

Pre-Visit Guide for Teachers

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ABOUT THE MATERIALS

This guide is designed to prepare your group for any of the self-guided visit packets that we offer. LACMA's self-guided visit packets are designed to fit into a variety of experiences and are applicable to any grade level.

Each packet begins with a summary and outline of curriculum connections to help you determine if the tour is right for your students. A Teacher Overview follows, to help you set expectations and prepare your students. It provides insight into timing, getting around campus, additional recommended materials, and how to guide your students through the space, as well as an optional introductory and reflection script to support you as you begin or wrap up your visit.

Following the Teacher Overview are the sample activity sheets that include the prompts for each self-guided visit. Worksheet templates, designed specifically for student use, are also included as a part of the packet. Depending on how you structure your self-guided tour, you might print some or all activity sheets for individual student use, or make copies only for the chaperone facilitators who accompany each group. The materials are all designed with a set of learning goals in mind:

1. Encourage close looking by providing students with the space and time to observe and process the museum and artworks around them
2. Present students with new ideas or learning strategies to consider while engaging with artworks and each other
3. Offer opportunities for students to reflect on how their experiences may provide connections to the artworks they discuss, and to create new connections through dialogue
4. Provide the critical thinking skills to continue exploring ideas beyond the museum

BEFORE YOUR VISIT

Logistics

Make sure you have your tickets! See the Frequently Asked Questions page for information on making reservations. LACMA's ticket office will send your passes via email as a QR code. Remember to check your spam folder in case your email security settings send the message to spam.

We recommend pre-assigning chaperones and students to a learning group of up to 10 students ahead of time. Each learning group must be accompanied by an adult chaperone. Remember to share copies of the self-guide materials you selected, [maps](#), meeting places, and the schedule with chaperones ahead of time. Find more information about student-to-chaperone ratios under General Visitor Guidelines. General chaperone guidelines can be found below.

You may plan the location of your tour ahead of time. Check the Getting Around recommendations in the Teacher Overview of your selected self-guided tour for tips on where to start.

General Visitor Guidelines

A brief set of visitor guidelines can be found in each packet and on LACMA's campus [map](#). Please take a moment to review them with your students and chaperones. A more comprehensive list can be found below.

To help us keep students safe:

- Be mindful of surfaces and surroundings and walk carefully both indoors and outdoors
- Assign one adult chaperone to a group of 10 students or less
- LACMA is an open campus; chaperones should accompany students at all times, including to the restrooms, in the LACMA Store, and in the galleries
- Chaperones must accompany students to the LACMA Store, with a maximum of 10 students per group
- In case groups get separated, designate a meeting area and time, and remember to carry a [map](#) with you at all times
- Encourage students to ask staff and volunteers for help, if needed; security guards, visitor services associates, educators, and docents can help direct students to meeting places, restrooms, and exits

To help us protect the art:

- Be mindful of how you move around the museum and ensure that you keep an arm's-length distance from any artwork, wall, table, or pedestal
- Do not lean or set things on cases or tables where artwork is displayed
- Mind all marked stanchions, exhibition platforms, and floor boundaries
- The curtains along the perimeter of the David Geffen Galleries are artworks; please refrain from touching them
- No food or drinks indoors; drinking fountains are located throughout campus
- Students should leave backpacks and large bags on the bus; adults should carry backpacks facing forward (first aid kits may be carried into the galleries by chaperones)
- Only graphite pencils are allowed in the galleries; no pens, markers, crayons, or color pencils are allowed
- Photography is welcome but please turn off flash

Guidelines for Chaperones

Chaperones play an important role in creating a successful museum experience for all of the students in your group.

- They model safe and respectful behavior by adhering to the visitor guidelines
- They stay with students and carry maps to help students find their way
- They encourage curiosity and foster a positive learning environment by reminding students that there are no "wrong" responses to art
- They support student learning by helping students understand the activities

Accessibility

LACMA welcomes students of all abilities. For a general overview of the general services and amenities available, please visit the accessibility page on lacma.org. Below you will find information specific to self-guided student tours.

- If your group requires additional adults, such as personal care assistants or aides, the chaperone-to-student ratio will be adjusted to accommodate your group's needs
- Accessible bus drop-off locations are available
- Service animals are allowed in the galleries and will just need to be checked in at the ticket office
- Groups with mobility devices may access galleries through ramps and elevators; all LACMA restrooms are accessible
- Wheelchairs are available at the ticketing office

Preparing Yourself for Engagement

The Teacher Overview in each document includes sections on timing and facilitation. It lays out how much time you can expect to spend on each activity or worksheet in the packet as well as how the activities should be presented and what type of engagement (independent, pair-share, group) you should expect to facilitate.

