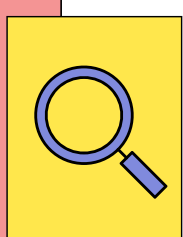


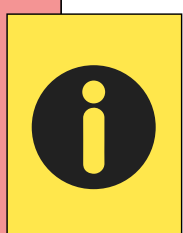
I Wonder Why... Context Is Important

In Museums and Exhibits

Context and presentation of artifacts is essential to our understanding of history.



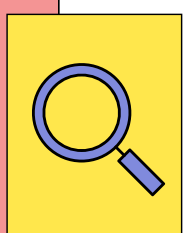
When we look at a museum exhibit, we don't only see the historical artifacts on display! Even if we don't notice it, we take in the surroundings and apply the information that we gather from them to help us understand. By setting the scene, museums can help us see history.



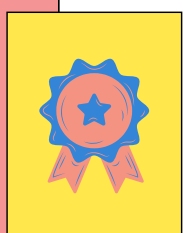
Signage can give context that visual cues may not be able to. They can explain how machines and devices were used if we can't be shown, and tell us why relics and their placements are significant, these are all important to the context of artefacts.



The presentation of an exhibit must be interesting, if we are not engaged then we are less likely to learn. If a artifact is placed alone in a plain display next to a display with a scene, relative artifacts and guest interaction; the second is more appealing to guests and they are more likely to engage.



Association is also key to context. If guests can relate an exhibit to their daily lives, it makes the history behind the artifacts concise and simple to understand and engage with. This can be done by forming comparisons, inviting guests to take part in activities and using familiar features or characters to portray the history.



Many museums, notably living museums, use coreographed sequences to help take guests "back in time" and allow them to exist within the history rather than appearing to be on the outside looking in. This allows guests to see first hand how we interacted with the relics they are viewing. Participation creates context.



Combine It All!

By combining all of these elements, museums can show us where history comes from, why it happened, who was involved, what caused it and so much more.

Without this information, we would be unable to properly understand the history we are being shown resulting in an inability to learn efficiently.

These elements create **context**. Without context we can not **learn**.