



Appendix G

Glossary

Accessioned: Objects which have completed the formal act of being recorded as an addition to the museum collection. Accessioned objects will be marked with an accession number.

Abstract Concepts: An idea that does not have a tangible or easily observable representation. Often, they can be perceived differently relative to one's perspective or experience. Examples include time, distance, value.

Archival Records: A document that is part of an archive collection that records information about past human activities. May include contemporary and period images (photographs, drawings, charts, plans, maps, etc.), books, oral history recordings, theme-related or site-related archival records.

Artifact: An object that is part of a museum collection which shows human workmanship or modification, as distinguished from a natural object (specimen); may include archival records.

Behavioural Engagement: Student engagement as demonstrated through adherence to expectations and participation in activities and discussion.

Building: Buildings are an important part of interpretation at sites, particularly historic sites where buildings are historic or represent a period in history. Some buildings are purpose built to reflect a theme or support an interpretive function.

Chaperone: Adults who accompany students on a field trip other than the classroom teacher. Chaperones can include, but are not limited to, other teachers, EAs (Education Assistants), parents and grandparents. Different school boards and different grade levels have different requirements for how many chaperones must accompany a group on a field trip.

Cognitive Engagement: Student engagement as demonstrated through a desire to expand the knowledge gained in a lesson and build a further understanding independently. Those who display cognitive engagement demonstrate critical thinking and see failure as an acceptable part of learning.

Collection: The accessioned objects owned by the museum or archives.

Critical Thinking: High level thinking that uses a number of strategies to assess a problem in a logical and balanced way. Effectively, it is stopping to reflect on an idea based on a deeper consideration of the many factors and perspectives that influence it.

Critical Thinking Skills: Strategies that can be used to facilitate higher level thinking about an idea.

Emotional Engagement: Student engagement as demonstrated through a displayed interest or comfort with the task at hand and the learning environment.

Engagement: Engagement in school programs is how students are involved, immersed and take “ownership” for the information being presented. As engagement increases so does participating and critical thinking. This toolbox encourages museums to consider three main types of engagement: behavioural, emotional and cognitive

Exhibit: Interpretive displays which include panels, labels, cases, signage, audio-visual, multimedia (computers, electronics, internet initiatives, etc.). Most exhibits include a combination of objects and text. Exhibits can be permanent, temporary or travelling.

Facilitation: The process of guiding those participating in an activity. Facilitators ensure that a program meets each stated outcome, accommodates the needs of each participant, and they act as a “sounding board” for participants’ ideas and connections to the material.

First-Hand Experience: Interaction in which the visitor engages with something. This engagement can be with interpreters (personal or audio/digital tours, demonstrations, theatre); hands-on/interactive interpretation; costumed presentations; activity sheets; discovery rooms. Interpretive programming can be designed for school visitations or for the general public.

Formal Learning: Learning that has goals, outcomes, and evaluations defined by an instructor with the learner intentionally being introduced to specific knowledge. This type of learning is often attributed to classrooms and structured learning environments.

Hands-on, Minds-on: Using physical exploration and manipulation of objects to encourage educational engagement in an activity. For example, touching an artifact while completing a worksheet that encourages critical thinking.

Heritage Skills: Activities done in the past as part of everyday life but that is no longer done, or done now as more of a novelty than a regular activity. These can be excellent ‘hands-on, minds-on’ activities that are object-based and have participants reflect on how technology has changed and how it has stayed the same (for example, blacksmithing, churning butter, carding and spinning wool, baking bread).

ICI: Innovation, Collections and Infrastructure are the three sections that make up ICI. ICI supports Nova Scotia Museum sites in the areas of interpretation, collections, and infrastructure.

IMP: The Nova Scotia Interpretive Master Plan (IMP) represents the work undertaken by the provinces’ Heritage Division to identify significant stories and values inherent in the provincial cultural and natural landscape. It sets out a series of best practices, goals and objectives, as well as strategies and recommendations that direct interpretive renewal.

Inclusive: Programs are considered inclusive if they are made available to participants with varying backgrounds, abilities, and needs. They should be easily adaptable to accommodate all visitors.

Informal Learning: Learning that is not based on a rigidly structured plan. It generally takes place spontaneously, with the learner taking ownership over what is learned and how. Informal learning can be facilitated to a degree by giving learners a choice in their actions and control over the subject matter to elaborate on ideas as their interest dictates.

In Situ: An object in its original place and context (for example, fossils still embedded in a cliff, an artifact found in a historic house).

Intangible: Something that is unable to be physically seen, manipulated, or that is difficult to define. Abstract concepts can sometimes be described as intangible.

