

Terra Teacher Lab

Planning an American Art Field Trip to the Art Institute

Take the following steps to plan for students' self-guided learning in the American galleries of the Art Institute of Chicago (planning worksheets are attached):

1. **Decide how you want the field trip to relate to your curriculum.** Define themes you want to support and goals for the trip.
2. **Visit the Art Institute's American galleries in advance of your trip and choose a gallery or selection of galleries you want students to visit.** Note that the collection is arranged chronologically and that several galleries have a theme or focus.

American art (pre-1950) is also on view in the following locations: the new American Folk Art Gallery (Gallery 227), American Decorative Arts (Galleries 158-159), Photography (Galleries 1-4), Architecture and Design Galleries (Galleries 283-285), Prints and Drawings (Galleries 124-127), and sometimes in Special Exhibitions galleries (ongoing, check <http://www.artic.edu/aic/exhibitions/current>).

3. **Choose groups or *kinds* of artworks you want students to see and note their locations (the gallery number).** Recommendation: limit yourself to 3–6 works (or groups of artworks)—“stations” where students will stop in the American galleries. Caution: Works of art are sometimes taken “off-view” by museum staff, so plan with alternative artworks in mind.
4. **Learn about the works you want students to see.** Read gallery labels. Note which institution (Art Institute or Terra Foundation) owns the works that most interested you so you can visit the respective Web sites to learn more:
 - <http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/amer>
 - <http://www.terraamericanart.org/collections/code/emuseum.asp>

Use the “My Collection” feature on the Art Institute Web site to learn what artworks are on view in the galleries (artwork location information is updated every day), to select artworks, and to add your own notes.

Staff at the Art Institute's **Crown Family Educator Resource Center** (ERC) can help you find more information about American art in both collections and can share ideas for self-guiding students at the museum. For hours and information visit <http://www.artic.edu/aic/education/trc/index.html> or call or email: (312) 443-3719; erc@artic.edu.

5. **Identify activities for self-guided learning.** Think about what you can do at the museum that you can't do in your classroom. What will you ask students to do that will address your learning goals and help them look at and think about each work of art you selected? For example: will they answer questions you provide, draft their own questions, write a poem or post-card, make a sketch, or compare two works of art, etc.?

6. **Plan pre- and post-visit strategies.** How will you prepare students for the museum visit and what they will see and do in the galleries? How will you debrief afterward to review and reinforce what they learned? Briefly describe your pre- and post-visit plans in the attached.

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Field Trip Planning Outline

Teacher: _____ School: _____

Curriculum Connection/Subject or Topic (e.g., American literature, Civil War, symbols)

Goals for Visit

Theme (e.g., American Identity, Diversity, etc.)

PREPARE—Pre-Visit Activities in the Classroom

AT THE MUSEUM

INTRODUCE: How will you start? How will you orient students? What will they do?

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DEVELOP: Which galleries will they visit and what will students see and do?

- **Galleries** (locations of works you want students to see—note gallery numbers)
- **Artworks** (names/titles of a few works per location that you want students to “read”)

Gallery number	Key idea	Artwork—title, artist, collection	Activity

Pages for designing individual learning activities for the visit follow this outline.

CONCLUDE

What will you ask at the end of the visit?

What will students do?

EXPAND & REINFORCE—Post-visit activities in the classroom

Gallery Learning Activity Plans

The following pages are student worksheet templates, set up to help you assign and structure learning activities in the galleries. The templates include a place to put a “stop” number. If your class is divided into groups, you may also want to use this space to identify a group, such as “Group A, Stop 1,” “Group B, Stop 2,” etc. Five pages are included. Make additional copies if your tour covers more than five “stops” in the museum.

Field Trip to the Art Institute of Chicago American Galleries

Guide for Students

Stop number: _____

Gallery number: _____

Key Idea:

Artworks to look for:

- Title and date:
- Artist:

- Title and date:
- Artist:

Activity:

*Recommendation:
Insert "thumbnail" images if
available on the Art Institute
or Terra Foundation Web
sites.*

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