

## SECTION FOUR

### TEACHERS' USE OF MUSEUMS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This section considers how teachers use museums, and reviews the responses to Q.20 – 25 in Form A. In the case-studies and focus groups combined, a total of 31 teachers were interviewed, and insights from these purposeful conversations are integrated into the discussions below, throwing a powerful light on the way in which teachers use museum resources and the way teachers link museums and the curriculum.

The first part of Section 4 deals with general questions. The Teachers' Questionnaire asked whether schools made regular use of cultural organisations, whether this was the first visit to this museum with a school group, and whether the teacher completing the form had organised the visit themselves. The teachers' use of museums over the preceding two years was the subject of Q.21, with sub-questions about visiting (as a teacher), borrowing objects and using on-line resources. These questions have been analysed by Key Stage. In discussions with teachers about their use of museums, these issues were also examined. Here, we found that teachers were sometimes experienced and flexible users of museums, but were sometimes using museums in rather unimaginative ways, and this may link to the maturity of the local museum education service.

The second part of this Section concerns the relationship of the work done to the curriculum, and the themes that teachers use museums to address. While the bulk of teachers continue to use museums for historical themes, there have been some changes since the previous study, with teachers' use of museums being much more open-ended and cross-curricular. The percentage of teachers using museums in an interdisciplinary way has increased enormously. Teachers told us that museum visits enhance the curriculum, sometimes in unexpected ways, and that while the curriculum does not always drive the use of museums (and this has fallen slightly since 2003) there is generally something that can be linked if needed. In comparison with 2003, teachers seemed more relaxed and open-minded about the generative potential of museums, and this is probably linked to shifts in government approaches to the curriculum and to the potential of partners external to schools.

## 4.1 Teachers' use of museums and other cultural organisations

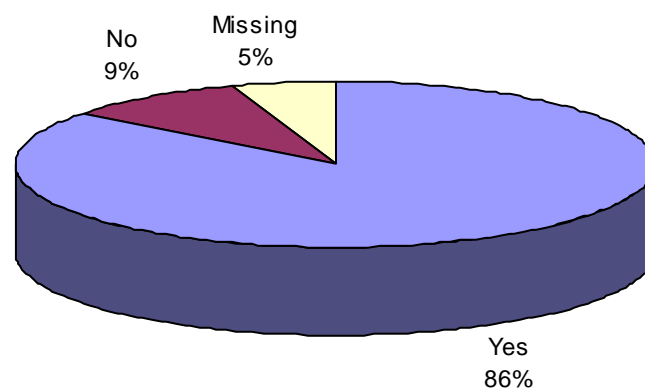
In the Teachers' Questionnaire (Form A) there were a number of questions asking about the ways in which teachers used museums. We were also able to use the three focus groups and three case-study visits to probe issues raised from the 2003 quantitative data.

◆ Q.24: 'Does your school make regular visits to cultural organisations?'

Evidence from *What did you learn at the museum today?* 2003 revealed that 85% of the teachers surveyed came from schools that made regular visits to cultural organisations.

The findings were very similar for the 2005 study with 86% of teachers responding that their school uses cultural organisations on a regular basis.

**Fig 4.1a: Form A, Q.24: 'Does your school make regular visits to cultural organisations?', 2005**

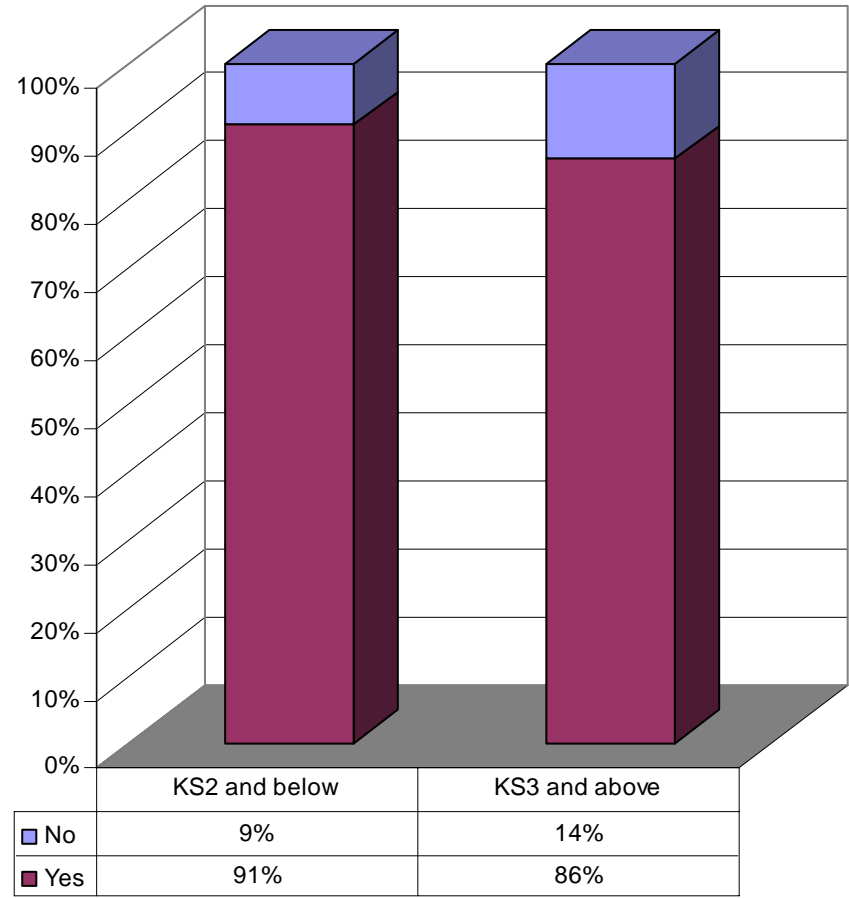


Base: all teachers' responses to Q.24: 'Does your school make regular visits to cultural organisations?', 2005 (1632)

Comparing the 2005 data by museum Phase, only a very small statistically insignificant difference was found between teachers visiting the Phase 1 and the Phase 2 museums.

There was, however, a difference when the 2005 data was compared across the Key Stages. Teachers of KS2 and below pupils were more likely to make regular visits to cultural organisations (91%) than teachers of KS3 and above (86%). In conversations with teachers, and evidence from elsewhere in the quantitative data, it was found that on the whole teachers of KS2 and below pupils were more likely to use museums to support their work.

Fig 4.1b: Form A, Q.24: 'Does your school make regular visits to cultural organisations?', by Key Stage, 2005



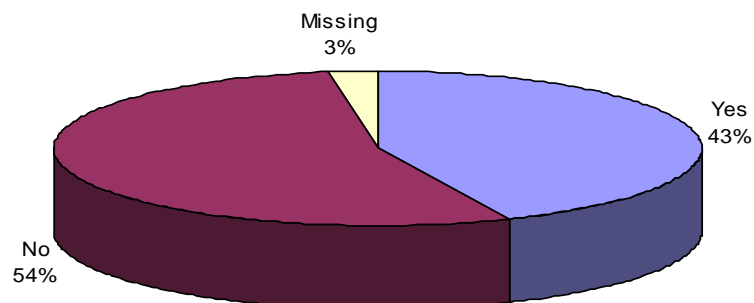
Base: all teachers' responses to Q.24: 'Does your school make regular visits to cultural organisations?' by Key Stage, mixed and 'missing' categories excluded, 2005 (1320 KS2 and below, 197 KS3 and above)

