

Small GLAMs



Opportunities & possibilities of working together with small heritage institutions

**Wikipedian in Residence in Gelderland
Erfgoed Gelderland
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- short introduction: Michelle, user:Mtmlan84, Wikipedian in Residence for Erfgoed Gelderland
- Erfgoed Gelderland is a Dutch organisation advising cultural heritage institutions on matters of collection registration (amongst other things)
- here to tell you more about my experiences with small glam institutions during my residency

**introduction WiR project
update project**

Small GLAM collaboration:

weaknesses
strengths
threats
opportunities

discussion & questions

- brief introduction of the WiR project (and the lovely province of Gelderland)
- update project: results I like to share
- small GLAMs compared to big GLAMs in the Netherlands; positive SWOT-analysis
- I do not intend to present you with the holy grail for working with small GLAMs, but want to share my experiences and offer certain point of views you can work with.
- I would also really like to hear your thoughts on the topic, so I hope we can have a bit of an discussion at the end.

**Introduction WiR project:
Wikipedian in Residence
in Gelderland**



I am assuming you all are familiar with the concept of a Wikipedian or Wikimedian in Residence; But Gelderland (no English translation there) might need some further introduction:

Gelderland is a province in the Netherlands, and, according to Dutch Wikipedia:

- biggest province if you measure land acres
- borders Germany to the east
- appr. 2 miljoen people are living there
- rich history: Romans founded first Dutch cities there, some important Duchies were founded there in the middle ages and major battles fought there in WO II
- There are over 200 cultural heritage institutions in the province
- in short: plenty of cultural heritage to be found there!



WIKIMEDIA
NEDERLAND

Notafish, derivative work Husky, Wikimedianaederland-logo.png, CC-BY-SA

On year pilot project with 7 relatively small heritage institutions cooperation between Wikimedia Netherlands and Erfgoed Gelderland.

Higher goal: Find a way to close the gap between national cultural heritage that has already been made available by big national GLAMs and regional cultural heritage in the collections of small GLAMs that remains greatly unavailable through Wikimedia projects.



Introduction small GLAMS

So these are the seven;

- 4 regional museums
- 3 regional archives

– to give you a sense of size:

Smallest organisation = 2.7 full time equivalent

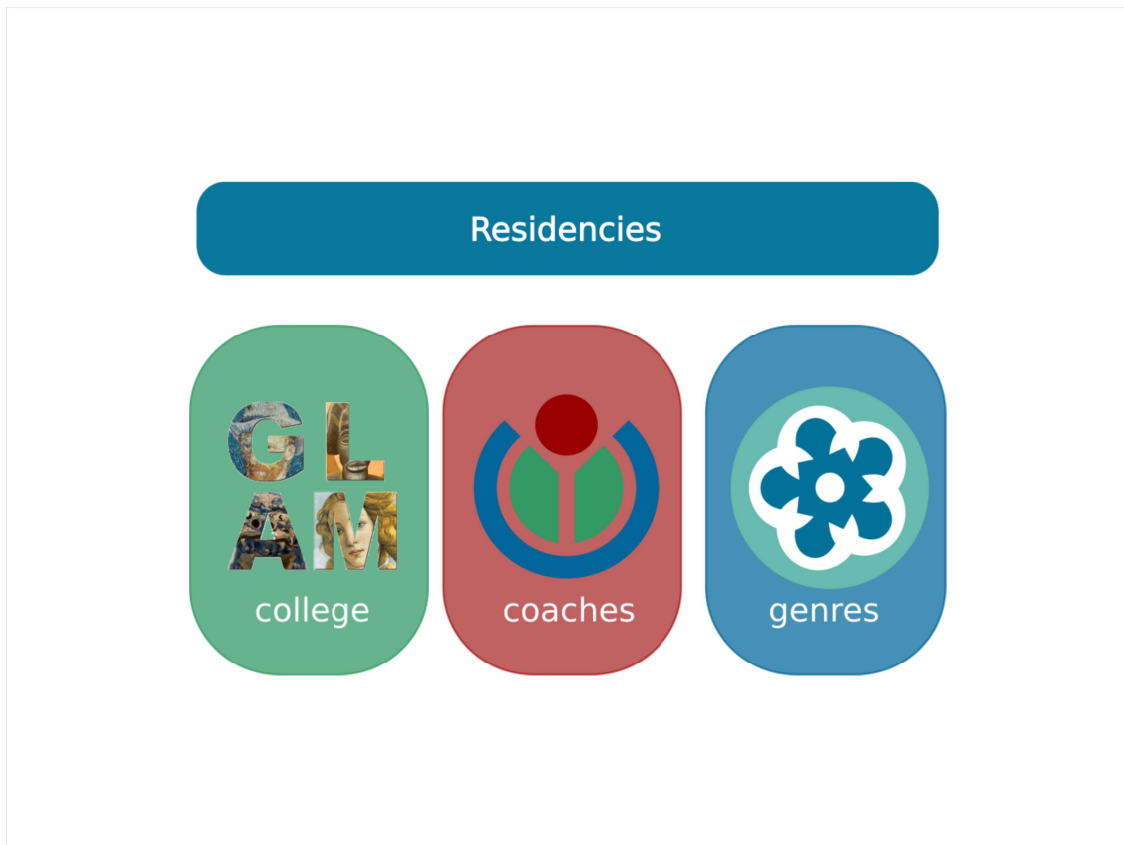
Biggest organisation = 28 full time equivalent

