

FACTFILE: GCE ART AND DESIGN

REVIEWING AN EXHIBITION



Visits to Art Galleries – A guide for Teachers

Making the most of your visit and gallery protocol guidelines:

Looking at art will enhance your students' visual literacy skills with the opportunity to see real art in a real gallery. It will provide the opportunity to develop thinking skills, observation skills, empathy and understanding. Visiting a gallery will also enhance creativity, knowledge and understanding. It can also increase skills such as team working, critiquing of artists work and help develop social skills outside the school environment.

Learning Goals from a gallery visit:

- Understand how to critique works of art.
- Learn to classify and appreciate art.
- Understand how to curate an exhibition.
- Write a critical essay comparing and detailing multiple works of art or create an artwork inspired by the visit.

Before your visit:

- Check out the website or any online details of the exhibition and artist to generate interest among students in the visit to the gallery.
- Let the gallery know in advance that you will be visiting with a group of students, they may be able to arrange for an artist to be available.

- Plan the length of the visit with your students interest and energy levels in mind.
- Check out any Teachers Resources available – lots of galleries and museums will produce resource packs and fact sheets.
- Decide the objectives your group would like to achieve.
- Ask the group for their expectations from the visit.
- Prepare paper, pencils and sketch books to take on the visit.
- Ask permission for your group to sit on floor space to sketch works in the exhibition.

During your visit:

- Divide into small groups to avoid crowding around artworks.
- Agree a space to meet before and after the experience, to allow students personal time in the gallery.
- Allow students some sketching time in the gallery from real works of art.
- Request students to keep noise levels to a minimum while in the gallery.

Gallery protocol:

- The oils and sweat in our hands contain acids which can damage works of art – keep hands for drawing in sketch books !
- Food, drinks and sweets are not permitted in galleries – ask the gallery to provide a space or room for your group to have lunch if required.
- Mobile phones should be switched to silent in the gallery
- Flash photography is not permitted in galleries, however check with the gallery about photography without flash.

Questions for students

First impressions:

- What is your first impression of the artwork/ exhibition?
- Does any artwork capture your attention more than any others?
- Why does this artwork interest you most?
- How does the work make you feel?
- Which words would you use to describe the artwork?
- What does the work make you think of?

Describing the artwork

- What does the work describe or offer to the viewer?
- What do you see in the work to make you say that?
- What is happening in the work?
- Which of the senses are moved by the artwork? Sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing.
- How would you describe the lines, colours, shapes and forms in the artwork?

Interpreting the artwork

- What materials has the artist used to create the work?
- Has the artist done this successfully?
- What is the theme or subject of the work?
- What message is the artist conveying to you?
- What is the purpose of the work?

Critique the work

- Would you change anything about the artwork?
- Why would you make this change?
- What would you say is the most important part of the artwork? Why?
- What would you say is the most successful part of the artwork? Why?
- Have your feelings about the work changed as you look closer and longer?
- Has the artist communicated their message effectively?
- Does the artist share the same opinion or feeling about the subject as you do?
- What will you remember about this artwork? Why?
- Does art have to be beautiful? Why? Why not?

The Artist's position

- When was the artwork created?
- What was happening in the world at that time and did it influence the artist in creating this work?
- Does the work relate to a distinctive time or is it timeless?
- Why is it timeless?
- Would you like to see more of this artists work?
- What questions would you ask the artist if she/he were here now?

Back in the classroom

- Discuss and compare student interpretations about the exhibition.
- Create your own artwork inspired by an artwork in the exhibition.
- What is the message you want to conveying in your artwork?
- Is your message influenced by feeling, society, an expression or what type of message do you need to convey?
- What is the title of your artwork?

Bibliography :

The J Paul Getty Museum – Education:

www.getty.edu/education/

V&A Design for Life projects;

www.vam.ac.uk/dflresources

Teachers' resources include: Drawing in Museums,
Architecture, Textiles

downloadable from;

www.vam.ac.uk/schools

AGO Art Gallery of Ontario;

www.ago.net/teacher-resources

