

The Exhibition: the parts

Exhibition · Template · Handout

An exhibition that reaches the top band usually has the parts below. Each commentary repeats the same parts for its object; together the three commentaries give three different answers to the prompt. The word counts are a guide to proportion, not a rule.

The exhibition as a whole

Part	What it says	How
Title	The prompt.	Copied word for word.
Opening (optional)	What the three objects show together.	One or two sentences naming the three different answers.
Three commentaries	One object each, about 300 words each.	Each object takes a different place in the range of possible answers, or shows a different way the prompt works.
References	The sources of every fact you cite and every image that is not your own.	Full and clean: no “(Wikipedia)” alone, no tracking tags.

Each commentary

Part	What it says	How	Words
Image and caption	What the object is and whose photograph it is.	Your own photograph where you can. Say so in the caption.	—
Context	What the object is, whose it is, when and where it came from, and how it came into your life.	Briefly, and only what the prompt needs. This is the shortest part.	50
The knowledge issue	The problem this object raises for this prompt.	One precise sentence, using the prompt’s key term in the same sense in all three commentaries.	35
How it shows it	The process by which the object shows the issue.	Explain the mechanism, step by step, and point to features of the object itself: its date, its owner, its numbers, its errors. This is the longest part.	90
Evidence	A checkable fact that the argument needs.	A date, figure, ruling or quotation, with its source, and a sentence on what it shows.	50
The limit	How someone else would read the object, and what that does to your claim.	One or two sentences that narrow the claim rather than undo it.	35
Link (objects 2 and 3)	What this object shows that the others do not.	Name the earlier object and the difference.	25
Verdict	This object’s answer to the prompt.	In the prompt’s own words, and as a specific answer, not a theme.	25

Before you write: the plan

- **The prompt, word for word**, and what its key term means in your exhibition.
- **Three different answers** the prompt allows, and which object stands for each.
- **For each object**: whose it is, when and where it came into your life, and the one fact you will cite.
- **Test each object**. Is it one specific thing, not a type? Can you photograph it yourself? If you swapped it for another of its kind, would the commentary stop working? Was it made by people knowing something, rather than used as a symbol?

How the parts hold together

- **The three verdicts differ**. Three objects making one point is one object’s worth of argument.
- **Each mechanism is explained, not asserted**. “This shows that context shapes knowledge” is a claim; *how* it does so here is the commentary.

- **Every fact is checked** and appears in the references.
- **850 to 950 words in total.**

The parts give the exhibition its shape. The mark comes from what fills them: specific objects, a precise reading of the prompt, mechanisms that are explained, and evidence that does work.