FY2025_MDL_Recording

0:03
Hey, let's get started.

0:05
So good afternoon, everyone.

0:07
My name is Helen Wechsler, and I work at the Office of Museum Services at the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

0:14
We're delighted that you could join us for this webinar about one of our national initiatives, Museums for Digital Learning.

0:26
So, our speakers today are Brooke Gyermek, who is the Digital Learning Manager and MDL Project Manager at History Colorado, and me.

0:37
That's all you've got!

0:43
And I'm just going to start us off by providing a brief introduction and then I'm going to turn it over to Brooke to talk about the function and use of the platform and hopefully entice you to dip your toe in.

0:57
So we conceived of Museums for Digital Learning back in 2018.

1:04
IMLS had been funding digitization projects as well as online educational resources for individual museums for a long time.

1:12
I can't even begin to guess the number of objects digitized with IMLS funding.

1:17
I just know it's enormous.

1:19
And the volume of important object-based classroom materials being made available to teachers by the nation's museums was also considerable.

1:29
We also knew that for most museums, their K-12 educator audience is relatively local.

1:36
We then wondered what it would be like if any teacher anywhere across the content could access content from any museum across the country.

1:46
We got a few committed museums and a cohort of K-12 educators together to co-create the templates and functionality that would characterize MDL, guaranteeing that we would meet the needs of teachers and students.

2:02
The product of that work is what you're about to see, a platform with educational resource kits contributed by museums across the US for teachers and students who can search by subject, grade level, and education standards.

2:17
Brooke, I'm going to turn it over to you to talk more about the platform and the opportunities for museums to become MDL contributors.

2:30
Museums for Digital Learning, which I will refer to as MDL throughout the rest of the presentation, is a platform made for museums who have existing digitized collection items ranging from artworks to primary historical resources, biological or geological specimens, and other unique objects from your museum's collection.

2:48
The audience is K-12 students, so having existing education materials or the potential to create educational materials, based on field trips or exhibits, is ideal.

2:59
While you do not need to have educators at your organization, you will need staff, and we do recommend at least two staff members who are able to commit to collections uploading and content creation.

3:10
It is also essential that there is institutional buy-in for this effort as well as support from your institution.

3:16
Once you sign up, museums are expected to create a Resource Kit which we will talk more about throughout this webinar.

3:27
Who is already participating?

3:29
Viewers are able to see a list of all of our existing museums.

3:32
Museums who have signed up, but not yet published content, appear at the bottom of the page.

3:40
We have a total of 93 museums at this time, including two international museums.

3:46
Nearly all museum types are represented, from house museums to art museums, history museums, botanical gardens, and more.

3:57
The primary audience for MDL is students across K-12 classrooms.

4:02
Educators would be the initial viewers examining each Resource Kit for national educational standards that align with their curriculum, content that is appropriate for their students, and activities for students to engage with.

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Links for Resource Kits can then be shared directly with student users via a link or through Google Classroom.

4:26
The steps for joining MDL can be done online using the links provided.

4:30
First, you can visit museumsfordigitallearning.org and fill out a form to become a participating organization.

4:37
Then you can sign up for an information session, where you will get additional information about the back end of the platform.

4:44
There are additional resources available that can be explored once you create an account.

4:54
Some of the resources available on the platform include a Resource Kit Planning Guide, which gives guidance on 6 tasks that will support your team in creating high quality resource kits that will engage students.

5:06
There is a planning guide template that you can fill-in as you work through the six tasks.

5:11
Videos and additional resources help you to identify the difference between media (which is uploaded content) and objects (uploaded content with metadata from your collection records).

5:24
A template is provided for creating an Educator Overview which allows you to quickly share the highlights of your Resource Kit with educators who are looking for resources for their classroom.

5:36
A publishing checklist allows you to ensure that the Resource Kit is ready to be published if you are in need of additional support.

5:44
We also offer monthly information sessions, which are about 30 to 45 minutes long, and are open for new and existing content contributors.

5:52
We are also currently hosting seasonal Content Creation Cohorts, which include six virtual meetings with guided support.