## 4.2 First visits to museums

### ◆ Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?'

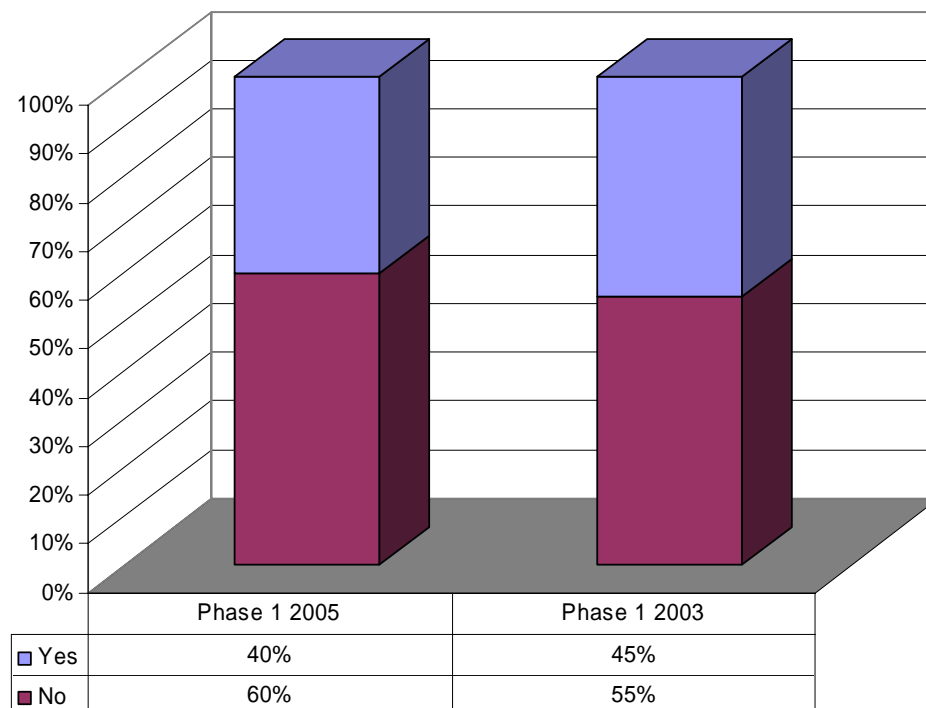
In the 2003 study, it was found that 45% of the teachers visiting the Phase 1 museums in September and October 2003 were using that museum for the first time. This did not mean that these teachers had not used museums before but it did suggest that one of the impacts of Renaissance funding was to attract new teachers to the Phase 1 museums. In the 2005 study it was found that results were comparable to the first study, with 43% of teachers indicating that it was the first time they had visited that museum with a class.

**Fig 4.2a: Form A, Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?', 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?', 2005 (1632)

**Fig 4.2b: Form A, Q.24 and Q.20: is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?, Phase 1 museums, 2003 and 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?', in Phase 1 museums, 2005 and all teachers' responses Q.24: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?', 2003 (755 Phase 1 museums 2005, 922 Phase 1 museums 2003)

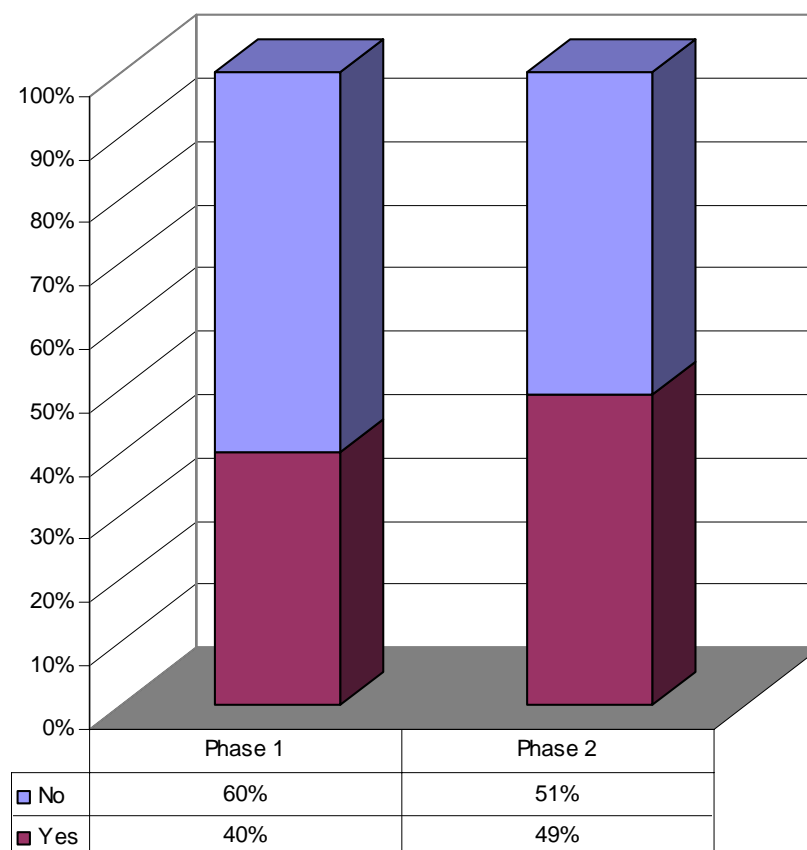
Given that the 2003 study involved the Phase 1 museums only, it makes sense to compare the 2003 study as a whole with the data from the Phase 1 museums in 2005. Looking at Phase 1 museums in 2005, it can be seen that the number of new teachers visiting these museums has declined slightly from 45% in 2003 to 40% in 2005, however this is not a statistically significant difference.<sup>1</sup>

However, it may suggest that the increased relationships which have been built with schools as a result of Renaissance funding may have encouraged greater numbers of teachers to make repeat visits.

<sup>1</sup> There is not a significant difference between teachers being on a first visit to the museum by Phase 1 museums in 2003 and 2005 ('missing' excluded). Chi square with continuity correction (degrees of freedom 1, n= 1669)=3.63, p 0.06 (>0.05).

When comparing the 2005 data in relation to first visits across the Phase 1 and Phase 2 museums it can be seen that there are more first visits made by teachers to the Phase 2 museums in 2005. In total, 49% of teachers visiting Phase 2 museums responded that it was their first visit to that museum with a class compared to 40% of teachers visiting Phase 1 museums. Phase 2 museums appear to be extending their reach into schools considerably.

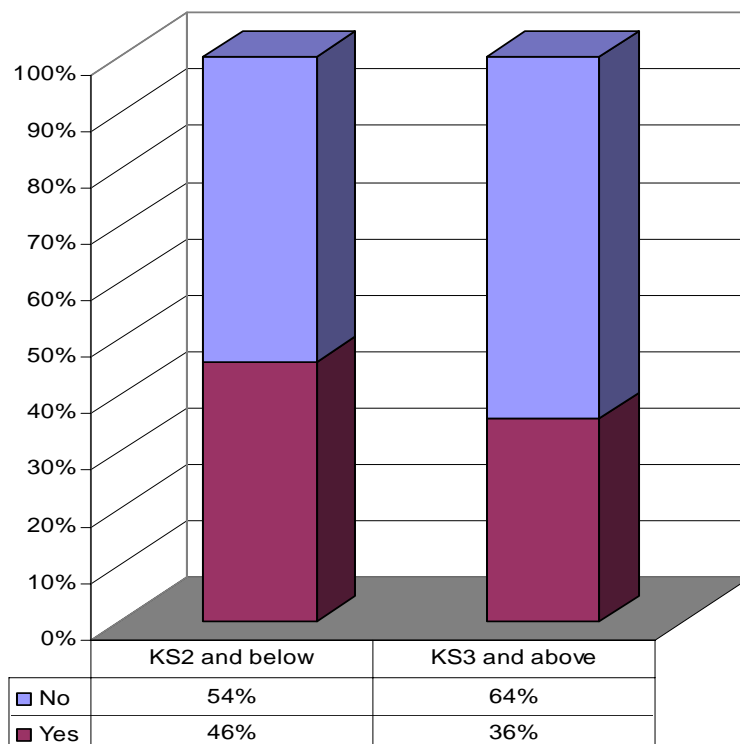
**Fig 4.2c: Form A, Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?' by Phase 1 and Phase 2 museums, 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?' by Phase, 2005 (755 Phase 1 museums, 833 Phase 2 museums)

Looking across the teachers visiting by Key Stage it can be seen that 46% of teachers making their first visit were teachers of KS2 and below compared to 36% of teachers of KS3 and above. This is a significant<sup>2</sup> difference. The challenges faced by KS3 and above teachers in taking pupils to museums were raised in the focus groups. These include the constraints of secondary timetabling, and the need to accommodate often large groups, including whole year groups, which presented a challenge for teachers and museums alike in organising visits.

**Fig 4.2d: Form A, Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?' by Key Stage, 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.20: 'Is this your first visit (as a teacher) to this museum with a class?' by Key Stage (1359 KS2 and below, 200 KS3 and above)

<sup>2</sup> Proportion of KS 2 and below and KS 3 and above pupils visiting shows a significant difference by first visit, 2005. Chi square with continuity correction (degrees of freedom 1, n= 1559)=7.24, p 0.006 (<0.05).

