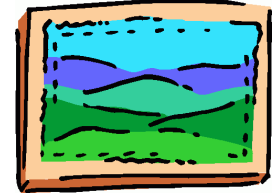




# Intergenerational Trips to the Art Museum

Museums provide a wonderful opportunity to spend time with another generation in a setting that is stimulating and enjoyable for everyone. Use these ideas for your next museum visit!



## 1. Before your visit:

- Visit your local library for FREE museum passes and suggestions for exciting and educational museums.
- When choosing a museum, consider what the younger generation is studying in school. Is there a local museum that connects to what they are learning? Consider having the student become the “leader” for the trip, sharing what they are learning in their classroom.
- Prepare for your trip by checking out the museum’s website. Find out if they have any special exhibitions or programs.
- Choose one or two exhibit halls to visit or prepare a short list of possibilities and let the children decide.
- Talk about the different types of exhibits you will see. If there is a particular piece of art or item that you will see on your visit, learn about it ahead of time to make seeing it in person more meaningful. Perhaps you can seize this opportunity to have the youngsters show you how to search on the web and the research sites they use.
- Pack items to use at the museum, including paper, pencils, a clipboard or notebook, a camera, and ***Bridges Together Grand Conversation Cards*** to inspire conversation.

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## 2. During your visit:

- Look at the museum map together and talk about the different sections you will visit.
- Ask the museum staff if they have any activities you can participate in during your time at the museum. Some museums offer scavenger hunts, puzzles, digital tools and other ways to engage with the art.
- As you look at different art pieces, take time to observe before looking at the written description. Ask questions like:
  - What do you notice about the piece?
  - What draws your eye?
  - How does it make you feel?
  - What medium did the artist use? (oil paint, watercolor, charcoal, clay, etc.)
  - What techniques did the artist use?
  - What colors did the artist use? Why do you think those colors were chosen?
  - Use your imagination to tell a story about the piece of art.
  - Stare at the piece for one minute. Have someone be the timekeeper. What do you notice? Take turns being the timekeeper.
  - After you have discussed a piece of art, look at the description and the artist’s name. Does this change how you feel about the piece? Would you have titled it something different? Are there other pieces by this artist in the museum? If so, how do they compare and contrast?





Before you leave the museum, consider stopping at the gift shop to purchase a few postcards to use in future activities.

### 3. After your visit

Continue your experience with some of these activities.

Remember that art educators often say “process not product”, meaning : focus on the process of the activity, not the final product. Have fun with these ideas that are based on the multiple intelligences!



- ❖ **Word smart:** Write a poem to go with a piece of art or write a note on a postcard then mail it.
- ❖ **Logic smart:** Some art is made from a collection of one type of item, such as a sculpture made from tennis balls or a mosaic made from bottle caps. As a family or organization, select an item like tennis balls, bottle caps or paper clips. Count them, group them and then make art!
- ❖ **Picture smart:** Recreate your favorite works of art at home. Use different materials to make the piece your own. For example, if you liked a painted portrait, consider dressing up and taking a picture that resembles it. Or if you enjoyed a particular sculpture, make a similar one out of play dough or clay.
- ❖ **Nature smart:** Collect some items from outside and use them to create art. What if you painted with a branch or leaf? Can you boil beets and dye with them?
- ❖ **Body smart:** Re-enact a sculpture with your body.
- ❖ **Music smart:** Write a song about your favorite piece or find a song that goes well with the artwork.
- ❖ **Self-smart:** Write a reflection on your time at the museum or create a collage about your experience.
- ❖ **People smart:** Make a puzzle by cutting the postcard into pieces. Consider writing a note to someone who needs some cheering-up on the back of the postcard before cutting it – and then mail it in an envelope! What a nice surprise!

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### **Check it out:**

*Some Massachusetts art museums that have been noted for their family-friendly environments and activities include:*

- *The Fitchburg Art Museum (thank you for hosting a Coffee Connection!)*
- *deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum*
- *Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art*
- *Museum of Fine Arts*
- *Norman Rockwell Museum*
- *The Worcester Art Museum*
- *Peabody Essex Museum*
- *The Springfield Museums and Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden*