

Read Me A Picture Pre-Visit Activity Grades 3-5

Before Your Visit:

Review the Albright-Knox Art Gallery School Tour Guidelines portion of the “Important Information for Your Visit” document with your students and chaperones. Perform the suggested pre-activity with your students, or enlist the help of your school art teacher.

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This hour-long tour will help your students sharpen observation skills and their ability to verbalize responses to works of art, elements necessary for both literacy and critical thinking. Close observation of works of art can reveal an artist’s intention and help the viewer to interpret meaning in ways similar to interpreting literature. Students will be encouraged to approach works of art based on their own background and experience, play observation games to practice their observation skills, and see how diverse artists use different approaches to express themselves. They will be introduced to the information that can be obtained from a museum label as well as different genres of art such as portraits, landscape, still life, and complete abstraction.

Through experience we have found that students who are prepared for the content of a museum visit have a much better experience. Please find the time to do the following activities between visits so your students will be prepared for their writing exercise.

Emotions and Art: Discussion and Art Activity

This activity will introduce your students to the idea that art can evoke different emotions in viewers.

- Show the transparency of Marc Rothko’s *Orange and Yellow* and Jackson Pollack’s *Convergence*.
- Discuss the difference in mood between the two paintings. Remember that a student’s reaction to a work of art is correct -- it is his or her own response to color, shape, and intensity reinforced by his or her own personal experience. Listen carefully to how your students respond to these paintings and you will learn a lot about them! Try to have them let you know what their reactions are to the colors, shapes and lines of the two works.
- Have the students complete two drawings - one in the mood of the Rothko and one in the mood of the Jackson Pollock. Please remember that students may vary in their reactions to these works of arts -- whatever they produce is acceptable. Ask them to think of a title for each artwork and start your own museum. On a card next to each artwork, display the artist’s name, the title of the work, and medium used in this format:

Jackson Pollock
Convergence, 1952
Oil on canvas

American, born 1912

Optional Activity: Exhibition Design

How would your students design an exhibition to show the works they created in the optional activity? Hang the artwork according to their plans. Have them write a museum wall text -- a description of the exhibition to be posted near the beginning of the exhibition. Questions for them to answer in the wall text should include facts that viewers of a school art exhibition would want to know:

- Who made the artwork?
- What inspired the artwork?
- What did the artists learn from making the artwork?

This activity will provide your students with a preview to the labels identifying each work at the museum, if they have not seen them, and an idea about what kinds of things are involved in mounting an exhibition.

NY State Standards met:

English Language Standards 1, 2, 3

Visual Arts Standards 1, 2, 3, 4

Optional Activity: English Language Arts Standards 1,2,3,4