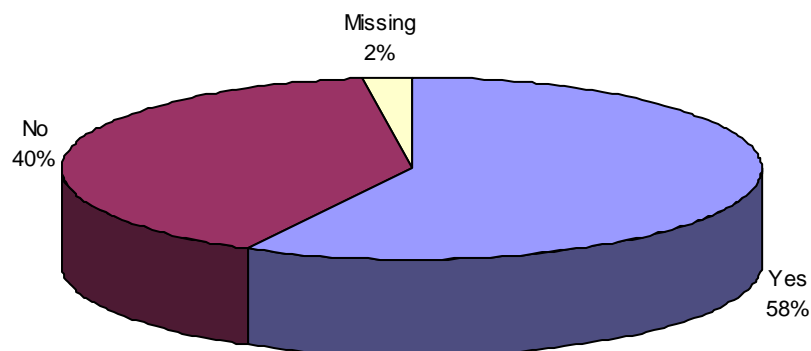
### 4.3 Organising the visit

#### ◆ Q.21: 'Did you organise this visit?'

The data from the first study in 2003 indicated that 62% of teachers completing the questionnaire organised the visit to the museum themselves.

From the data supplied by teachers as part of the 2005 study it appears that the majority of teachers continue to organise the visit to the museum themselves (58%). There was no significant difference between teachers across the Phase 1 and Phase 2 museums or by primary and secondary teachers.

**Fig 4.3a: Form A, Q.21: 'Did you organise this visit?', 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.21: 'Did you organise this visit?', 2005 (1632)

#### 4.4 The use of museums in the past two years

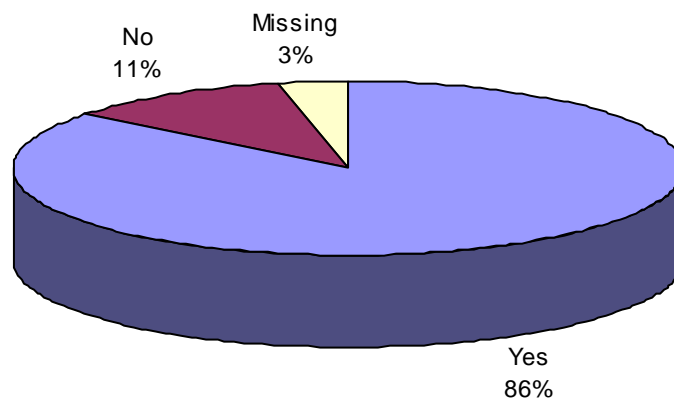
- ◆ Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) visited a museum, used on-line museums resources or borrowed an object or handling box from a museum?'

This question asked teachers to review their use of museums over the past two years. This question was added to the questionnaire for 2005 at the request of MLA, so no comparisons could be made with the first study. The qualitative data gathered through focus groups and case-studies supported the quantitative findings.

- ◆ Visited a museum (other than today)?

A large number of teachers who completed the questionnaire had visited a museum other than the museum they visited at the time of the research in the past two years, 86% of the total.

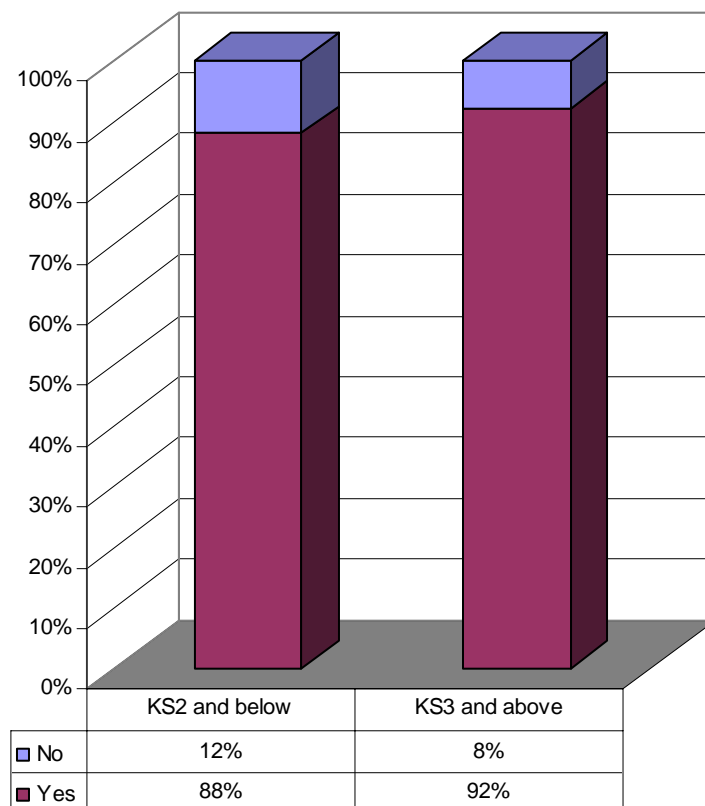
**Fig 4.4a: Form A, Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) visited a museum?', 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) visited a museum?', 2005 (1632)

Despite making fewer visits to museums, KS3 and above teachers were slightly more likely to have visited a museum in the past two years, 92% responded 'yes' compared to 88% of KS2 and below teachers. This is interesting as it seems to contradict the finding that teachers of KS2 and below are more likely to visit museums (and other cultural organisations), as based on the findings from Q.24 which shows the larger volume of visits made by such teachers during the research period. It may mean that those KS3 and above teachers that do use museums use them in a consistent manner.

**Fig 4.4b: Form A, Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) visited a museum (other than today)?' by Key Stage, 2005**

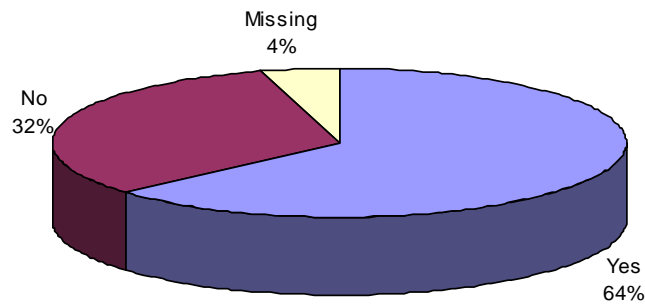


Base: all teachers' responses to Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) visited a museum?', 2005 by Key Stage (1320 KS2 and below, 197 KS3 and above)

◆ Used on-line museum resources?

Overall, 64% of teachers had used on-line museum resources in the past two years.

**Fig 4.4c: Form A, Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) used on-line museum resources?', 2005**

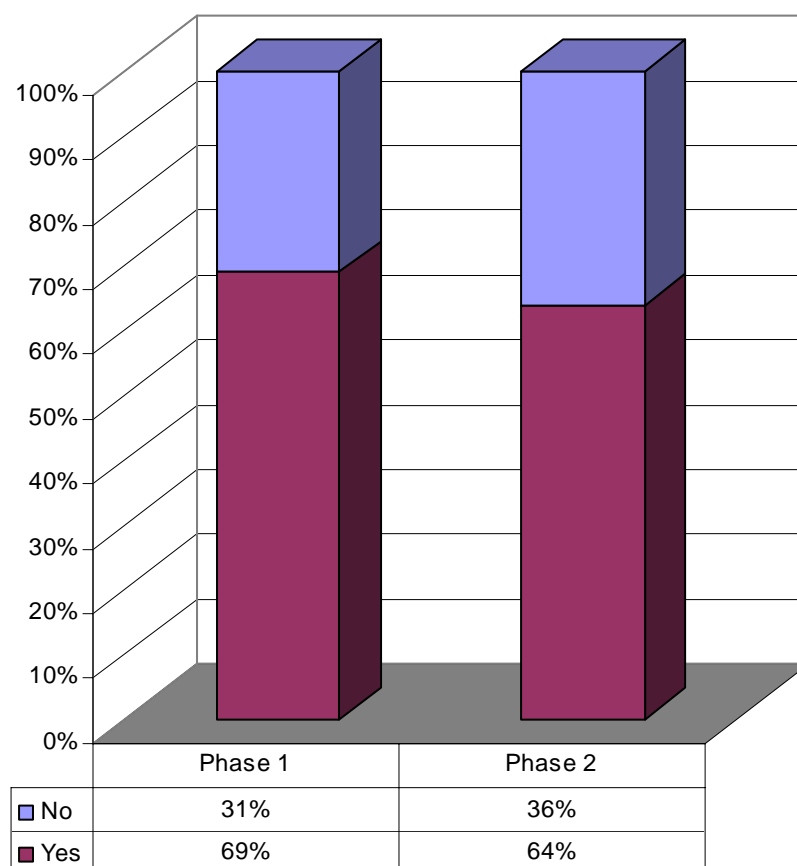


Base: all teachers' responses to Q. 25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) used on-line museum resources?', 2005, (1632)

There was no significant difference in the use of on-line resources between teachers of the different Key Stages perhaps suggesting that museum on-line resources are suitable for a range of potential users.

