

## Text in the Museum: Why, What, How Much, and For Whom

Jennifer Cahn, Ph.D., Fulbright Scholar Program – Ukraine 2012-2013

Ivan Honchar Museum, January 29, 2013

### Resources

*The Manual of Museum Exhibitions*. Barry Lord and Gail Dexter Lord, editors. Altamira, 2001.

Exhibit Element	Word Length	Type Size
Main Titles: Identifiers	3–8 words	To be sized as appropriate for the size of the exhibit unit and the context of viewing. 2–3 inches (5–7.5 cm.) is often used as a standard
Subtitles: Level 1 – Key points	10–25 words	100–120 point. This is usually the most important written information in the display
Group Texts: Level 2 – Explanatory text	50–60 words	30–40 point. This text usually explains why the key point is important or describes a group of objects in an exhibit
Detail Text: Level 3 – Discussion	60–80 words	24–32 point. This text explores the argument and implications of what is presented in an exhibit
Artefact Text: Level 4 – Individual items	10–20 words	18–22 point. These words present information on specific objects on display. They may be on individual or group labels

### Text

Writing Effective Museum Text: <http://www.slideshare.net/HelenHales/writing-effective-museum-text-8243677>

Gallery Text at the V&A: A Ten Point Guide:

[http://media.vam.ac.uk/media/documents/legacy\\_documents/file\\_upload/10808\\_file.pdf](http://media.vam.ac.uk/media/documents/legacy_documents/file_upload/10808_file.pdf)

“Your Labels Make Me Feel Stupid,” *Artnews* 2010: <http://www.artnews.com/2010/07/01/your-labels-make-me-feel-stupid/>

Kids and Text in Museums, 2010: <http://australianmuseum.net.au/BlogPost/At-The-Museum/Kids-and-text-in-museums>

### Design

<http://www.adobe.com/uk/designcenter/thinktank/jenkabat/>

<http://www.museumnext.org/>

<http://www.digitalengagementframework.com/framework.html>

### Participation

Museum 2.0 Blog: <http://museumtwo.blogspot.co.uk/2012/06/17-ways-we-made-our-exhibition.html>

Australian Museum Blog: <http://australianmuseum.net.au/news-blogs>

### Evaluation

Visitors Studies Association: <http://www.visitorstudies.org/>

Museums & Society 2034: Trends and Potential Futures: <http://www.aam-us.org/upload/museumssociety2034.pdf>.

Profile of an Exhibition. Evaluation Summary: [http://informalscience.org/evaluations/report\\_91.pdf](http://informalscience.org/evaluations/report_91.pdf)