

Ivory

This trail guides you round ivory objects made from different animals in the Museum and explores why people have used ivory to make a particular object.

- Narwhal
- Walrus
- Hippo
- Wild Boar
- Elephants
- Sperm whale
(lives in every ocean)

Ivory is a hard, white material from the **tusks and teeth** of certain mammals, such as elephant, mammoth, hippopotamus, sperm whale, narwhal, wild boar and walrus.

walrus tusk made from ivory

These coloured areas on the map show the areas where the different mammals used for ivory live today

Killing animals for their ivory tusks and teeth has led to a decline in numbers of many of these mammals. Now there are strict rules in place relating to the hunting and trading of mammals with ivory.

Humans have used ivory to make many different kinds of objects.

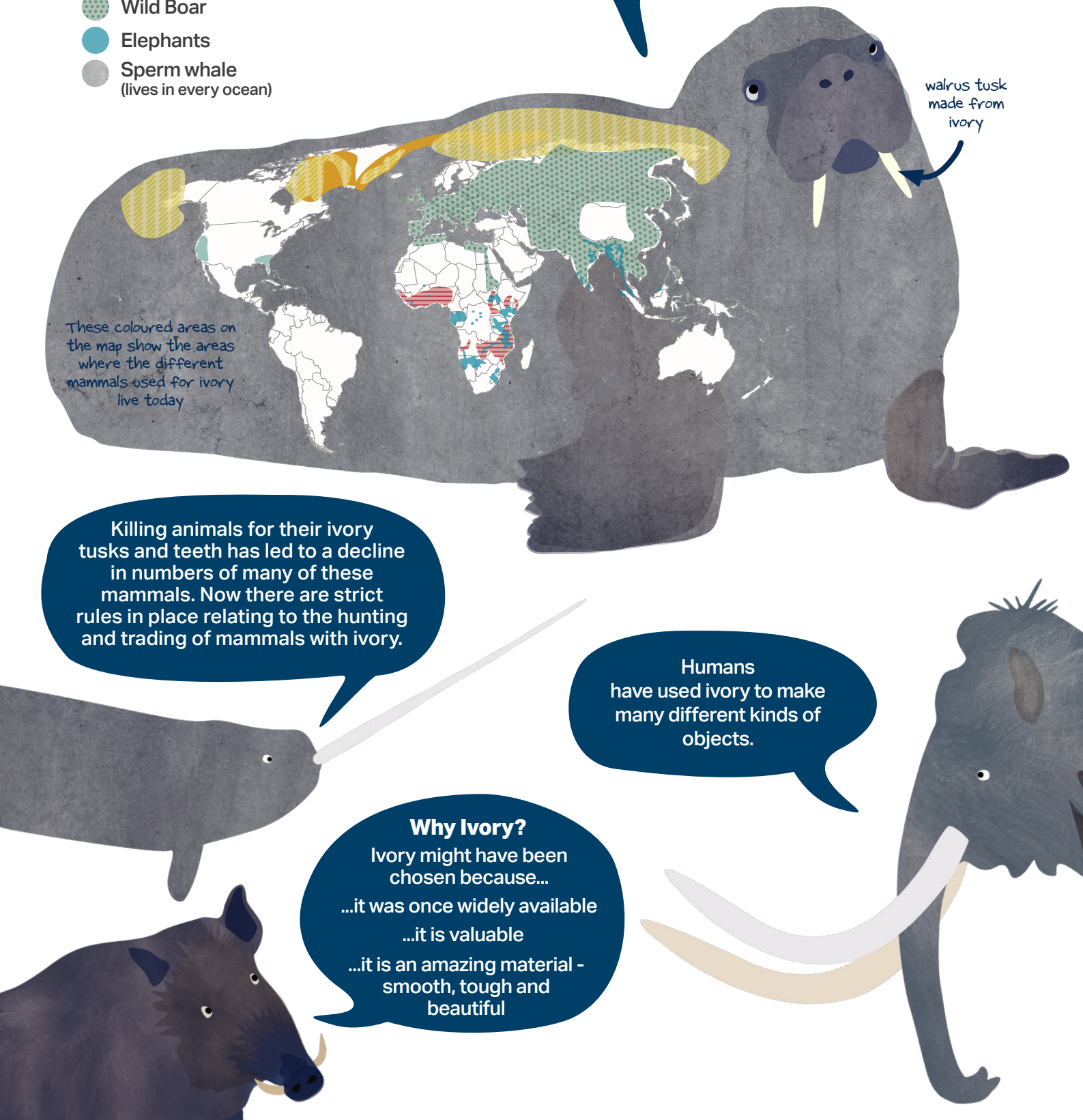
Why Ivory?

Ivory might have been chosen because...

...it was once widely available

...it is valuable

...it is an amazing material - smooth, tough and beautiful



Second Floor

Ivory everywhere!

In the Arctic ivory used to be more available than wood as trees struggle to grow in very cold places. In the past Inuit people used every part of an animal to make objects from, including their tusks and teeth.

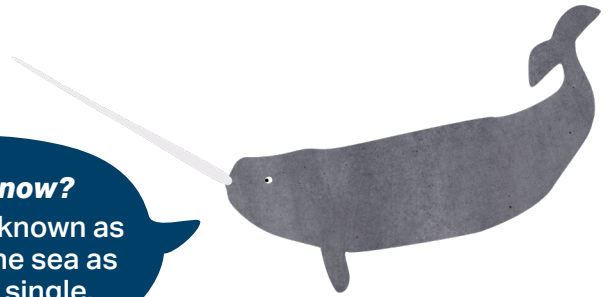
1

A narwhal tusk has been used to make a hunting spear by Inuit people. What else might this narwhal tusk have been used for? Circle 2 answers.

Found it!

Spear made from a narwhal tusk by Inuit people, Canada
Case 23A 1884.20.5

Did you know?
Narwhals are known as unicorns of the sea as they have a single, spiral tusk.



A musical instrument

Tent poles

cooking pot

Tool for moving a sledge stuck on ice

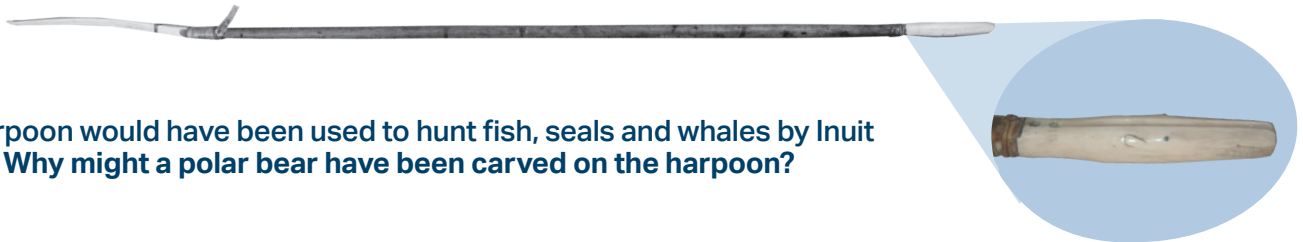
2

This harpoon would have been used to hunt fish, seals and whales by Inuit people. Why might a polar bear have been carved on the harpoon?

Found it!

Harpoon with a polar bear head carved from walrus ivory, made by the Western Inuit, Alaska.

Case 25A 1884.20.13



3 First Floor

Why do you think Inuit people used walrus tusks to make runners for their sledges? Tick 3 answers



- smooth surface
- soft material
- widely available
- rough surface
- hard material
- rare material

Found it!

Sledge runner made from large walrus tusk by Inuit people, Canada

Case 64A 1902.46.33

Did you know?
Inuit communities in the Arctic regions of Canada and Greenland are allowed to hunt a certain amount of narwhals and walrus each year. They use the animals for food and make objects from ivory and bone as part of the sustainable use of these animals in Arctic waters.

First Floor

Look at me - I'm important

Ivory has often been used to make objects as it is a valuable material and can show that someone is important. As mammals have a limited number of tusks and teeth it increases the value of the material.

4



✓ Found it!

Necklace of two boar's tusks from Papua New Guinea

Case 120B 1895.43.21

In Papua New Guinea necklaces made from boar tusks were worn by male warriors to show that they were powerful and fierce like boars. What animal would you like to be linked with and why?