However, there was a slight difference between the teachers visiting the different Hub museums. Of those teachers visiting the Phase 1 museums, 69% answered that they used on-line museum resources compared to 64% of teachers visiting Phase 2 museums. This 5% difference is not statistically significant;<sup>3</sup> however, it may suggest that the Phase 1 museums have been successful in responding to the developing e-learning context through development of web resources. The importance of the use of the web for teachers was underlined in the case-studies and focus group discussions, where almost all teachers referred to the use of museum web-pages.

**Fig 4.4d: Form A, Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) used on-line museum resources?', by Phase 1 and Phase 2 museums, 2005**

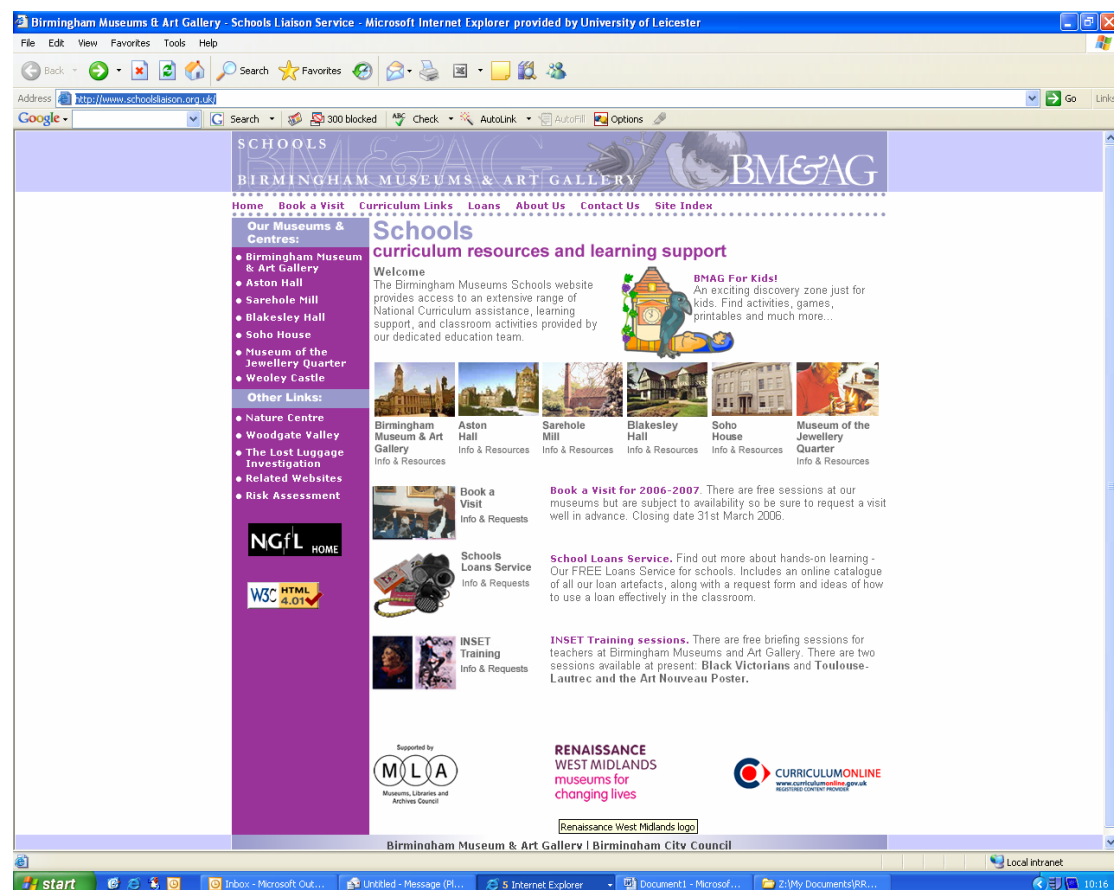


Base: all teachers' responses to Q. 25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) used on-line museum resources?' by Phase, 2005, (Phase 1 museums 742, Phase 2 museums 816)

<sup>3</sup> There is a not a significant difference in teachers using online museum resources in Phase 1 and 2 museums ('missing' excluded). Chi square with continuity correction (degrees of freedom 1, n= 1558 =3.51, p 0.061 (>0.05))

Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery reported in its Form D that usage of its web-pages has risen from 52,000 user sessions in 2003 to 462,000 user sessions in 2005. As usage dips in August, they are fairly certain that it is mainly pupils and teachers using the site.<sup>4</sup>

Fig 4.4e: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery website

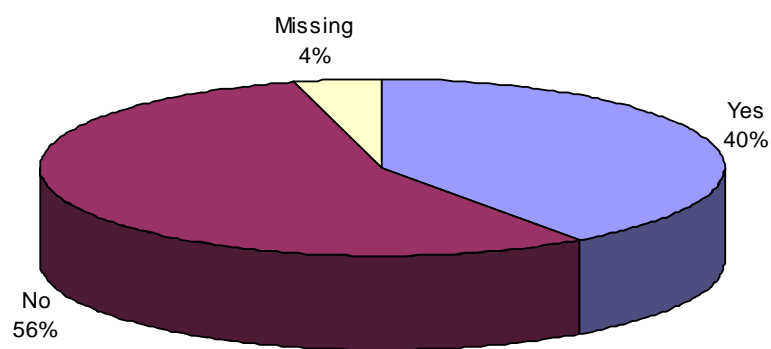


<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.schoolsliaison.org.uk/>. Further information provided by Jan Anderson of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery.

◆ Borrowed an object or handling box from a museum?

Forty percent of teachers who completed the questionnaire have borrowed an object or handling box from a museum in the last two years. Fewer teachers used these resources than made a visit to a museum or used on-line resources. However, this may reflect lack of availability as many loan services were closed down in the 1980s and so loan services are not uniformly available across England.

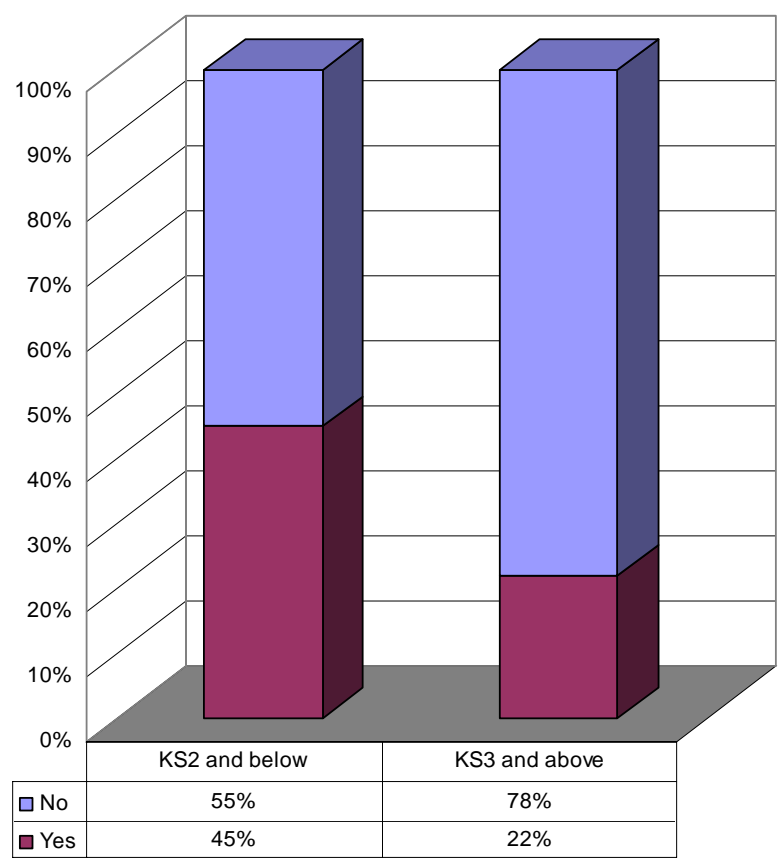
**Fig 4.4f: Form A, Q.25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) borrowed an object or handling box from a museum?', 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q. 25: 'In the past two years have you (as a teacher) borrowed an object or handling box from a museum?', 2005 (1632)

Primary teachers were more likely to use these resources than secondary teachers. There were more teachers of KS2 and below (45%) who had borrowed an object or handling box from a museum in the last two years than teachers of KS3 and above (22%).