(by comparison: the Dutch Royal Library had an increase in fte. Of 75 in 2017)

Collection sizes vary between 5000 and 200.000 objects

(To compare: Rijksmuseum has 1 milion objects in its collection)

And collection topics ranging from archeology, regional language and modern art to jam production.



Schematic representation of the approach to the project:

– residencies of 6 weeks at each institution

Combined with:

– Workshops on overlapping topics s.a. copyright, organising Wiki-activities, Wikidata (upcoming)

– online Wiki-coaches to answer questions and help out, also after end of project, to safeguard continuity

– selection of themes to organise activities to be working together, e.e.g. Roman archeology, Battle of Arnhem. In light of this, a writing week on Gelderland is organised from 2 tot 15 oktober.

Also:

– user manual to accompany GLAM employees as they work with the Wikimedia projects

Project update

- project year is split up between museums and archives, the residencies at the four museums have all ended, after summer I am moving on to the archives
- a couple of the results of the project so far I would like to share;



In Dutch law copyright remains with the photographer if he or she is working as a volunteer with an institution because this is not considered a work for hire.

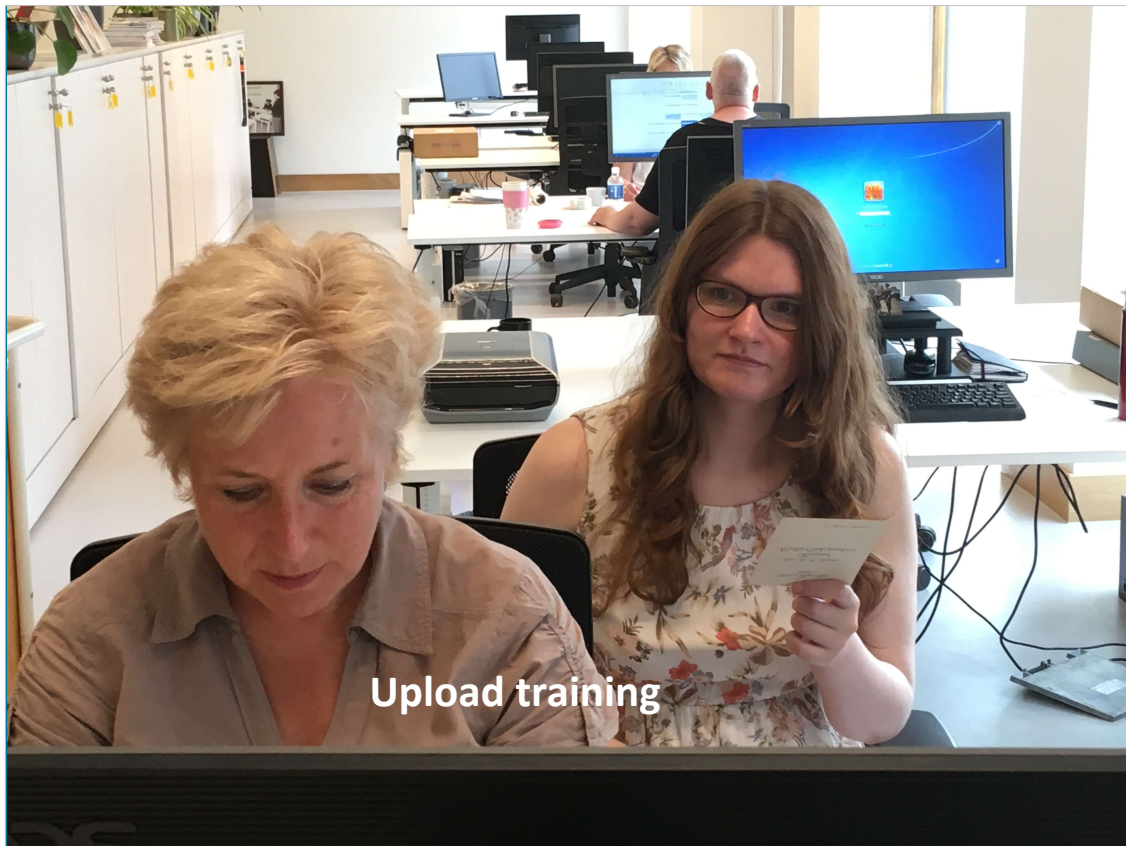
Museums that had 3D images in their collection have all made their volunteer photographers sign over the copyright on their pictures to the museum, or added clauses to the agreements they sign with their volunteers, signing copyright over to the institution.



