

Make the most of your museum visit! A trip to the Walters is exciting in itself, but you can make the experience go even further by linking your museum tour to classroom activities. Use the ideas in the pre-visit section below to build anticipation for your trip, and to prepare students for what they will do and see at the museum. Afterwards, the post-visit suggestions will help students reflect on their museum experience back in the classroom.

PRE-VISIT:

- As a class, have students share ideas of what they expect to see and do on their trip to the Walters. You can do this by making a chart, list, or even a collaborative mural. What will the museum be like? What art objects and artifacts will they find here? Who will be here to teach the students about the artwork? After the trip, they can reflect on these ideas and talk about how the actual museum experience was similar to or different from their expectations.
- Go over museum manners. Remind everyone that on their trip to the Walters Art Museum they will need to stay with their tour group, use inside voices, and remember not to run or touch any works of art.
- Divide students into their color-coded tour groups, and have each child make his or her own nametag that incorporates their group's color. Refer to your confirmation letter for the correct number of groups.
- Invite students to visit the Walters' website (www.thewalters.org) to view images and learn more about our collections. Give them specific objects and questions to research: How did the *Rubens Vase* get its name? Which god is celebrated on the Roman sarcophagus? What object is the Egyptian sculpture of Enehy holding? Students might want to work in groups to become experts on a particular work of art or time period, and then share what they discovered with the class.
- How did the Walters acquire all of its art? Explain to students that much of it was collected by William and Henry Walters about 100 years ago. (For more information on the museum's history, visit www.thewalters.org/html/museum_detail.asp?ID=62). Ask students if they have any collections of their own. Why do we collect things? Did the Walters have the same reasons for collecting art? Why or why not?



POST-VISIT:

- Ask students to record the most memorable parts of their trip to the Walters Art Museum. This can take several forms: journal entries, drawings, or even letters to your docents.
- Ask students to give a presentation about their trip to another class or grade who hasn't been to the museum before. What did they learn? What did they see? How can they share this with others?
- Have students reflect on their experience by writing a review of the Walters' exhibits as if they were magazine critics. Have them first describe what they saw and learned, and then tell what they thought about it. Would they change anything?
- Have students research contemporary life in one of the countries they learned about through the Walters' collections. How is life in Egypt today different from the way it was 3000 years ago? How is it similar?
- In recent years, debate has arisen about whether some artifacts should be in museum collections at all, or returned to their countries of origin. Older students could research this issue, take sides, and have a debate. Some links to help in their research:
www.american.edu/TED/monument.htm
www.emory.edu/ACAD_EXCHANGE/2003/decjan/ramesses.html
news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/03/0304_040304_mummyantiquities.html

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

For Students:

The Nine-Ton Cat: Behind the Scenes at an Art Museum, Peggy Thomson, Barbara Moore
You Can't Take a Balloon into the Metropolitan Museum, Jacqueline Preiss Weitzman
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, E.L. Konigsburg
Babar's Museum of Art, Laurent de Brunhoff
How to Take Your Grandmother to the Museum, Lois Wyse

For Teachers:

Looking to Write: Children's Writing Through the Visual Arts, Mary Ehrenworth
The Intelligent Eye: Learning to Think by Looking at Art, David Perkins

Using Museum Resources in the K-12 Social Studies Curriculum: www.ericdigests.org/1998-1/social.htm
Smithsonian Education: www.smithsonianeducation.org
Harvard Project MUSE: www.pz.harvard.edu/Research/MUSE.htm

Use the *Welcome to the Walters* Teacher Resource Kit for more lesson ideas and images of objects!
Email schoolprograms@thewalters.org for more information.