**Fig 4.4g: Form A, Q.25: ‘In the past two years have you (as a teacher) borrowed an object or handling box from a museum?’, by Key Stage, 2005**



Base: teachers’ responses to Q.25: ‘In the past two years have you (as a teacher) borrowed an object or handling box from a museum?’, by Key Stage, 2005 (1337 KS2 and below, 199 KS3 and above)

## 4.5 Talking to teachers about how they used museums

The quantitative data showed clearly that teachers visited museums alongside other cultural organisations, and that they also used museum resources on a regular basis. Talking to teachers in focus groups and on case-study visits enabled a deeper exploration of the way teachers thought about what they and their pupils could get out of museums.

**Fig 4.5a: A focus group**



Through discussions we were able to explore further how museums were used and how teachers' views and attitudes affected this use. We talked with a range of teachers with varying levels of experience in using museums as a resource for their teaching and we found that, on the whole, we could think about these teachers' in two categories:

- Teachers who were regular and committed users of museums and used museums in a very proactive flexible fashion; and,
- Teachers who used museums once or twice a year in a reactive fashion for quite limited purposes.

The first category of teachers talked about using a diversity of museums as well as other cultural resources. Teachers talked about dropping into museums for quick visits as well as more involved structured visits (although drop-in visits depended on geographic access to museums). These teachers

also used museums flexibly, taking advantage of the various resources museums offer, including facilitated sessions, Internet resources, teachers' kits/packs, and so forth. These teachers were very confident in talking about their ability to take advantage of either facilitated museum sessions or were 'happy to come independently to the museum'. Many of these teachers also talked about working in partnership with museum staff to achieve a particular learning outcome for their pupils. These teachers were also able to see the diversity of cross-curricular uses which a museum visit can offer. These regular users saw museums as useful for topic-based work, but they were also much more adventurous in their approach. These teachers were able to see the benefits of a museum visit at all stages of teaching a topic: 'taking kids to the museum at the beginning generates enthusiasm and taking them at the end [is about] making connections'.

It is important to point out here that while most of the teachers in the case-studies and focus groups who represented this more flexible and proactive use of museums were based in urban schools this was by no means the case for all of them. Proactive and flexible use is not simply a matter of better geographical access to cultural resources. Indeed most of the urban-based teachers did not have a museum 'around the corner' and therefore a visit to the museum was still subject to complex logistics concerning travel, permissions, risk assessments, and so forth.

Teachers who were proactive and flexible users of museums believed that regular museum visits led to better broad-based learning outcomes:

'Bringing children to the museum, the impact is in the future-cultural change and education- it instils an instinctive desire to find out about where they are'.

'The real benefit that I felt with that group was the regular going to the gallery and seeing it as being somewhere familiar... and they actually went back on their own and took their parents'.

'A museum visit develops skills of analysis and evaluation, it's your real higher order kind of skills, skills anyway of synthesis of different arguments and comparison'

'Dressing up at Blakesley Hall, acting in role, leads to empathy, children gain so much and have fun'.

Fig 4.5b: A pupil learns a great deal through dressing up at Blakesley Hall



The second category of teacher tended to use museums once or twice a year for a specifically topic-related purpose, for example: 'to do the Romans'. These teachers were less flexible about the ways in which they used the museum and were more limited in their assessment of what they thought the museum could offer their pupils. For these teachers the museum visit should come at the end of a subject as the museum 'does not teach' and pupils should 'already have the knowledge and understanding' when they go to the museum. Given their understanding of the museum as simply an illustration of a topic area it is unsurprising that many of these teachers preferred a loan service which sent copies of artefacts to the school for discussion in class rather than going on a museum visit.

Developing an understanding of how teachers use museums and the impact this will have on the pupils' learning has to take into account a number of complex factors. Notably, from the focus groups and case-studies we found that teachers who were regular users of museums were more analytical about their use of museums, the quality of museum provision, their own and their pupils learning outcomes. However, we also found evidence that where regular involvement with a museum is not based on a good quality partnership with the school and good quality facilitation from the museum and/or the school then pupils learning outcomes were limited. See Section 7 for further discussion.

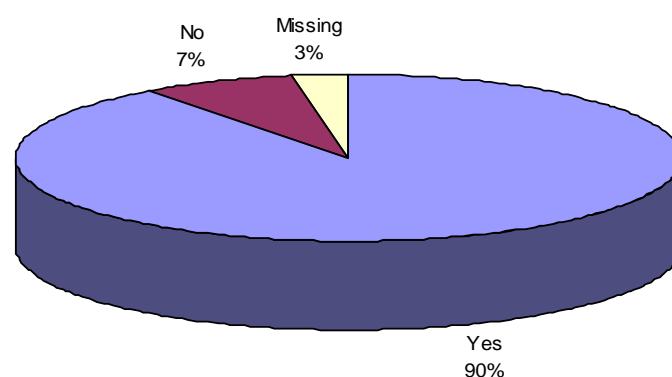
## 4.6 Using museums for curriculum-related work

The relationship between the museum visit and the curriculum is an important one. In the first study in 2003, 94% of teachers agreed that their work at the museum was linked to the curriculum. The time period during which the research was carried out may have had a bearing on this, as more visits carried out at the beginning of the school year are likely to be linked to the curriculum than at the end of the school year in June/July. Both the studies were carried out during the Autumn term.

- ◆ Q.22: 'Is the work done with the museum today directly linked to the curriculum'?

In 2005, 90% of teachers responded that the work they were doing with their pupils at the museum was linked to the curriculum. The change from 94% in 2003 is a statistically significant difference.<sup>5</sup> Teachers may be beginning to use museums in a more open-ended way, possibly encouraged by shifts in government strategies that emphasise creativity in teaching and learning.

**Fig 4.6a: Form A, Q.22: 'Is the work done with the museum today directly linked to the curriculum?', 2005**



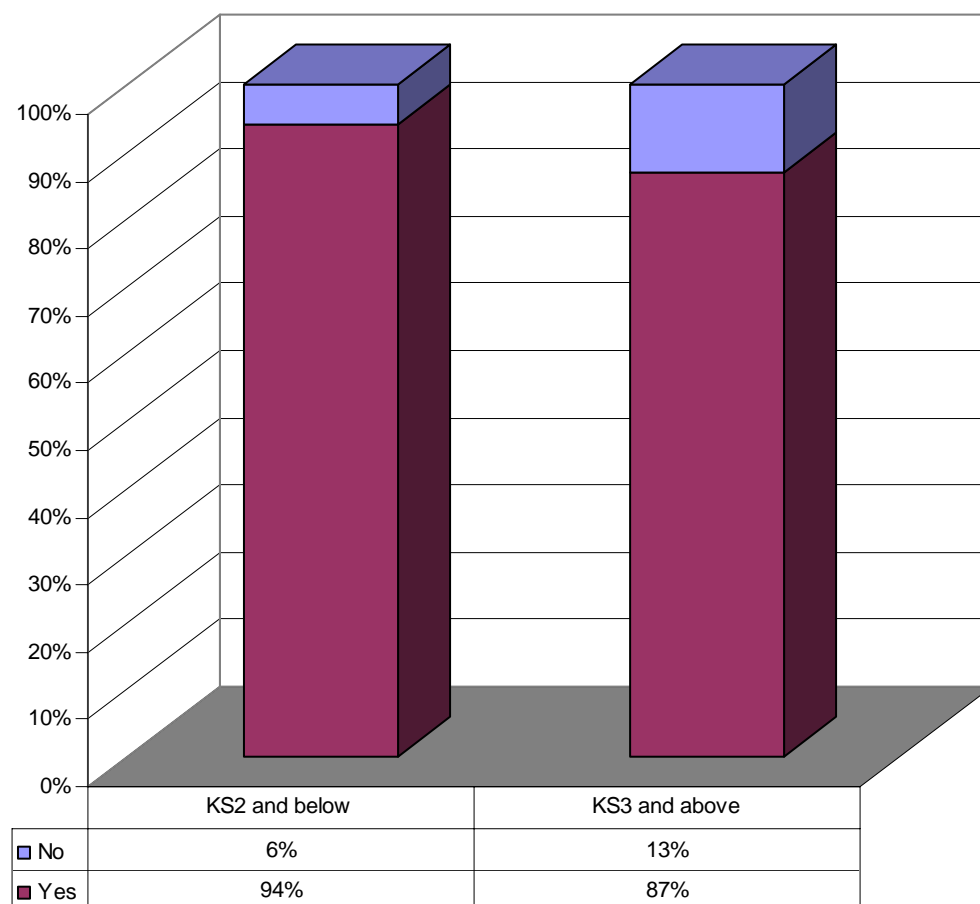
Base: all teachers' responses to Q.22: 'Is the work done with the museum today directly linked to the curriculum?', 2005 (1632)

