



# Lab Tag Explorer

## Teacher briefing notes

### What's the experiment?

Who else is using **Web Lab** right now?

When your students come to **Web Lab** they'll get a Lab Tag with a unique pictogram – an optically readable symbol which will allow them to access their Lab creations or artefacts. These pictograms are then shown on the Pictogram Wall and can be accessed by your students at the exhibit or online. The Pictogram Wall groups and sorts the pictograms of the current visitors to the gallery, including your students, on the large display to show connections between them. There'll be lots of connections to discover... How many visitors are in the gallery? How many online visitors are from Australia? The possibilities are endless.

### Learning outcome

Understand how your information is stored on the web so that it can be easily accessed at another time.

### Lab Tag activity

You can use your own webcam or unique code to access the information from your pictogram and view your artefacts when you get home or back to school.

### Glossary

**Database** – A database is a collection of data that's organised so that its contents can easily be accessed, managed and updated.

## What does it show us?

When your students get home or back to school with their Lab Tag they'll be able to access their information on their home or school computer. But how does the internet select the correct information for your students' Lab Tags from all the other bits of information out there?

The answer is by using databases. Databases work by tagging information so that it's easy to find. Your pictogram will be different to every other pictogram, so your set of tags will be different to every other set of tags. Using your pictogram and the information tags your home or school computer will be able to search the databases and collect your artefacts rather than someone else's.

The web works in a very similar way, with every web page having a set of tags so that when you search for something on the web you get exactly the result you were looking for. The web will use other things to access your set of tags too. Your login details for your e-mail will act as the tag retrieval data so you get your e-mails and no-one else's.

The Pictogram Wall will also provide a space for you to make connections between your pictogram and the pictograms of the virtual and physical visitors to the exhibition. This will build an understanding that the modern web makes it possible for virtual and physical visitors to 'share' a space and that the web is full of real people even though you don't 'see' them in the same way that you see other physical visitors to the Museum.

## What could we discuss?

- Make a database of your classmates' favourite objects from the Science Museum.

## Museum web links

[sciencemuseum.org.uk/weblab](http://sciencemuseum.org.uk/weblab)

The on-gallery animation which introduces the topic of databases can be found here.