5



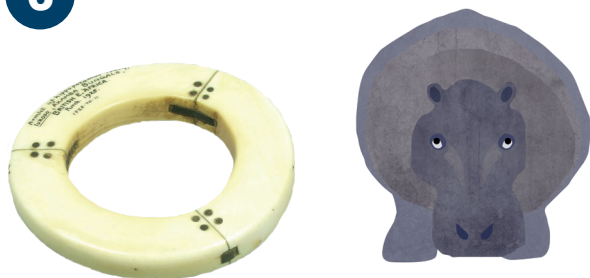
✓ Found it!

Armlet made from elephant ivory by the Batanga people, West Africa

Case 111A 1884.82.130

Armlets made from elephant ivory were often worn in West and Central African communities to show that someone was important. How many armlets made from ivory can you find in this case?

6



✓ Found it!

Armlet made from hippo ivory by the Kamba people, Kenya

Case 111A 1925.70.11

This bracelet made from hippo ivory was worn by the Kamba people to show that someone was wealthy and a good hunter. What might someone wear now to show they are wealthy or brave?

7



✓ Found it!

Necklace made from sperm whale's teeth from Fiji

Case 111A 1940.10.54

On the Pacific island of Fiji, only a chief can wear a tooth necklace on special occasions. Think of leaders in your own community – Queens, Kings, headteachers! What do they wear at special occasions?

HEAD DOWNSTAIRS FOR NO. 7

Ground Floor

Ground Floor

Amazing material

Ivory has often been used to make objects due to its great qualities for carving – it is hard, long-lasting, smooth and polished by oils from human hands over time.

8



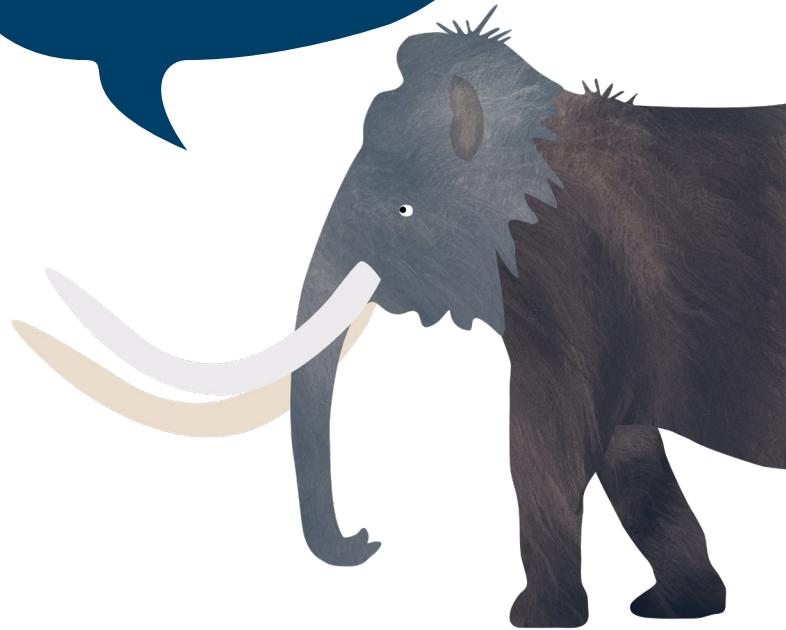
Did you know?

Mammoths are now extinct but their tusks keep on appearing in the Arctic as the permafrost melts due to global warming. This means that mammoth tusk is now commonly carved and no animal dies in the process!



Scoop made from mammoth ivory by Inuit people, North America

Case 111B 1914.79.1



Ivory is a tough material which lasts a long time – mammals need their teeth and tusks to be strong for eating, digging, and fighting. Many everyday objects were made from ivory in the Arctic as Inuit people knew this material would last.

Can you find these objects in Case 111A and B?



Spoon



Fork



Knife



Comb



Needle

9

Go to Case 147A and look below for drawer 147.9

Ivory is a beautiful material and has been used to make objects for play and display.

Open the Drawer!

