn’t. I mean, maybe we’ll find that those would be the better word, but also the curriculum has just changed. So we’re keen not to focus on what’s already happened. Because they were teaching Houses and Homes, and they were teaching this. We need to find out a bit more about what they’re going to be teaching in the future. And then maybe change it to that.
71. Uh huh. Yes.
72. Okay. So you mentioned that the kind of public stuff, the My Learning, really targets. So if I understood correctly, there’s a 100 teaching kind of community?
73. Yes.
74. And on the other hand, a more kind of museums-oriented community?
75. Yeah.
76. I would say so.
77. In the teaching community is it prominent tweeting teachers or more a collective?
78. I don’t know. There’s a lot of big teaching communities. There’s things like the TES. Which is a magazine, but also they have about five or six different Twitter accounts. They’re very active. They get a lot of feedback. So they publish resources and things, like we do. Or they highlight resources that they have to their community. But they also do a lot of other general education chat. Which is something that perhaps isn’t as relevant to us. So they’ll talk about things that apply to teaching, like new government policies, that sort of thing. The nitty gritty of it. Like there was lots of talk yesterday because there’s going to be a strike. In June or July, I think. There’s going to be a teaching strike. So lots of people are talking about that. So we’re not as relevant to that. We’re resources. We’re content. Rather than educational chatter. But there does seem to be a lot of talk that we need to be in, I think.
79. Yeah.
80. Yeah.
81. Okay. So right. And in terms of content, how does that kind of feed into teaching communities? Is that related to the resources you have at the museum that could possibly be used by teachers to teach? Or is there any other way other than that?
82. That’s what we’ve been doing. But I mean, our reach isn’t particularly big at the moment. It’s a small Twitter account. So I think we need to think of ways to engage more, perhaps. I don’t know. I think we are sometimes just firing things out. You need to have a conversation. So we need to look at that, but I don’t know, I think our strength really is our content and what we’re offering, and how we can bring extra things into the classroom for teachers. How we can help them plan exciting lessons and bring subjects to life. I think that’s our big selling point, is the masses of content and nice images that we’ve got from museums. And we’re kind of bringing it all together and giving it to teachers. So I think that’s our main thing.
83. You do make it relevant to what’s happening in the bigger world. Like the other day was International Women’s Day, so [A2] tweeted from the museums and My Learning, and she would find the content that was relevant to that theme at the time. But I don’t know. My Learning’s a tough one, isn’t it?
84. Yeah. I think it is.
85. We’re not quite sure. We’re not getting out there. Because there’s some good content on there. It’s just figuring out what’s going on.
86. In terms of engaging publics; what are the challenges that you have faced? For example for the My Learning, which is trickier?
87. Again it’s trying to be relevant. So without being in it, and knowing the absolute ins and outs of what people might be teaching at this time of year, as [A1] mentioned what topics people are still doing, whether that’s going to change, you know, we all know a certain amount, but it’s not particularly being at the heart of that community that is the challenge sometimes. It’s trying to second guess what people want and what people are going to find useful. And a lot of the time you’re putting things out that for 90% of your followers maybe it’s not going to be relevant to them today. But for a couple of them it might be, “Oh, that’s just what I was looking for”. So I think that’s the main one. We have a bit of dialogue and we have a lot of followers who are from the museums community. Who have different kinds of conversations which aren’t necessarily not relevant, but it maybe doesn’t suit the purpose of why we’re tweeting. If you see what I mean.
88. Yeah. Okay.
89. The other thing is that My Learning is so broad teaching. We cover every curriculum area, and actually it’s only a very, very small part of [A2]’s job, and it’s only [A2] doing it. We’re hoping these tools will make this easier, so that we can reach more with less.
90. Less resource?
91. Yeah. I understand. And have I asked you what you deem the most important ones? I can’t remember.
92. No. You didn’t. But okay. I guess, well looking at them now they’re very broad. But I think people would look for things like “Interactive”. “Science”, “History”, “Activity”, “Object”, a lot of what we have is based around museum objects. “Learning”, “Teaching”, “Teachers”, I think they’re the ones possibly that are more to do with where we want to be. Rather than where we are.
93. Okay. Why is that so?
94. Because we have a very specific target audience, and those words are more to do with that area.
95. They’re more likely to come up in tweets. If they’re using it for educational work, you’re more likely to use the word “teach” in your tweets. Maybe you’re actually looking for a science worksheet. But you might put, “I teach science. I’m looking for science worksheets”. And that “Teach” word might come up over and over again. And it’s the same with “Learning” as well. You know? “My kids are learning about”, so they’re broader. I think they’re a good choice. And the curriculum areas too. Sorry, butting in there.
96. No. That’s fine.
97. Let’s see. I think we have covered everything that I needed to cover. Okay. I think I’ve got a pretty good kind of feel of what the thinking behind those were. Do you have anything else to mention that wasn’t mentioned?
98. I don’t think so. We might remember something. But can we ask you questions? Is what we’ve said what you were thinking?
99. Well I didn’t have any kind of anticipation in terms of what you were going to say, because my job in this research project is largely to observe and document at this stage what kind of input you guys are bringing to this, and also what is our role as well. So I’ve tried to minimise the amount of premade conceptions that I will have.
100. Okay. Okay. Yeah.
101. Do you have any other questions?
102. No. I don’t think so at the moment. I’m sure we’ll have a lot more questions after this afternoon, though.