<sup>5</sup> There is a significant difference in teachers' work at the museum being linked to the curriculum between 2003 and 2005 ('missing' excluded). Chi square with continuity correction (degrees of freedom 1, n= 2499)=7.984, p 0.005 (<0.05).

There is a significant difference between the Phase 1 and the Phase 2 museums in terms of whether work was linked to the curriculum, with teachers' visiting Phase 2 museums more likely to undertaking work linked to the curriculum.<sup>6</sup>

When this question is considered in relation to primary and secondary teachers, the data reveals that more teachers of KS2 and below link their visit directly to the curriculum, 94% compared to 87% of KS3 and above teachers. There is a 7% difference between primary and secondary teachers.

**Fig 4.6b: Form A, Q.22: 'Is the work done with the museum today directly linked to the curriculum?', by Key Stage, 2005**



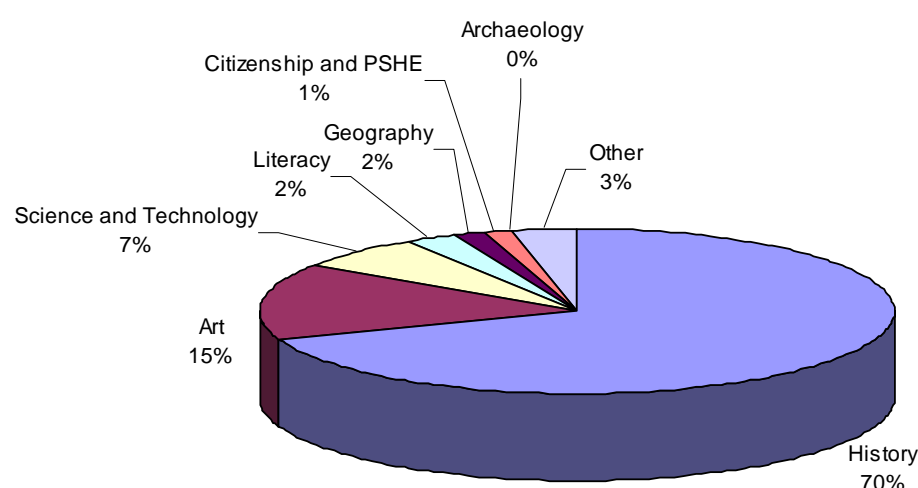
Base: all teachers responses to Q.22: 'Is the work done with the museum today directly linked to the curriculum?' by Key Stage, 2005 (1359 KS2 and below, 196 KS3 and above)

<sup>6</sup> There is a significant difference in teachers' work at the museum being linked to the curriculum by Phase 1 and Phase 2 museums ('missing' excluded). Chi square with continuity correction (degrees of freedom 1, n= 1583)= 4.31, p 0.04 (<0.05).

## 4.7 The themes the teachers are studying

In the first study in 2003, Form A, Q.4 asked: 'What theme are you studying?'. The teachers' themes that emerged as responses to the questionnaire were grouped into five curriculum-related categories. The vast bulk of visits were made by teachers working on History-related themes (70%), with very much smaller numbers in the other categories.

**Fig 4.7a: Form A, Q.4: 'What theme are you studying?', 2003**

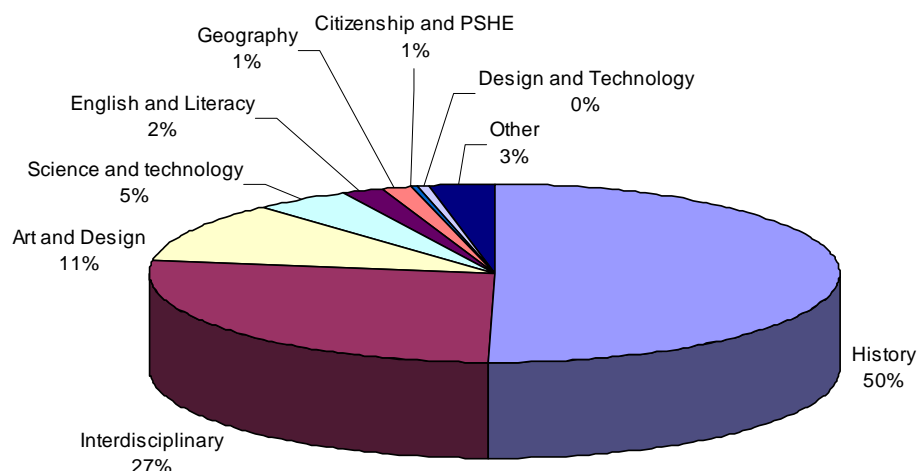


Base: all teachers' responses to Q.4: 'What theme are you studying?', 'missing' excluded, 2003 (924)

Reflecting on the first study, the researchers queried the use of these categories, and worried whether coding the themes into subjects had the effect of masking the interdisciplinary use of museums. To some extent, it had, as teachers told us in the first study that although they were ostensibly using the museum to follow a specific subject-related theme, they were also well aware that learning outcomes would be broader than this might suggest. However, a question still remained as to whether teachers were actually following interdisciplinary themes that had been coded up as single subject themes.

In order to try to capture the complex character of museum use a little more effectively, and to allow the interdisciplinary categories to become visible, the question about what the teachers were doing in the museum was posed in a broader way in 2005. Form A, Q.23 asked: 'What curriculum areas are you covering in your visit today?'. Teachers tended to give a little more information in their answers as a result. In coding the responses, where more than one subject area was mentioned by teachers, the response was coded 'interdisciplinary'. Apart from this, the responses were coded in the same way as in the earlier study.

**Fig 4.7b: Form A, Q.23: 'What curriculum areas are you covering in your visit today?', 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.23: 'What curriculum areas are you covering in your visit today?', missing excluded, 2005 (1525)

Bearing in mind these changes to the coding of data, History still emerges as the most frequently found subject area with 768 teachers (50%) following a range of themes including:

- Agricultural revolution
- Ancient Egypt
- Romans
- Victorians
- Black History (Black History month was in October)
- Aztecs.

Four-hundred and nine teachers (27%) indicated that their visit was 'interdisciplinary' and could relate to a variety of themes across the curriculum:

- History and Literacy
- History and Science
- Art and Design, Citizenship and Maths.

Some teachers were more explicit e.g. 'Life as a Tudor, introduction to Tudor topic, links to Literacy, Art, Creative Writing, Geography' and 'Mainly History with many cross-curricular links i.e. Geography, Literacy (follow up work), ICT (follow up work), Technology'.

Art and Design themes included Africa and African masks, relationships, landscapes and sculpture. One-hundred and sixty-nine teachers indicated specifically that their visit was related to Art and Design (11%).

Sixty-nine teachers (5%) specially related their visit to themes of Science and Technology, 29 teachers (2%) to English and Literacy, 20 (1%) to Geography and 8 (1%) to Citizenship and PSHE. Six teachers (0%) were using the museum to teach Design and Technology.

