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A Tale of Technology and Collaboration

Preparing for 21st-Century
Museum Visitors

Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn,
and Hitomi Yoshida

Reader Guide by:
Lynn Baum & Kimberly McCray

With contributions by:
The MER Editorial Team

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In *A Tale of Technology and Collaboration: Preparing for 21st-Century Museum Visitors*, authors Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn, and Hitomi Yoshida share their work with readers—a project that demonstrates how museum professionals can successfully develop and implement a set of multi-modal, multi-layered sessions that are anchored by an interactive digital learning experience.

Utilizing content experts, educators, collections, and “live video chat technology,” Mitchell, Linn, and Yoshida of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Penn Museum) worked with a Delaware high school. They used live virtual programs as a vehicle to connect in-classroom, hands-on learning to on-site museum experiences.

This Reader Guide encourages us to use Mitchell, Linn, and Yoshida’s work as an example, a foundation from which to think about our own aspirations (and our institution’s goals) as it relates to interactive virtual learning (IVL) programs offered by museums.

The questions below have been adapted and expanded upon from the four that were included in the article. We invite you to use them to think about this work in further detail and to reflect how you/your museum can create virtual learning experiences that will expand the reach of your practice and meet the educational demand for the 21st-century.

1. Understanding the learning needs of your communities, what content can you activate that will support them through the use of interactive virtual learning (IVL) programs?

- To both strengthen and support the impact of the IVL component, what materials, objects are available to travel to partnering sites?
- What digitized content that is available?

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2. In addition to your skilled interpreters and educators, who might add their knowledge to the program?

- In what ways are your curators or researchers available?
- Who else works with your curators and researchers that could support this project?
- Who are your source communities and how could you involve them?

3. How can museum educators use their pedagogical and interpretive expertise to assist content experts?

- How can museum educators help content experts improve their practice by deepening their understanding of collaborative and participatory learning, both online and onsite?

4. What technology can facilitate your interactive virtual learning programs and is accessible to your participating communities?

- What additional training might be necessary for the staff involved?
- Who are your partners? Who might you like to partner with?

5. What age audiences makes sense for your museum to collaborate with: schools, community centers, senior centers, other non-profit organizations?

- Who at these sites will be your contact and working partner?