6:02
A Content Creation Cohort is a series of virtual meetings with new museum content contributors hosted by the MDL team.

6:11
These 6 virtual meetings across 11 weeks are intended to give additional support for following the six tasks for creating resource kits.

6:20
Two staff members from your organization must participate and you receive a $1,500 stipend.

6:26
This allows your team to develop the skills needed to create Resource Kits independently in the future.

6:32
Once you join MDL, you are able to sign up to join the upcoming cohorts and there is a limit to 10 museums per cohort.

6:42
The first 3 tasks of the Content Creation Cohort support planning.

6:46
The exhibit exercise allows your team to explore all the resources already available for your topic, identify which educational subjects are covered and who your audience will be, and finally, choose national standards and write guiding questions that will be used as the foundation for your Resource Kit.

7:03
The last three tasks in the Content Creation Cohort focus on the creation of your Resource Kit, starting with creating content and student engagement activities, uploading media and objects, and considering other components like audience before publishing your work.

7:22
To get a better understanding of what a Resource Kit includes, we are going to examine a Resource Kit created by the History Colorado team.

7:34
First, we would anticipate that educators use the Contents tab and home screen for the Resource Kit to examine what the whole Resource Kit includes.

7:46
Each type of activity is indicated with an image and the title gives additional information at the bottom of the Contents.

7:52
Educators can see additional resources under Educator Materials as well as the Resource Kit Standards.

8:05
Each resource Kit must have an educator overview.

8:08
This templated document allows museums to quickly share the key components of the Resource Kit, like guiding questions and an overview of the activities, which helps educators quickly determine if the resource is right for their classroom.

8:27
Back on the homepage of the Resource Kit, everything is written for the student audience, in this case 6th to 8th graders.

8:34
Students explore each activity, navigating from the home screen or by using the arrows within the Resource Kit.

8:45
As students work through the Resource Kit, the related guiding question appears at the top of the screen.

8:50
Museums use these questions to create structure in the Resource Kits, and an example of this can be seen here.

9:06

In this annotation activity, students are asked to think a little more deeply about miner adaptations to overcome the challenges of Colorado's geography.

9:18
The students have been presented with all of the information needed to understand how miners adapted and are now asked to think about which adaptation they think is the most important.

9:28
This annotation activity also allows students to download their work to turn into their teachers.

9:40
As you can see, the students then move into learning connected with a new guiding question.

9:45
The banner above helps students to see this and allows educators to plan accordingly.

9:51
They may ground the activities across multiple days, ask for student check in between guiding questions, or bring students together to reflect on guiding questions before moving forward.

10:04
It is also helpful to include background knowledge activities, reflection opportunities, and wrap up questions.

10:15
This "Know, Want to Know, Learn" activity, which is commonly used by educators, allows students to activate prior knowledge before starting the Resource Kit.

10:35
The "Apples to Oranges" game here gives students an opportunity to sort the images to think about the positive and negative aspects of the topic, and finally, students are able to return to their "Know, Want to Know, Learn" activity in the final activity of the Resource Kit.

10:56
Utilizing these educational strategies and resources is something that our team at Museums for Digital Learning is able to support you with throughout the Content Creation Cohorts.

11:05
If you are unable to to participate, there are also a variety of resources and guiding templates on the back end of the MDL platform.

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There are significant benefits for both museums and K-12 users.

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Your reach will increase as schools across the nation will be able to access your resources.

11:35
You will be increasing the accessibility of your digital collections as well as creating valuable educational content.

11:41
And it's all free.

11:43
Students and educators get access to unique museum collections that support national standards.

11:49
They are able to engage in a variety of resources digitally, and our hope is that by recruiting a wide range of museums, we will be able to bring more underrepresented stories to the classroom, closing a resource gap that teachers struggle with.

12:05
Here are some quotes from museum professionals who have been using the MDL platform.

12:14
And here are some quotes from some educators who have been using the MDL platform.

12:22
Good luck.

12:22
I hope we see lots of cool resource kits coming from all of you. And take care, thanks for joining.

12:30
Thank you.