You can view works on view ahead of time [online](#). To learn more about what's on view, check "works on view" on the LACMA Collections landing page. Once you have selected an artwork, click on the image to find the artwork entry, which includes label information plus its current location.

Tip: To familiarize yourself with the campus, view or download the [campus map](#). On page 2 of the map, you will find a gallery map to the David Geffen Galleries and a list of the presentations currently on view. You can also use the David Geffen Galleries guide on [Bloomberg Connects](#), which includes maps, descriptions, and selected artwork information.

Preparing Students for Engagement

You may use the optional introductory script included in each packet. Scripts can be modified to best suit your students. You might also consider showing students artworks that they might see on their visit [online](#) or by sharing the campus [map](#).

Pre-Visit Tip: Students who are comfortable navigating digital tools on their own may benefit from an assignment using LACMA Collections [online](#) to match an artwork to its location on campus. You may also use the online artwork listings to introduce students to the type of information shared on exhibition labels: invite them to select an artwork and ask them to identify the type of information on the online entry. Use the glossary of terms support you in this activity.

ARRIVING ON CAMPUS

For parking information, see the Frequently Asked Questions page. Check in at the ticketing counter near [Urban Light](#), located near Wilshire Boulevard. The visitor services associate at the counter will scan your code and ask you to provide them with a final count. They will then provide you with admission stickers. Keep those stickers on during your entire visit as they provide you with access to any of the galleries. If students need to use the restroom, use the [map](#) to find the one closest to you.

AFTER YOUR VISIT

You may use the optional script for post-visit reflections. Scripts can be modified to meet the needs of your students. These reflection questions may be presented by the chaperones at the end of the self-guided engagement or by lead teachers in a debrief session.

Tip: Back in the classroom, encourage students to review their notes while viewing the artworks that they chose for their activities [online](#).

- Do they feel the same way about the artworks viewing them online as they did viewing them in person?
- What might be similar and what might be different about this experience?
- If you are sharing the artwork entry with students, is there anything in the artwork entry that surprises them?

You might consider having the student create a label for a selected artwork without viewing the artwork entry:

- Ask them to come up with a title, year made, country of origin, and media/materials
- Then, have them compare it to the actual label
- Is there anything that surprises them about the artwork information they found online?

FREE NEXGENLA MEMBERSHIP

Make LACMA a regular part of your life! NexGenLA is a free membership for students under 18 who live in L.A. County. As NexGenLA members, kids and teens can visit the museum for free anytime and bring one guest for free. If you are interested in obtaining free memberships for your students, you are encouraged to share [this link](#) with your students and their guardians. Students ages 13–17 can sign themselves up for NexGenLA. [Learn more about NexGenLA](#).

THANK YOU!

We hope that this overview is helpful in planning your self-guided visit and thank you for selecting LACMA as a field trip destination! To learn more about our student engagement options, visit our field trips [page](#).

LACMA

SELF-GUIDED TOURS | FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need reservations?

Yes, LACMA requires a minimum of two weeks to make self-guided visit reservations. Reservations can be made via email at schooltours@lacma.org.

How much will it cost?

LACMA grants free admission to all students visiting with their school groups and to a limited number of accompanying adults. Please note that your self-guided visit does not include free parking.

How many students can I bring?

LACMA can accommodate a maximum of 100 students per school, per day. Students will be split into two groups of 50 and assigned staggered entry times (e.g., 12 pm and 12:30 pm). Once admitted, students may stay for the remainder of the day.

How many adults should I bring?

LACMA requires a minimum of one chaperone per every 10 students and allows a maximum of one for every five. Adults exceeding this ratio must pay their own admission. Exceptions are made for adults accompanying students that require special assistance.

What time can we visit?

Self-guided visit reservations are available beginning at 11:30 am on weekdays and 10:30 am on weekends, up until one hour before the museum's closing time on your selected date. Please note that we are closed to the public on Wednesdays and will not schedule self-guided visits on days that we are closed.

Where can we park our bus?

Free bus parking is first come first serve on S. Curson Ave. near the La Brea Tar Pits.

Where can we store our lunches?

Please leave items like lunches, backpacks, and water bottles on the bus or in vehicles.

Where can we eat lunch?

There are food trucks near the museum, but LACMA currently does not have a designated eating area for school groups. Our campus is adjoined to Hancock Park, where school groups are encouraged to eat if weather permits.

Can we get a tour guide?

If you are interested in a guided tour for K–12 students, please visit gallerylearning.lacma.org to find availability. If you would like to join a drop-in docent-led tour during your self-guided visit you can find upcoming drop in tours on our events page.

