

PICTURING

PROJECT: QUALITY TIME

Montgomery County Public Schools

Self-Guided Tour

AMERICA

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.

These self-guided activities can be used anytime you would like to visit the Smithsonian American Art Museum. These activities are intended to help your family learn to look at and talk about art.

Come together for quality time with family, friends, and some great works of art.



Suggested activities

Apply these activities to any works of art in the galleries that interest you and your family. You will find permanent collection works, or works that belong to the gallery, and special exhibitions of works on loan from other museums. Feel free to ask museum staff if you need assistance locating a particular work of art.

1. USE YOUR ARTIST EYES.

Choose any artwork and take a closer look. Spend a few minutes just looking. Write ten words or phrases that *identifies* or *describes* what you see.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Challenge:

Look at the same artwork again. Write 10 additional words or phrases that identifies or describes what you see. Do not repeat what you have just written, but describe it in greater detail.

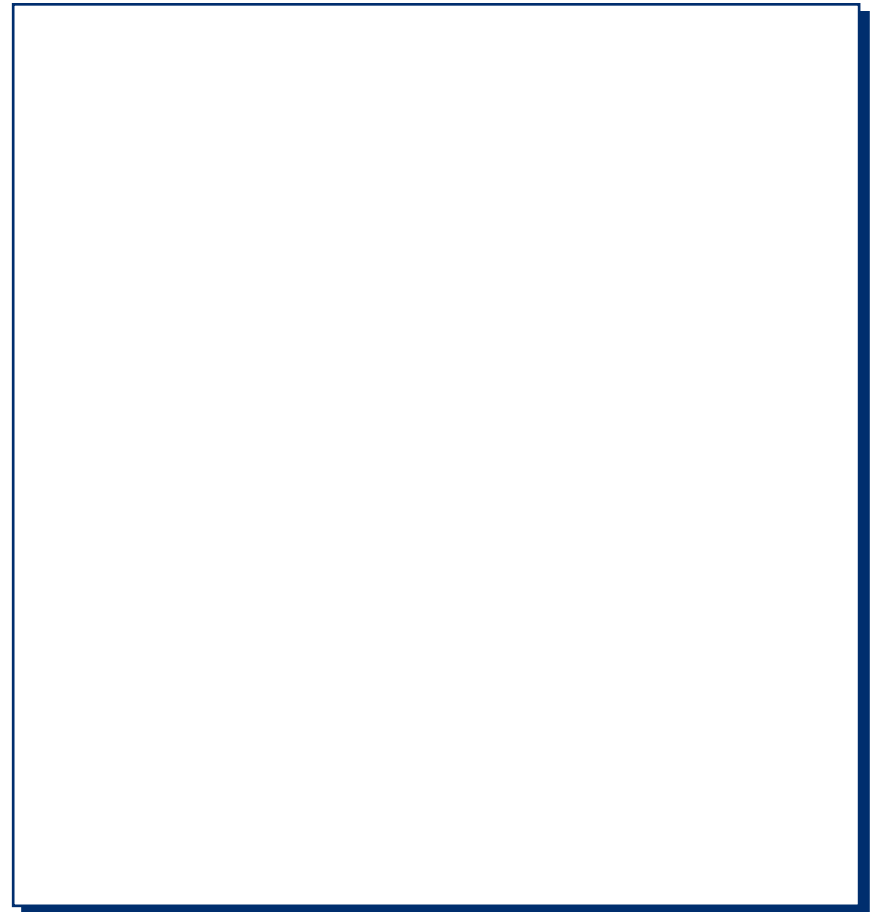
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

2. FIND THE MYSTERY PAINTING.

Find a gallery with many artworks on display. Select one person to be "leader." Everybody else stands in the middle of the gallery with their eyes closed. The leader chooses an artwork and gives clues to describe the painting. After listening to several clues, everybody opens their eyes and tries to guess the mystery painting. Try this in several different galleries throughout the museum to give everyone a turn being the leader.

Extension:

Ask why the leader chose that artwork to be the mystery painting. Draw a picture of your favorite Mystery Painting.



