The Tampa Bay History Center

Goal:
- "To preserve and share our community's rich history and culture in one of the finest regional history museums in the United States."

Exhibit Essentials:
- Expansive – 500 years of history and 12,000 years of habitation
- Relevant – Connect people to the history of Tampa Bay
- Interactive – "to transcend time"

Backpack Program Goals:
- Integrate children and families into new exhibits
- Encourage parent-child interaction

Theoretical Approach

Entertainment ➔ Authenticity

Visual/aesthetic ➔ Context

Objects ➔ Stories

- The "postmodern museum"
  - Transparency (museum as an interpreter, not legislator)
  - Display of results as well processes
  - More participation and "life" to the museum

- Post-processualism in archaeology
  - There are multiple routes to a multivocal past
  - The past and power are contested
  - There is no true past (authenticity)
  - The past is constructed (authority)
  - Multiple interpretations
  - The audience is not a passive recipient (agency)
  - Identity is formed through the past
  - Self-reflection

Archaeology Education in Museums: How and Why?

- Know the audience
- Understand public knowledge and perceptions
- Engage multiple audiences - Schoolchildren
- SS
- Learning styles
- Challenge stereotypes
- De-mystify the archaeological process
- Emphasis on the everyday and ordinary
- Be interactive and hands-on

Background Research: Case Studies

- Backpack and hands-on museum education programs
- General museum education
- Archaeology and education
- Public and applied archaeology
- Activity guides for children
- Archaeology in the classroom
- Archaeology and outreach
- Evaluation of museum programs

The Creation Process: Where Do We Begin?

- Some challenges:
  - Explaining a whole discipline and process
  - Tie in to future exhibits
  - Stick to main objectives
  - Be portable and durable
  - Be sustainable and cost-effective
  - Be interesting, fun, friendly, and engaging
  - Be dynamic and time-conscious

Exploring the World of Archaeology

- What is archaeology?
- Who are archaeologists, and what do they do?
- Where do archaeologists work?
- Why does archaeology matter?

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