Intangible Heritage Objects: Heritage objects that cannot be physically manipulated, seen or may be difficult to define however represent an important aspect of a heritage. These can be described as the living aspects of heritage and can include songs, music, stories, language, expressions, smells, dance, etc.

Intellect: A trait associated with the ability of an individual to reason and understand concepts objectively. It is often demonstrated through content knowledge and the ability to think critically about that knowledge.

Interpretation: A dynamic communication process designed for audiences to reveal meaning, relationships, and appreciation of cultural and natural heritage. Interpretation enhances understanding through media/activities including but not limited to: exhibits, first-hand experiences, objects, buildings, landscapes and websites.

Interpretive Working Group (IWG): The Interpretive Working Group is made up of members from NSM, ICI and Nova Scotia Archives, Museums and Libraries. The purpose of this group is to provide a collective, collaborative and consistent approach to interpretation, focusing primarily on the NSM sites. The IWG has several sub-committees, including the Education Sub-Committee, who produced this toolbox document.

IPP (Individual Program Plan): An individualized plan created to support a student's success in school. These plans indicate the adaptations required to ensure a student has the opportunity to be an active participant in all activities and to cater to their strengths and needs.

Landscape: Landscapes can help to interpret a museum's natural and cultural history, habitats, and land use (agriculture, mining, etc.). Landscapes can be further interpreted through trails, panels, signage, print media and guided hikes.

Lifelong Learning: Learning that happens throughout the course of a person's lifetime. It can be formal (through structured lessons), informal (through conversations and experiences), intentional, and/or incidental.

NSM: The Nova Scotia Museum which contains 28 provincial sites.

Object: Objects are the basis or stepping off point for interpretation. They can include tangible and intangible objects. Tangible objects can be artifacts and specimens in the collection or in exhibits as complete objects. They can also be representative of another object such as illustrations, pictures of an artifact or specimen. Objects can also be props used to support (and sometimes be used in lieu) of collections artifacts and specimens. Intangible objects can be presented as complete objects or experiences, such as song, language, dance, music, etc. Intangible objects can also be presented through a representative object (for example, fiddle to represent music) or archival records such as paper documents, videos, sound recordings or images.

Object-Based Learning: The use of objects in an activity as a medium for exploration and discovery. Through the manipulation and examination of objects, learners are encouraged to think critically about their purpose, importance, and the story that they tell.

Open-Ended Questions: Questions that can be answered in a number of ways, giving the opportunity for deeper consideration and critical thinking. They encourage the learner to draw upon their own knowledge and experiences to provide a thoughtful response.

Primary Source: A first-hand account, original record, or physical object that provides novel information about a person, place, process, or event. Oral histories, objects, photographs, documents such as newspapers, ledgers, census records, diaries, journals, and inventories are examples of primary sources.

School Program: An experience designed specifically for students to meet their specific learning needs, including addressing curriculum outcomes.

Specific Curriculum Outcomes (SCOs): Specific curriculum outcomes (SCOs) are written by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development as specific goals for teachers to include in their curriculum.

Specimen: A natural object, including rock, mineral, fossil, animal, or plant material, as distinguished from an object made or modified by human actions (artifact).

Student: In this toolbox students refer to those attending school from primary to grade 12. Younger (pre-school) and older (college, university, graduate) youth may also be considered students but this toolbox only addresses those in P-12.

Student-Centered Learning: A teaching strategy that provides students with control over what and how they learn. There can be varying degrees of student-centered learning, depending on the amount of control that the educator is willing to give up. It does not necessarily mean that there should be no structure to a lesson, merely a more flexible one. The main idea behind this style of instruction is giving students choice and ownership over what they are learning.

Tangible: An object or concept which is able to be directly related through touch or experience.

Tour: The process of an interpreter guiding visitors around a site while talking about what visitors are seeing. Tours are often less interactive than programs and hence not always effective school program activities.

Website and Online Initiatives: Audiences can access museum interpretation via the internet on museum websites, virtual exhibits, and social media. These extend the range of museum users to a general broader awareness of museum resources. Museums using website and online initiatives for school programming should be aware that many schools have firewalls which block access to specific websites. Amongst the sites most often blocked include social media websites like Facebook and Twitter.

Working Collection: Accessioned artifacts or specimens which collections staff have designed as objects that can be operated or handled by staff, volunteers, and the public and that, ultimately, may be expendable. They must fulfill a program need, be appropriate to the program, be demonstrated to be expendable (for example, a duplicate with no defined purpose, over representation in the collection), be safe to use and not contravene legislation (for example, firearms). Should be denoted in accession number by 'W.'