

Engage the Visitor

Relate to visitor's personal experience

Student curators can successfully design displays that in one way or another make a relationship to the lives of visitors. For example, The Martin Luther King Junior National Historic Site in Atlanta, Georgia, has an exhibition called *Children of Courage*. One display challenges young people to do what they can to end injustice. A child-sized door says: "Who can take the lead in ending injustice? Open the door to see a future leader." The child opens the door and looks into a mirror. (See additional examples in *Learning on Display*, pages 124-128.)

1. Have students think of exhibits they've seen that have successfully related to visitors' personal experiences.
2. Have students brainstorm ideas for their display.

Engaging the visitor's senses

Displays that engage the senses are more likely to attract and hold the attention of visitors. Students should consider ways to add visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile interest to their exhibits. For example, listening to a speech is far more captivating than simply reading it. The students at St. Paul's Elementary School used sound in their *Civil Rights* exhibit by playing a recording of the Martin Luther King, Jr. "I have a Dream" speech (obtained at the local library) in addition to displaying a copy of the text. (See additional examples in *Learning on Display*, pages 124-128.) Show examples of museum displays from kidcurators.com (or have students use their imaginations) to suggest ways in which displays engage visitors through the use of the following enhancements:

- Visual (use of color, light, objects, dimension, varying sizes, etc.)
- Auditory (sound effects, music, dramatic readings, etc.)
- Kinesthetic or tactile (hands-on, movement, etc.)