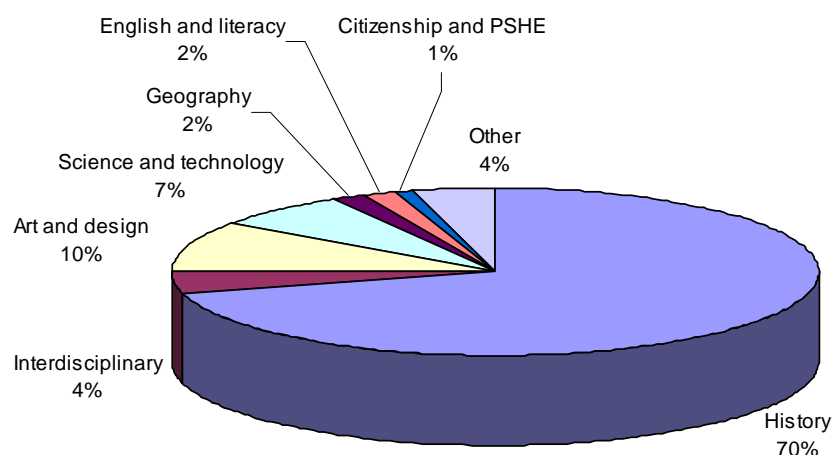
Forty-seven teachers (3%) followed other kinds of themes which did not conveniently fit into these categories and were therefore coded 'other'. This category also included themes indicated by less than 5 teachers. These included:

- Media studies
- Sociology
- Health and Social care
- Leisure and Tourism.

General visits were also included within this 'other' category.

In order to check the significance of the emergence of the large interdisciplinary category, the data from the first study was revisited and, where relevant, recoded to identify those themes that could be understood as 'interdisciplinary'.<sup>7</sup> The pie chart shows that this category did exist in 2003, but was very small at 4%.

**Fig 4.7c: Form A, Q.4: 'What theme are you studying?' reclassified, 2003**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.4: 'What theme are you studying?', reclassified and 'missing' excluded, 2003 (890)

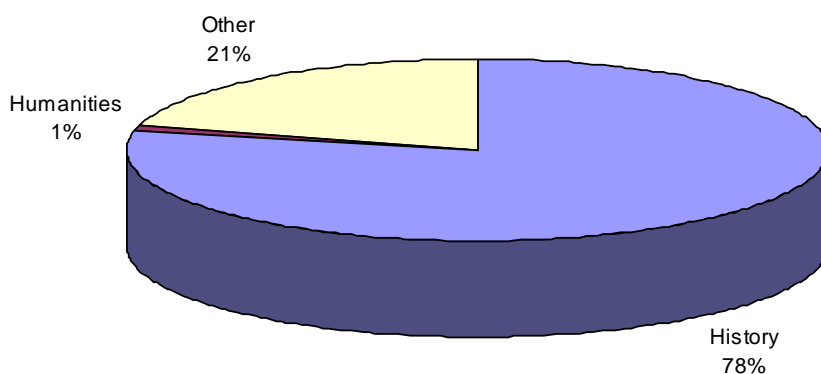
<sup>7</sup> One or two responses had been incorrectly coded in 2003 as 'other' where they should have been coded as 'missing'. This was remedied.

The 'interdisciplinary'<sup>8</sup> theme was further investigated in order to explore the increase from 4% to 27%. At the second seminar with museum participants, some interesting points were raised about how teachers were using museums in relation to broader areas of the curriculum, such as 'developing enterprise behaviours', or were using History as a springboard for other subjects. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in particular is interested in how History can be pivotal in driving interdisciplinary work and raising its status as a minority subject.<sup>9</sup> Questions were also raised about the proportions of teachers of KS2 and below and KS3 and above who indicated interdisciplinary themes. These points suggested one way of examining the 'interdisciplinary' category, which was to understand the role that History might play in driving interdisciplinarity.

Revisiting the teacher responses that were coded under the 'interdisciplinary' category, these were re-categorised according to the following:

- where they specifically mentioned History or a specific period studied in the curriculum (e.g. Victorians, Ancient Egypt) these were coded as 'History'
- where teachers mentioned humanities but did not specifically mention History, these were coded under 'Humanities'
- any other combination of subjects were coded as 'other'.

**Fig 4.7d: Re-categorising the 'interdisciplinary' category to include combinations of subjects including History, 2005**



Base: all teachers' responses to Q.23: 'What curriculum areas are you covering in your visit today?' categorised as 'interdisciplinary', 2005 (409)

Of the 409 responses coded as 'interdisciplinary' it can be seen that 78% of these include History specifically mentioned as a subject studied. A further 1% of teachers mention 'Humanities', which is likely to include History. This

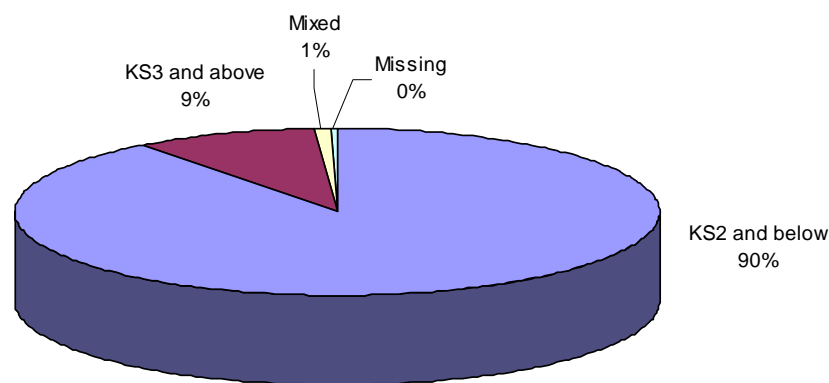
<sup>8</sup> 'Interdisciplinary' was used as a category where two or more discrete subjects were mentioned or where the teacher made a direct reference to cross-curricular working.

<sup>9</sup> See *Innovating with History* part of the QCA website which outlines how History can contribute to the wider curriculum <http://www.qca.org.uk/history/innovating/>.

appears to support the view that teachers are recognising that History can be linked to other areas of the curriculum, as diverse as Art, Science, Maths and Literacy, as advocated by the QCA. Museums can play an important role in this as is evidenced by the increasing numbers of teachers using museums to support interdisciplinary work.

Using the data from Form A, the themes coded under 'interdisciplinary' were matched back to the school data in order to ascertain the Key Stage of the pupils accompanying the teacher. The findings from Q.10 were used in order to categorise each response to Q.23 in relation to KS2 and below, KS3 and above or mixed.

**Fig 4.7e: Re-categorising the 'interdisciplinary' category to link responses to Key Stage of pupils accompanying the teacher, 2005**



Base: teachers' responses to Q.23: 'What curriculum areas are you covering in your visit today?' categorised as 'interdisciplinary' (409)

It can be seen that the vast majority of teachers who recorded responses that could be coded under 'interdisciplinary' visited the museum with KS2 and below pupils, 90% compared to only 9% of KS3 and above. Teachers of KS2 and below are over-represented, as they make up 82% of the teachers in the sample as a whole. It would seem from this that primary teachers are being pro-active in developing the History curriculum. It is, of course, much easier for primary teachers to work in a cross-curricular way.

The evidence from the focus groups and case-studies sheds further light on the ways in which teachers use the museum in relation to the curriculum.

## 4.8 Talking to teachers about museums and the curriculum

In general most teachers were able to think of a museum visit as useful across the curriculum. Where teachers were experienced at using museums and/or very good museum/ school partnerships had been formed, we found evidence which showed that both the museums' and the teachers' expectations could be pushed to make creative and productive uses of museum resources for a variety of subject areas. In addition to subject areas which teachers traditionally use museums for, such as History, Art, and Science, KS3 and above teachers also talked about the use of the museum for Citizenship Studies and PSHE. We also were told about museums being used for Geography, ICT, Physical Education, French, Drama, and Music, A-level Psychology, and GCSE Business Studies.

Both of the focus groups involving teachers of KS2 and below talked about how the culture of teaching was changing and how this was leading to a more flexible engagement with the potential of the museum as a learning resource:

'[The] culture of teaching is changing again after the literacy and reading strategy, everything went into boxes and now it is changing again because it didn't work'.

