



## Walk the Walk! Museum Manners

A visit to an art museum is an exciting experience! Take this quiz to see if you're ready to be a respectful guest.

- 1. Today's the big day! As you're getting ready for school, you...**
  - A. wear your fanciest clothes and shoes because it's a formal occasion.
  - B. wear comfortable clothes and quiet shoes, maybe with a sweater.
  - C. wear an old t-shirt and sloppy jeans because you think they look artistic.
- 2. You want to remember everything about this day, so you...**
  - A. bring a camera to take lots of pictures.
  - B. bring colored markers to make sketches and notes.
  - C. use your eyes and ears to look and listen carefully.
- 3. When you enter the Museum, be sure to...**
  - A. listen for instructions and stay with your group.
  - B. make sure you've got your backpack.
  - C. tell everyone you've been here a million times and don't need a tour guide.
- 4. Looking at art can bring on an appetite! You'll want to...**
  - A. carry a good sack lunch and drink with you on your tour.
  - B. slip a healthy snack into your pocket in case you get hungry.
  - C. eat a good breakfast at home since you can't bring food or drinks into the Museum.
- 5. The tour leader is showing you a very interesting sculpture. You don't...**
  - A. keep your hands in your pockets while taking a good look.
  - B. put your hands behind your back while listening.
  - C. learn about the texture by feeling the sculpture with your hands.
- 6. You walk into a gallery full of terrific paintings. It would be a good idea to...**
  - A. run to the ones you like best so you have plenty of time to see them.
  - B. find one that grabs your attention and take a closer look.
  - C. call across the gallery to your friend to come look at your favorite one.
- 7. The next gallery you enter is very popular—there's a big crowd. The best plan is to...**
  - A. walk carefully to an artwork, pause for a moment to look, and then move on.
  - B. gently nudge people aside so you can be sure to see the art.
  - C. step in front of someone who has been there too long!
- 8. Your museum visit is almost over! You should...**
  - A. whine that you're bored and tired of walking and want to leave NOW.
  - B. think about how to describe the artworks to the people at home
  - C. hide in the galleries so you can stay longer.

How did you do? If you know the answers to these questions, you're ready to be a superstar museum guest. We can't wait to see you!



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Here are the answers to the quiz and some discussion points for you and your students.

- 1. B** There will be a lot of walking and standing during this field trip, so comfortable clothes and shoes are a good idea. It's not necessary to dress up, but looking clean and neat will show respect for the museum staff and the other visitors. Keep in mind that you may be sitting on the floor, and that the temperature in a museum is sometimes a bit cool. Noisy shoes and clothes that rustle can be distracting, so save them for another day.
- 2. C** Cameras that flash can damage the artworks, so be sure you don't use them. And pens can cause damage too, to the art and to the walls and furnishings in the museum. If writing or drawing is a part of your tour, you'll need to use a pencil. But do keep your eyes and ears open throughout your visit!
- 3. A** Your teacher has a plan, so listen up! And if you're being led by a tour leader, he or she will have important instructions as well. Backpacks aren't allowed in the Museum - they can bump into priceless artworks, causing damage. And even if you've been here before, every visit is a new one.
- 4. C** Food and drinks are not allowed in the Museum. If your visit includes lunch or a snack, there will be a special time and place for that. Be sure to eat a good breakfast that day so you'll have lots of energy and brain power.
- 5. C** Even the cleanest hands have skin oils that are harmful to the artworks, so to keep them in good shape for years to come, you must be careful not to touch. There are some exceptions, but unless your tour leader has told you an artwork is OK to touch, remember to keep your hands at your sides, in your pockets, behind your back, or somewhere else safe. And try to stay at least an arm's length from the artworks most of the time.
- 6. B** Even if you're excited about the art, you must remember to walk in the Museum to keep yourself, the other visitors, and the artworks safe. Talking with a friend about what you're seeing is a great idea, but using a loud voice disturbs others who are looking at the art. Keep your voice low and your movements slow, and take a good look at the pieces that really interest you.
- 7. A** Good museum manners include being considerate of others. Nudging people is not a good idea, and be sure to say "excuse me" if you bump into someone accidentally. Just like you wouldn't stand in front of someone watching a ball game, try not to come between a museum guest and a piece of art. You'll want to stand still while you're looking at an artwork, but if the gallery is crowded, pay attention to when you should move on and let others take a look.
- 8. B** You must stay with your group at all times! Getting separated is unsafe for you and might cause your classmates to miss out on something while people are looking for you. Be respectful, stay positive, focus on the great experience you're having, and be ready to share something you've seen or done when you return home. Maybe the people you live with will be so excited by what you tell them they'll bring you back for another visit.



## Walk the Walk! Role Playing Suggestions

It's been said that practice makes perfect. No one expects your students to be perfect during their museum visit, but here are a few ideas you can use to practice being good museum guests.