3. HOW'D THEY MAKE THAT?

People create art by inventing new ways to better express their ideas, feelings, and memories. Sometimes artists use unusual tools or techniques. A medium (plural – media) is a material and the related techniques used to create art. Examples: oil on canvas, watercolor, charcoal, clay, marble

Suggested works:

- 1st Floor, North Wing: Mike Wilkins, *Preamble*, 1987
- 1st Floor, West Wing: James Hampton, *The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations' Millennium General Assembly*, ca. 1950-1964

As your family tours the galleries, make a list of all the different media artist use to create art.

At-home masterpiece:

Look around your home to find materials that could be used to make art. Create a mixed media sculpture or collage.

4. ART CAN TELL A STORY!

A narrative artwork allows storytelling to emerge in visual form. It can be real or imagined; represent the past, present, or future. It can be a single artwork or a series of artworks.

Suggested works:

- 1st Floor, West Wing: Morris Kantor, *Baseball at Night*, 1934
- 1st Floor, West Wing: Lily Furedi, *Subway*, 1934
- 2nd Floor, North Wing: Allan Rohan Crite, *Sunlight and Shadow*, 1941

or choose your own:

Find a narrative artwork in the museum. Write a story to describe what you see.

What happens in the beginning of the story?

What happens in the middle of the story?

How does the story end?

5. ART CAN RECORD HISTORY.

Artists can create artwork to document significant personal events, current and historical events, and celebrations.

Suggested works:

- 1st Floor, West Wing: Malcah Zeldis, *Miss Liberty Celebration*, 1987
- 4th Floor, Luce Foundation Center: William H. Johnson, *Soldiers Training*, ca.1942
- 2nd Floor, East Wing: Alonzo Chappel, *Lee Surrendering to Grant at Appomattox*, ca.1870

Can you find a history painting? What event did the artist choose to depict? Why do you think this event was important to the artist?

Create a drawing of the event from your own point-of-view.



At-home masterpiece:

Collect photographs and other materials to create a collage that represents an event from your personal history.

6. YOU BE THE CRITIC!

Art Criticism is a process that uses art vocabulary to describe, analyze, interpret, and judge works of art.

Suggested works:

- 3rd Floor, East Wing: Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway*, 1995
- 3rd Floor, East Wing: David Hockney, *Snails Space with Vari-Lites*, "Painting as Performance", 1995-1996

Choose an artwork that you find interesting. Now it's your turn to be an art critic. Use what you know about art to judge this artwork in these categories: composition, creativity, and craftsmanship. Discuss your opinions as a group.

Composition:

What art elements (line, color, value, shape, texture, form, and space) and design principles (pattern, repetition, contrast, balance, rhythm & movement, emphasis, emphasis, unity) did the artist use to make the artwork successful?

Creativity:

What makes this artwork unique and special?

Craftsmanship:

Did the artist skillfully use tools, technique, and media to create their work?

Do you like this artwork? Explain why or why not.

Do you have any suggestions for the artist to improve the artwork?

Smithsonian American Art Museum (<http://americanart.si.edu>)

Location

8th and G Streets NW, Washington DC 20004

Hours

11:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. daily

Transportation

*Street parking is limited. Taking Metro is highly recommended.
RED/YELLOW/GREEN lines: Chinatown – Gallery Place*

Rules for Visiting the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Thank you for visiting the Smithsonian American Art Museum with your child. Help make your visit successful and fun by supervising your children in the museum.

Do Not Touch the Art. *All artwork including sculpture sitting on the floor can be damaged by oils from you hands.*

Carrying Things. *Check coats and large bags in the checkroom at the entrance. Backpacks may only be carried on one shoulder when moving through the galleries.*

Safety and Conduct. *Walk, do not run, in the galleries. We don't want people to hurt themselves or damage a work of art. Use "inside" voices. Respect fellow students and other visitors.*

Drawing/Notetaking. *Writing and sketching are allowed in the galleries using pencil only. Do not lean upon walls and cases or use them as writing surfaces.*

Potography. *Flash photography is permitted, but not in special exhibitions or the Luce Conservation Center*

*The **Project: Quality Time** team needs your help! Please take time to complete the feedback form as you leave. The forms are located at the sign-in table. Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated and are used to help plan future events.*