Here you see a tour of the archeological department of museum het valkhof, with users Ronn and Taketa, who were there to help out at the workshop.

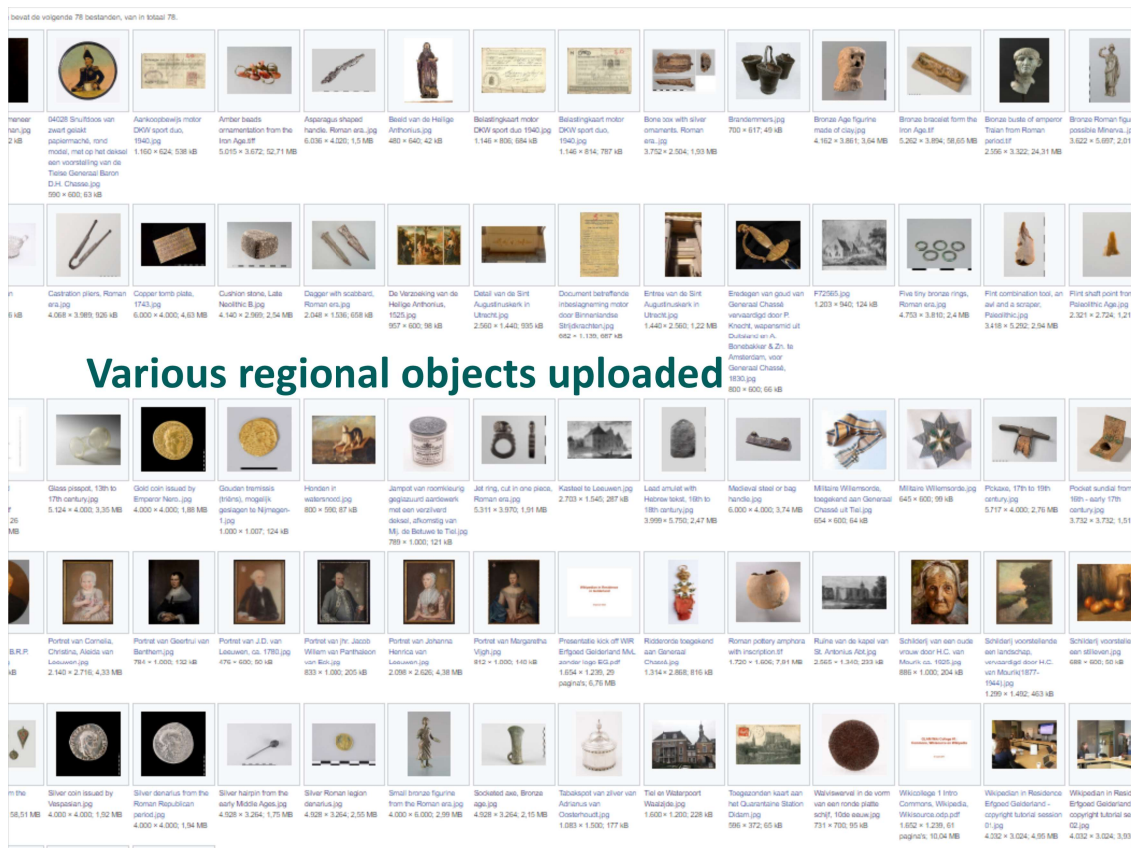
Tour is part of

4 well visited Wiki- workshops; intended also as a place where employees of different institutions working on the project could get together and share experiences. This is working out, they are actively asking each other how to go about things. e.g. edit-a-thons



14 employees of the institutions are trained to independently upload images to Commons (using the upload tool or PATTYPAN), providing the image with the right license.

– these are Marja and Amber, two volunteers of the Rozet heritage centre adding extra information of one of the engravings they uploaded to Commons



Various regional objects uploaded

133 images of various regional objects uploaded to Wikimedia Commons by the involved employees.

Might not seem like a big number, but the upload was done by the employees themselves and the number rises slowly but steadily every week or so.

Small GLAM collaboration

This part of my talk is intended as a sort of SWOT-analyses of working with the Small GLAMs in comparison to experiences at previously held Wikimedia projects with bigger GLAMs in the Netherlands.



The four institutions I have compared the small GLAMs (starting in the top right corner) with are the museum of natural history Naturalis, the institute of Sound & vision, Ethnological museum the Tropenmuseum and the National Archive & Royal Library.

All have been contributing to Wikimedia platforms in different ways from 2009 onwards, except for Naturalis , they startend in 2015.

Weaknesses

Or point of attention, on a more positive note.



Most employees involved with the project at the small glams are volunteers.

They are around the museum a limited amount of time (in most cases one day a week) and have other regular tasks that need to be done that are part of the day to day tasks that are needed to keep the museum running.

This makes the time available for Wiki training very limited, and also threatens continuity.

Because it would be well possible that after the project is finished the employee gets assigned to another department if necessary

Learning point: mixing things up:

The fall residency at the archives is organised in blocks of two days of residency with three weeks intervals in between. This allows staff more time in to work on the project and collect data.



(Monday was cat day)