List 4 animals you can spot here:



Ivory animals
Drawer 147.9

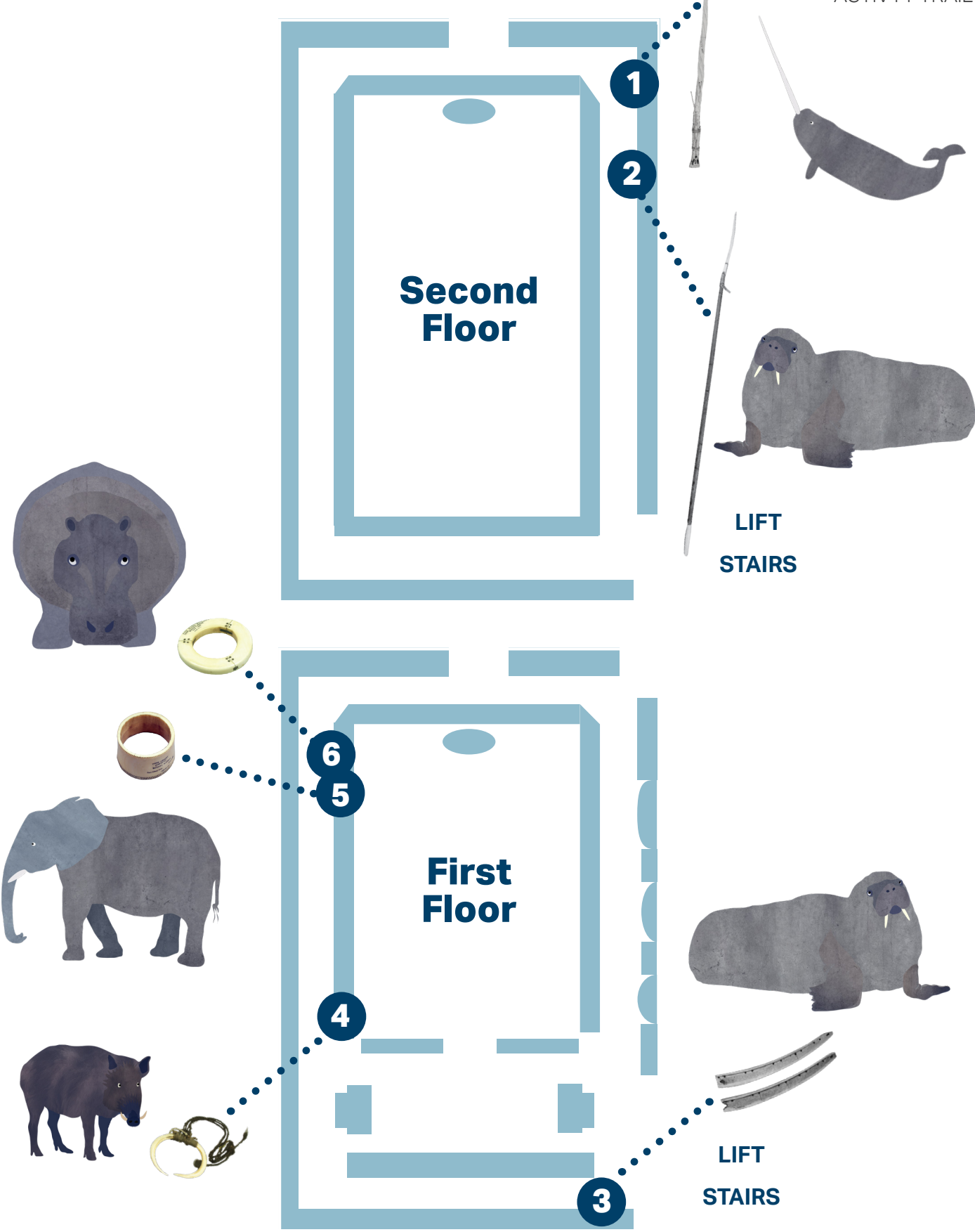
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