### Create a Classroom Art Museum

Collect some posters, magazine pictures, or books with large images of artworks. You could also use artworks created by your students for this activity, alone or with the other images. Display the art around the room—on the walls, on desks and countertops, etc., and explain that your classroom is now an art museum. Have the students view the artworks, practicing the behaviors below and others you may think of. [The "Museum Manners" quiz](#) in this guide may be helpful for this activity.

- During your museum visit, the students will probably view some artworks as a whole group and some in smaller groups. Take the time to practice both.
- Remind the students that they won't be allowed to touch the artworks. Have them practice what to do with their hands to help them remember. They might put them behind their backs or in their pockets, for example.
- If your students will be using clipboards for sketching, note taking, or other activities, have them practice that. Remember that only pencils can be used in the Museum.
- Help students develop "crowd sense." Sometimes they will need to wait to get a good look at an artwork, and sometimes they'll need to move to allow others to look.
- This is a good time to practice discussing art. Students can gain experience expressing their observations and opinions as well as listening to those of others. Setting expectations for respectful discussion is very important to help everyone feel safe in expressing thoughts. Help them understand that opinions are not right or wrong, only substantiated or unsupported. If you'll be serving as the tour guide for your visit, this is also a good time for you to practice leading the discussion! [Find some tips here.](#)
- Remind your students that they will enjoy some of the artworks more than others but that it's important to keep an open mind. Just as we usually like a person better after we get to know him or her, we tend to like pieces of art better after learning a little more about them or spending more time with them.
- Point out the differences between original works of art and reproductions. (You may be using both in this role play.) At the Museum, all the artworks they see will be originals.
- Take some time to provide details about your trip. You will all be more likely to enjoy the outing if the expectations are clear, and it's a great opportunity to build their excitement.



## Walk the Walk! Role Playing Suggestions

### **Bring Art and Music Together**

In 1874, Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky wrote a piece of music about a visit to an art gallery, which is called *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Modest's artist friend Viktor Hartmann had died suddenly the year before. A collection of Viktor's drawings and paintings was put on display, and Mussorgsky was inspired to write this musical work as a response. *Pictures at an Exhibition* is a suite, which is a collection of short pieces with a unifying theme (like the famous *Nutcracker Suite* by Tchaikovsky).

*Pictures* opens with a piece called "Promenade", which suggests walking, and this walking tune returns between several other short pieces, which have names like "The Gnome", "The Old Castle", and "Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks" - each one suggested by one of Hartmann's artworks. In other words, the whole suite is something of a soundtrack for a thirty-minute visit to an art exhibit - an exhibit which now exists only in our imagination. It simulates walking from artwork to artwork, pausing to look at and think about each artwork.

The music is easily accessible online at YouTube, iTunes, etc., and additional information can be found using a search engine. There is also an excellent picture book with the same title by Anna Harwell Celenza depicting the music and its story; it includes a CD of the suite performed by an orchestra.

Consider using some or all of this piece of music with your students as you prepare to visit the Museum. Sharing the picture book with them would be one way. You might also use the "Promenade" in the role play activity described above as a signal to move from one artwork to another. For a more in-depth experience, play a few of the other selections from the suite and have students create artworks inspired by the titles and the music, which can then serve as the artworks in your role play activity.



## Walk the Walk! Before and After: A Narrative Writing Project

Writing can help students prepare for their museum outing, focus during their visit, and reflect on it afterward. Drawing on their experience gives them plenty of material and breathes life into their writing. [Find help connecting these projects to the Common Core State Standards here.](#)

Here are two suggestions for projects:

### **Picture Me at the Museum**

For younger students/emerging writers

1. Divide your page in half (in a landscape orientation). Write the word "Before" at the top of the left side, and write the word "After" at the top of the right side.
2. Before your museum visit, think of something you know or imagine you will see or do there. Draw a picture of it in the "Before" section of your paper. Write or dictate a few sentences about your drawing, including when and where you're going, what's happening in the picture, and how you feel about it.
3. During your museum visit, think about what you drew and what you wrote.
4. After your visit, remember something you did or saw at the Museum. Draw a picture of it in the "After" section of your paper. Write or dictate some details about it just like before.
5. Share your drawings and writing with others.

### **Something to Write Home About**

For older students/intermediate writers

1. Choose a real or imaginary audience for a letter you'll write about your museum visit: a friend, a relative, or even a journal. You will write your letter in two parts - one before the outing, and one after.
2. Before your museum visit, think about what you know or imagine you will do there. Begin your letter and describe what you're anticipating - where you're going, what will be happening and when, preparations you're making, how you feel about the trip, and so on.
3. During your museum visit, take note of things you'll want to write about.
4. After your visit, write about your experience. Use as many sensory details as you can - what you saw, heard, felt, smelled, and maybe even tasted. Describe how you felt about the trip. You might also include a quotation from a classmate or your tour guide. Be sure to write a conclusion that sums it all up.
5. Share your letter with others.