We saw evidence in the focus groups and the case-studies of the impact of government policy as contained in *Excellence and Enjoyment: a strategy for Primary Schools*, *All our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* and the cultural offer for pupils outlined by DCMS in *Living Life to the Full* (see Section 1).<sup>10</sup> In general, teachers in 2005 appeared to view the curriculum as less of a constraint than had some teachers in 2003. The potential to use the museum for theme-based teaching is perceived more clearly than before.

We used our finding from the 2003 survey that only 35% of teachers thought it very likely that cross-curricular learning would occur on a museum visit to initiate discussion about cross-curricular use of the museum. Many teachers disagreed with this finding. One teacher's comment about a particular museum visit involving a whole school year group and many different subject teachers is particularly illustrative of this point:

'I'm surprised at that because I think that ... our day has brought people together and made pupils and staff see... more links between subjects, because... even if you went with a blinkered view, like I'm thinking of History... looking at pictures from a previous time and talking about the subject matter and looking at costume... there's always something that comes up... and you can guarantee that students will be engaged by something that's completely different...'

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<sup>10</sup> Department for Education and Skills, 2003, *Excellence and Enjoyment: a strategy for Primary Schools*, DfES, London; Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2005, *Living Life to the Full*, DCMS, London; National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, 1999, *All our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, DfES, London.

As for other types of museum use, we found that the more experienced the teacher with museums, the more likely they were to use the museum for cross-curricular purposes and the more articulate they were about this use.

We found that some teachers valued the way in which they could refocus the curriculum around a local museum. This allowed them to capitalise on local learning resources and make the National Curriculum more relevant;

‘[The] curriculum is national... textbooks seldom give local examples, museums can give a more local perspective’.

The museum could also shape how the curriculum was managed. So, for instance, rather than devoting one lesson to a topic, the topic could be stretched over a number of weeks, incorporating other parts of the curriculum and a museum visit. This was possible because of the proximity of the museum to the school and the particular resources it offered.

The following are comments from teachers in the focus groups on their use of the museum in relation to the curriculum:

‘Visits enhance the curriculum’.

‘By coming out of school [we are] doing much more than just looking at the curriculum’.

‘[There is] usually something at the museum which can be linked to the curriculum’.

‘The [museum] workshops or the experience has been used as part of GCSE coursework or KS3 coursework’.

In one case-study we observed a museum educator teaching a KS2 class about portraiture as part of the KS2 art curriculum.

**Fig 4.8a: A museum educator teaches a KS2 class about portraits**



These pupils subsequently did their own self-portraits back in the classroom.

Fig 4.8b: Self-portrait on paper using scraffito



However, we also encountered some evidence where either because of poor facilitation, poor partnership or poor resources, uses of museums for the teaching of the curriculum was not particularly successful judged in terms of learning outcomes for the pupils. See Section 7 for further discussion.

## 4.9 Conclusions

This section considered how teachers use museums, and overall the picture is a very positive one. Museums are well used by the teachers, with most teachers who already use museums, using them frequently, and often in a sophisticated and open-ended manner. Primary teachers are more likely to use museums in a more diverse way, using the web-pages and borrowing materials as well as making visits. Primary teachers are also more likely to use museums for cross-curricular work. Those secondary teachers that use museums use them consistently.

### 4.9.1 General use of museums

The quantitative data tells us that 86% of teachers use cultural organisations on a regular basis. When comparing the data across Key Stages, 91% of primary teachers made regular visits to cultural organisations compared with 86% of secondary teachers.

Forty-three percent (43%) of all teachers were on their first visit to the museum on the day they completed Form A. A higher proportion are on their first visit in the Phase 2 museums (49%) compared to the Phase 1 museums (40%), and in the Phase 1 museums, the percentage of new teachers seems to have decreased since 2003. This may suggest that Phase 1 museums are building stable long-term partnerships with teachers, while the education services in the Phase 2 museums were successfully extending their services.

Primary teachers were more likely to be on their first visit (46%) than secondary teachers (36%). Over half of all teachers (58%) had organised the visit themselves.

Q.25 asked teachers to review their use of museums over the past two years; 86% said they had visited a museum as a teacher during this period, 64% said they had used the on-line resources of museums, and 40% had borrowed an object or a handling box. Ninety-two (92%) percent of secondary teachers had visited a museum in the past two years compared to 88% of primary teachers. Primary teachers were more likely to use resources such as on-line museum resources (69%) or have borrowed an object or handling box (45%) compared to secondary teachers (64% and 22% respectively).

It is interesting to see that teachers are using museum resources as well as visiting museums. Many museums in receipt of Renaissance funding, as the discussion in Section 8 (8.6) will show, have up-graded or improved their on-line provision, or have developed new web-based projects, curriculum links and advice on how to manage a school visit. With 64% of teachers already using museum web-pages and this being a frequent point of reference during discussions with teachers, museums are clearly working hard, with good

results, to exploit the new possibilities of ICT, and are in a good position to play their part in the developing DfES e-strategy.<sup>11</sup>

The focus group and case-studies enabled us to consider the attitudes and values of teacher that use museums more deeply. Teachers varied in the levels of sophistication with which they used museums. Many teachers in the focus groups and case-studies spoke at length about the unique and special experience that a museum visit provides for pupils and for teachers, and clearly this stimulates teachers to use museums. From this point of view, museums are well-placed to help deliver the 'cultural offer' being promoted by DfES.

The type of school at which teachers work affects the way they use museums, with primary teachers being more likely to make regular visits to cultural organisations (91%) than secondary teachers (86%) and also more likely to use museums to support their work. However, there is some evidence that once secondary teachers see the value of museums, they are likely to use them consistently. Secondary teachers are less likely to be 'new' to the museum, although they are likely to come from schools that make fewer regular visits to cultural organisations.

#### **4.9.2 Museums and the curriculum**

The vast body of work that takes place in these museums was linked to the curriculum. However, since 2003 there has been a slight reduction in curriculum-related work and an enormous increase in interdisciplinary work.

When asked if the work at the museum today was linked to the curriculum, 90% agreed that it was, compared with 94% in 2003, with more curriculum-related work being carried out in the Phase 1 museums than in the Phase 2 museums (94% of teachers compared with 91%). More teachers of KS2 and below pupils linked their visit directly to the curriculum, 94% compared to 87% teachers of KS3 and above. Secondary teachers are more likely to use museums without a specific curriculum focus. It is also very likely that teachers from special schools use museums in open-ended ways that are not necessarily directly linked to the curriculum.

One of the strongest findings from the research was the large increase in the use of museums for interdisciplinary and cross-curricular work; teachers working on interdisciplinary themes have increased from 4% in 2003 to 27% in 2005. Ninety percent (90%) of these teachers are primary teachers, which is perhaps not surprising considering how much easier it is for primary teachers to work across subject boundaries. The research shows how primary teachers are taking advantage of museums and their resources to engage their pupils in learning, to stretch them and to open up their imaginations by making links

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<sup>11</sup> Department for Education and Skills, 2005, *Harnessing Technology: Transforming Learning and Children's Services*, DfES, London, <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/e-strategy/>

across subject areas, and by providing their pupils with a range of different ways to learn.

History remains the main subject that all teachers wish to work on in museums, with 51% working on History-related themes, compared with 70% in 2003. History-based themes also made up the basis for 78% of the cross-curricular work. Eleven percent (11%) of the teachers were working on Art and Design, compared with 15% in 2003; other subject areas made up very tiny percentages. Museums seem to be used almost exclusively by teachers working on historical matters, although this is now more likely to be approached in a cross-curricular way, or to be used to open up links into other subject areas. It is surprising that the use of museums for Art and Design has declined but this may have been affected by the types of museum in the increased sample.

It became clear during discussions with teachers that teaching cultures were changing, due at least in part to the impact of new government initiatives such as *Excellence and Enjoyment*. The freeing up of the curriculum potentially offers new opportunities for schools and museums to work in partnership. That teachers, and especially teachers working on History-based themes in the primary school, are beginning to use museums in a more creative and open-ended way is clear from the rapid rise in interdisciplinary themes. The enhanced focus on outcomes promoted by *Every Child Matters* also seems to have encouraged teachers to analyse their museum use more critically and to assess benefits rather than describe process.