in working with small GLAMs, the progress of training staff and uploading material is greatly dependent on the ICT skills of the staff involved and these vary greatly.

The Wiki interface isn't the most userfriendly of course, but sometimes I even had to explain how to switch between screens, that Wikimedia is available everywhere on the internet, or were they can find the button for the webbrowser..

This low level of ICT skills can really slow things down.



Collection registration rate= very low

- some cases objects still need to be registered
- in all cases big parts of collection still needs to be photographed.

This makes the process of uploading even a few images very time consuming. However, the low collection registration rate also creates an opportunity to make sharing on the Wiki-projects part of the daily workflow. E.g. liberation museum is selecting images to share online, they go through them object by object, and during that process they now select images to upload at the same time

Another thing related to collection is that the collections are smaller, so the size of the donation is smaller. This makes it more difficult to create visibility.

Strengths

What are the strengths of small glams?

Will & wonder



Museum Het Valkhof, Amber beads ornamentation from the Iron Age, CC-BY-SA 4.0

- Regional collections hold unique objects that have not been published online yet, for example this beautiful (i.m.o) piece of hair jewellery from the Iron Age.
- Wikimedia is great step ahead for smalls GLAMs, (glistening eyes after every upload), so they are very enthusiastic about contributing and seeing their stuff on the projects, very rewarding to work with.



Because of the 'flat' organisational structure of the really small GLAMs it is very easy to talk to directors and people on management teams and convince them of the point of collaborating with Wikimedia projects.



Small GLAMs are often very embedded in their communities. They have close networks of volunteers and friends surrounding them.

Because of this close connection, it is relatively easy for small GLAMs to arrange the transfer of copyrights from artist, right holders, photographers or volunteers – This would create a opportunity to make modern regional collections available on Commons.

Also: the communities surrounding the small GLAMs (historical associations especially but also friends of the museum) contain groups of people with high 'Wikipedia' potential (i.m.o)

Threats



small GLAMS have none or little resources to allocate WiRs for a longer period of time or employ a GLAM Wiki coordinator.

Money that they do get (municipality funding) is often reserved for more 'visual' and less 'technical' projects ; e.g. setting up exhibitions or educational programs

It turned out that in questioning the other 'big' GLAMs in the Netherlands it seemed that time (and/or money) was also an issue at their institution.

However, the combination between low collection registration level and few means that are allocated to the institution in general, the lack of money is more pressing for the smaller institutions.



As said before, small GLAMs depend greatly on volunteers to work on Wiki-projects and volunteers are more likely to stop working for the institution (for various reasons). This threatens the continuity of collaborating with Wikimedia projects. When the volunteer leaves, their knowledge also leaves the institution.

Bigger GLAMs also indicated to have problems with continuity, but to a i.m.o lesser extent than small GLAMs, because there is more time for training new staff.

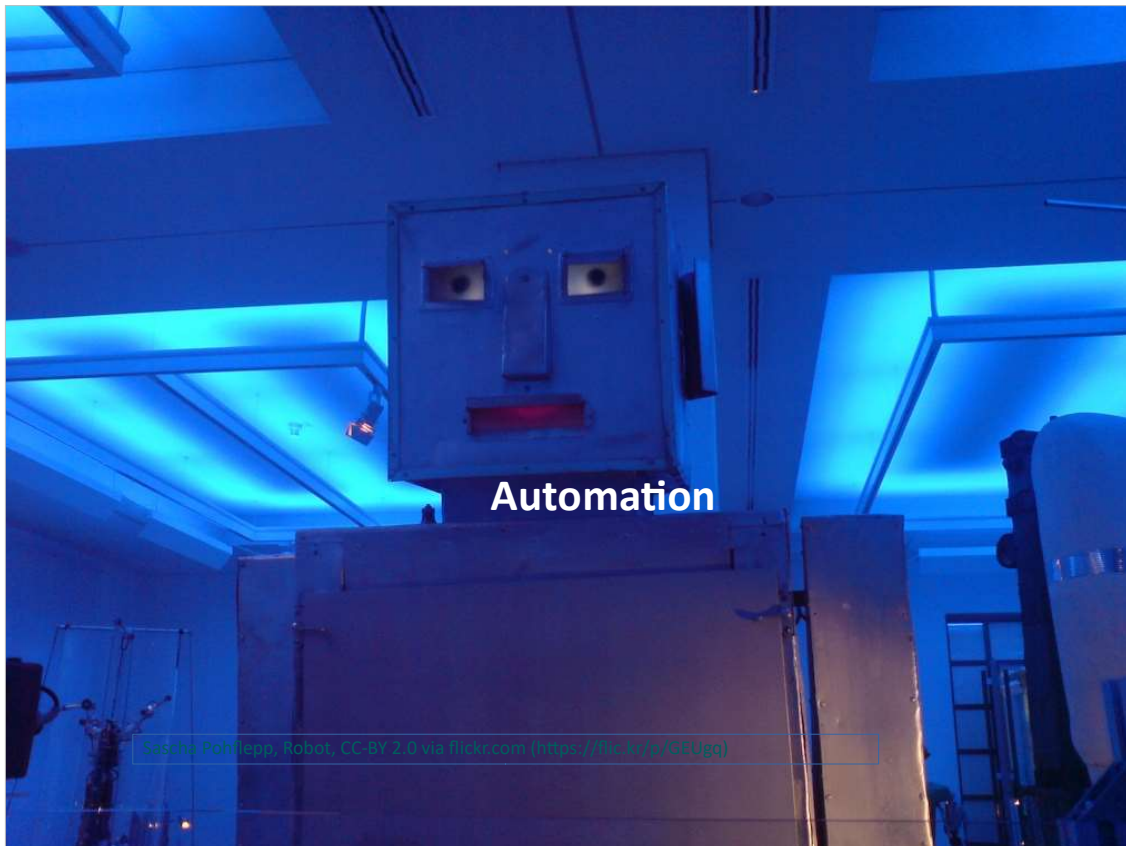
Opportunities



Collaboration between institutions can save time, money and effort.

An opportunity would be to make use of overarching institutions or make one institutions take the lead role in for example the technical aspects of uploading.

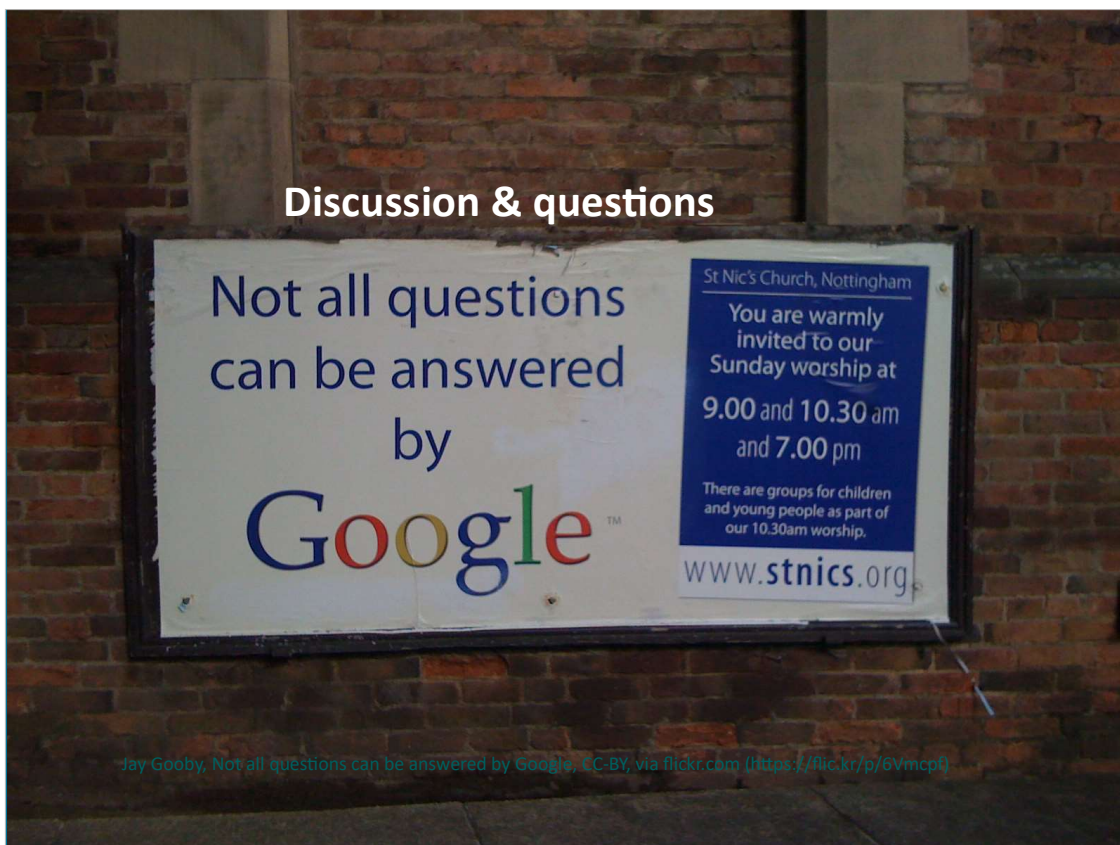
in Gelderland we are preparing a content donation of objects already accumulated by our regional aggregator website Collectie Gelderland, to increase the quantity of regional objects published and get more and maybe even smaller GLAMS to take their first steps on-Wiki.



in training staff -especially staff with lower ICT skills-
it would help a great deal if things like inputting
'Wiki-syntax' were automated to a greater extent

The same goes for determining copyright status or
adding the correct public domain template. (my
hopes are vested in the structured data project).

Discussion & questions



That is all I wanted to share with you on the small GLAM collaborations. I look forward to answering your questions and would love to hear about your experiences. Do you feel we should be collaborating with small glams? How could it work?



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- Erfgoed Gelderland is a Dutch organisation advising cultural heritage institutions on matters of collection registration and maintenance, visitor experiences and funding (amongst other things)
- here to tell you more about my experiences with small glam institutions during my residency and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threads if encountered along the way.
- this presentation is intended to share my experiences with you and offers possible starting point for working with small GLAMs. From the Dutch situation.
- It does not intend to hold the one way of working with small GLAMs, since it is based on my experiences and opinions with Dutch institutions.
- I would also really like to hear your thoughts on the topic, so I hope we will have time for discussion at the end.