

TIPS for Docents

There are several **themes** in the *Manifold Greatness* exhibition; docents should look for and play up these themes, which recur across panels. Under each theme, several items have been highlighted as significant and worthy of conversation with visitors. Docents can pick items to highlight under each theme that speak to them personally, thereby giving visitors a personal and enthusiastic tour.

Links to more information can be found for most items on the Manifold Greatness website. Look through the sections or use the "Search" box to learn about a specific item.

- **TRANSLATION.** The King James Bible may be the best-known English example of the important literary process called translation. This complex, nuanced process is one through which a culture may form itself by adapting and appropriating earlier cultures through essential texts.
 - On **Panel 2**, look for William Tyndale's surviving leaves of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) and John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, which depicts several scenes of martyrdom of translators.
 - On **Panel 3**, look for the Coverdale and Great Bibles, and point out the Bible timeline of earlier English Bible translations.
 - **Panel 4** highlights Queen Elizabeth I's Bishops' Bible, a treasure of the Folger Shakespeare Library and an earlier English Bible
 - The King James Bible translation was first suggested at a conference with the king. Learn about Hampton Court from **Panel 5**
 - On **Panel 6**, look for a marked-up (annotated) page from a Bishops' Bible, one of the only surviving records of the translation process of the King James Bible
 - **Panel 10** features the first Bible printed in America, a translation into the Algonquian language of the Massachusetts people.
- **ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE:** The KJB influenced the English language, which can be seen in great works of literature, as well as public rhetoric.
 - **Panel 11** is the obvious go-to for this topic. The panel features John Bunyan, John Milton, Herman Melville, Allen Ginsberg, and Toni Morrison.
 - On the topic of rhetoric, Martin Luther King, Jr. is an important choice. See **Panel 14**.

- **HISTORY OF THE BOOK:** Scholars consider copies and editions of historic books—including the King James Bible—as physical objects whose forms, illustrations, condition, annotations, and other properties teach us about the culture of reading, book ownership, and other social, cultural, and religious issues. This perspective also examines, through example, the role of the family Bible in American social history, both as a repository of family records and as a site of memory for successive generations.
 - Printing and misprinting is a great history of the book topic, discussed on **Panel 7**, which includes the famous misprint in the so-called “Wicked Bible,” a hit with visitors.
 - See **Panel 9** for a selection of family Bibles
 - **Panel 8** discusses formats and forms of Bibles
 - There are several “association” Bibles in the exhibition, meaning copies associated with a particular person – royal examples include Elizabeth I’s Bible (**Panel 4**); Prince Henry’s (King James I’s son) Bible (**Panel 7**); and Queen Anne’s Bible (**Panel 8**). There is also John Alden’s King James Bible, which he brought over on the Mayflower (**Panel 10**); Alden was originally a crewmember, so his choice of the KJB contrasts with the Pilgrims’ preference, the earlier Geneva Bible.
- **RELIGION AND POLITICS:** The creation and later public uses of the King James Bible illuminate the complicated relationship between church and state, from its inception in seventeenth-century England—inextricably bound up in and shaped by political controversies between the English monarchy and sometimes anti-monarchical translations like the Geneva Bible—to its enduring role in American political speech and ceremony from colonial times to the present.
 - Early political reactions to translating the Bible into English are a point for discussion on **Panel 2** (Tyndale) and **Panel 3** (King Henry 8)
 - The King James Bible translation was first suggested in a political conference. Learn about Hampton Court from **Panel 5**
 - Use the Civil War Bible (**Panel 8**) to explore the role of the King James Bible in the Civil War. President Lincoln pointed out in his second inaugural address that both sides “read the same Bible and pray to the same God”
 - Speeches like Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” (**Panel 14**) have marked American political rhetoric for decades.