DISCUSSION TIPS

Getting Started: Discussion Questions and Prompts

These general questions and prompts can be used with any grade level. Use them to enrich engagement when using the self-guided packets, as a classroom warm-up before your visit, or to design your own self-guided experience.

Tip: Always provide 30 seconds to one minute of close looking before you begin your discussion.

1. “What do you see?” or “Describe what you see”

This prompt invites students to take their time to closely observe the artwork before jumping to opinions or interpretations. It encourages students to focus on visual evidence by citing elements like shape, line, or color. You can also ask them to notice and describe materials, patterns, and how the artwork is arranged. Follow up this prompt with open-ended questions to help students notice even more details.

- a. An open-ended question does not result in a “yes” or “no” answer. For example, instead of asking “Do you think this person is sad?” you might ask “Can you describe what you see that makes you think this person might be sad?” or “What do you see that makes you say that they are sad?”

2. “What do you wonder?”

This prompt encourages students to share any questions they might have about this artwork, which encourages them to reveal and describe an aspect of the artwork that they have a question about. For example, they might say “I wonder why this is so shiny,” which reveals that they are looking at surface quality or texture. This question invites students to explore their curiosity about what they just observed.

- a. You can ask “What do you wonder?” independently, or use it after asking “What do you see?” to start building up a conversation.
- b. You might consider paraphrasing or repeating the thoughts that students share, both as a way to confirm that you understand what the student is saying and also as a way to let other students consider an idea and add their own thoughts.

3. Movement and Body Prompts

Movement and body prompts support embodied responses, which help kinesthetic learners engage with art and encourages other learners to consider their physical connection to an artwork. By using their bodies to mimic shapes, gestures, or motion in artworks, students might better understand how artists depict movement or show emotion, while staying focused and involved.

- a. You might try “Can you trace the lines you see in the air with your fingers?” to encourage students to understand the direction, speed, and quality of line or “Can you tap out the rhythm of the spots?” to encourage students to identify pattern or action in an artwork.
- b. You might try “Can you mimic the way that the figure is posing?” to help students feel the mood or emotion depicted in an artwork

4. Prompts for Deeper Thinking: These questions encourage students to look beyond what they see and explore the artist's choices and intentions. By asking why and how students practice making inferences, personal connections, and thinking about meaning and emotion in artwork. You might consider gently guiding students towards deeper thinking if needed.

- a. You might try "What actions might the artist have taken when they made this?" to help students understand the gestures, force, movements, or tools that an artist might have used to create an artwork.
 - i. You might consider asking the students to act out those gestures or movements to encourage embodied response.
- b. You might try "What do you think the artist is trying to make you feel or think?" to encourage students to consider the role of artwork as a tool of communication across geographies and time periods.
 - i. Consider following this question with "What do you see that makes you say that?" to encourage the citation of visual evidence.

GLOSSARY OF ART TERMS

General Museum Terms

Museum: A place where objects that may be important to human history, art, and science are kept safe and available to be viewed by anyone. LACMA, which stands for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, is a place where art is kept to be viewed by residents of and visitors to the County of Los Angeles!

Collection: A group of things or the action of gathering things together to study or admire them. LACMA's collection is made of over 155,000 artworks from around the world.

Exhibit: A public display of objects. Exhibits usually tell a story or support an idea or hypothesis.

Label: A small tag, usually placed next to an artwork, that gives visitors basic information about the artwork. Information includes the title of the artwork, the name(s) of the artist(s) if available, the year the artwork was made, the materials used to make the artwork, the size of the artwork, and the place where the artwork was made or found.

Gallery: A space for exhibiting art. At LACMA, art is exhibited in indoor and outdoor spaces.

Wall Text: A large sign, usually posted on the wall of a gallery, that provides information about the artwork on display. It tells visitors why the objects are being displayed together and might include historical or cultural information important to understanding the story being told in the exhibition.

The Elements of Art

Line: The path a point makes moving through space. We make lines when we make a mark by dragging a pencil point on a surface like paper. Lines can be straight, squiggly, thin, or thick.

Shape: A flat area enclosed by a border. Shapes are two-dimensional. Some examples include squares, circles, and triangles.

Form: A form is a shape with added dimension. A three-dimensional form has height, width, and depth, which translates into mass or volume. Examples of forms include cubes, spheres, and pyramids.

Space: The empty areas between, around, and within flat shapes or objects.

Texture: How something might feel. Texture is the surface quality of objects that we might experience through the sense of touch.

The Elements of Art (Cont.)

Value: How light or dark something is. It can also refer to how much light versus darkness we see in an image or on an object.