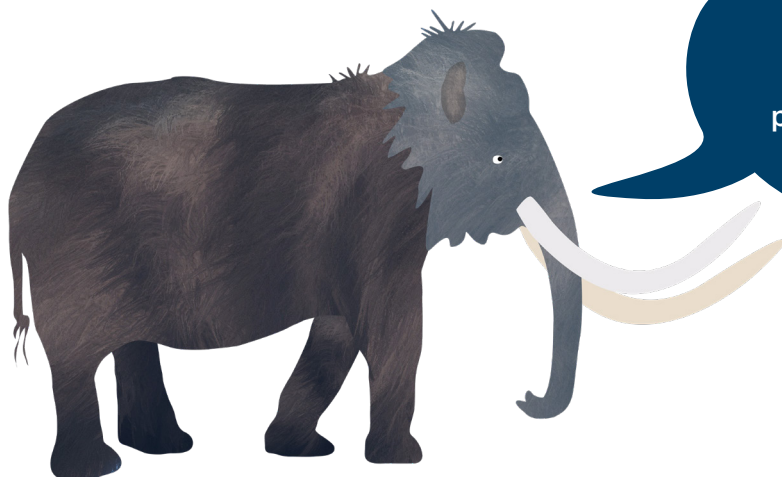
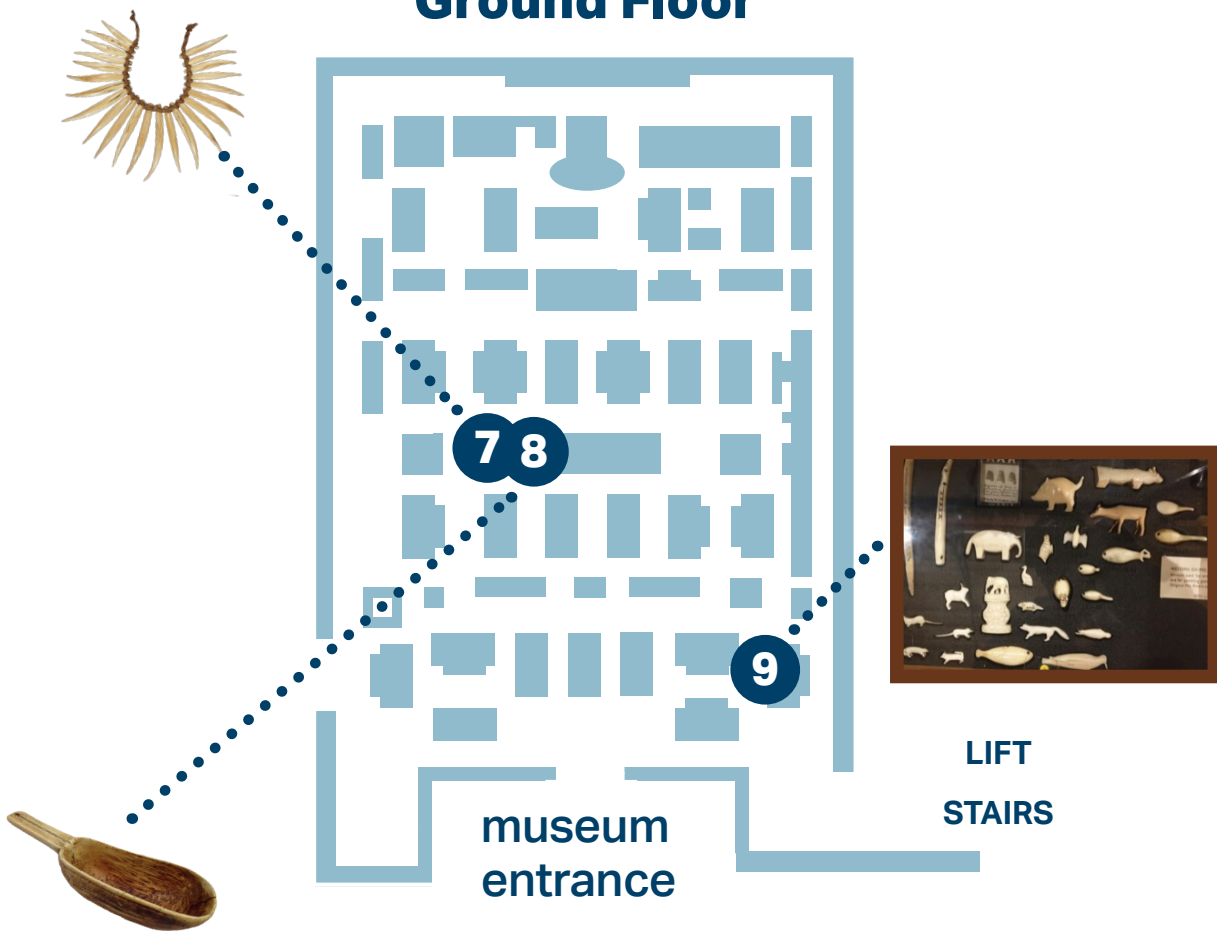
Ivory trail



Ivory trail



Ground Floor



Sadly, the over-use of ivory to make objects means many of the mammals shown in this trail now need to be protected. Do you think we should have objects made from ivory on display in the Museum?