Color: An element that is created by reflected light. Our eyes perceive the wavelengths that bounce off of an object as light hits it as different colors. Artists use colors to remind us of certain feelings or ideas. Think about heart emojis. You will choose a specific color for a heart depending on what you want to say or express. We also use color to express feelings through language. For example, when someone is sad, they may say “I feel blue.”

APPENDIX | LACMA SELF-GUIDED TOUR ACTIVITY PACKETS

Below you will find a list of the self-guided activity packets currently offered at LACMA. These materials will be updated periodically so please return to this digital document from time to time for new materials!

ART WALK CHECKLIST

A scavenger hunt based on seven clues. The clues are presented as a checklist of accessible tasks that rely on the student's own taste and preferences to complete them. Working from the task prompt, students select any artwork they wish to match the prompt. Each task is followed by a bonus question for deeper examination and scaffolding questions to get ideas going.

- Can be used anywhere on the LACMA campus—choose your own adventure!
- No prior art experience necessary for students or teachers.
- Designed to be used by students working on their own or in pairs
- Suitable for all ages
- Can be used as a facilitated, small group experience for younger students or those who require additional support
- Timing is flexible; use it for as little or as long as you wish
- The worksheet includes seven prompts
- Most visitors will use it for between 30 and 90 minutes
- Required materials: print-outs of the worksheet, graphite pencils
 - Optional: clipboard or notebook for writing

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (Literacy) and VAPA Anchor Standard 7—Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 8—Interpret Intent and Meaning in Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 11—Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding

I WONDER ABOUT LARGE-SCALE ART AT LACMA

A collection of 11 worksheets to introduce students to specific large-scale artworks found outdoors, in the Resnick Pavilion lobby; in BCAM, Level 1; and in the Atlantic area of the David Geffen Galleries. Each worksheet asks three questions related to the prompts (“I see... I think... I wonder...”) which encourages students to look closely in order to describe, analyze, and interpret each artwork.

- Walking tour featuring specific large-scale contemporary artwork (mainly outdoors) at LACMA; students should follow a designated path which should be pre-selected by the teacher
- No prior art experience necessary for students or teachers
- Designed to be used by students working in small groups and guided by a chaperone or facilitator

I WONDER ABOUT LARGE-SCALE ART AT LACMA (CONT.)

- Suitable for all ages
 - Can be used as a facilitated, small-group experience for younger students or those who require additional support
- Timing is flexible—each worksheet requires a minimum of 10 minutes; use worksheets individually or mix and match
 - This packet contains 11 worksheets in total
 - Teachers should plan to spend between five and 10 minutes moving between stops; plan to spend about 60 minutes to complete between three to four worksheets.
- Required materials: print-outs of the selected worksheet(s) for each learning group facilitator
 - Optional: notebook and graphite pencil for students to take notes

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (Literacy) and VAPA Anchor Standard 7—Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 8—Interpret Intent and Meaning in Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 9—Apply Criteria to Evaluate Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 11—Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding

A SENSE-ATIONAL SEARCH!

A set of reflection worksheets that encourage students to examine artworks through the lenses of sight, sound, taste, touch, smell, and movement. Each two-page worksheet explores one of the senses, asking students to consider the sense before selecting a corresponding artwork or set of artworks. These open-ended worksheets can be used on various visits. When utilized in association with LACMA's collection online, they can be brought into the classroom for more in-depth analysis and conversation.

- Can be used anywhere on the LACMA campus—choose your own adventure!
- Requires no prior art experience
 - Familiarity with the elements of art is a plus
- Designed to be used by students working in small groups and accompanied by a chaperone or facilitator
- The content is suitable for all ages and the materials are designed to be adjustable
 - K–8 students will need a chaperone, instructor, or facilitator to present the prompts and keep the conversation moving and grounded in the content
 - 9–12 students may work independently and without facilitation support but should still have a chaperone or instructor accompany them to respond to clarifying questions

A SENSE-ATIONAL SEARCH (CONT.)

- Timing is flexible; each worksheet requires a minimum of 15–20 minutes
 - Use worksheets individually or mix and match (six worksheets total); we recommend allocating between 75 and 90 minutes to this activity (approximately three to five worksheets)
- Each worksheet includes specific instructions related to its respective sense, three basic prompts, one pair-share activity, and two bonus guided questions
- Required materials: print-outs of the selected worksheet(s) for each small group leader or facilitator, graphite pencils, and notebooks for each student

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (Literacy); VAPA Anchor Standard 7—Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 8—Interpret Intent and Meaning in Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 9—Apply Criteria to Evaluate Artistic Work; Anchor Standard 11—Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding