COMMON CORE CONNECTION
DESIGNING AN ART EXHIBITION

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.5 (optional) Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Intended audience All grade levels

Time frame two 50-minute lessons (depending on whether artworks are student or teacher chosen and whether final work is presented)

OVERVIEW
So many decisions go into creating an exhibition—which pieces to use, how to group and arrange them, and how to make their artwork available clear to the public. This activity starts with a portrait of the founder of the Walters Art Museum, Henry Walters. Henry Walters collected objects and arranged them in interesting and meaningful ways when designing his museum. In this activity, students will create an exhibition by grouping works of art in meaningful and deliberate ways.

SUPPLIES
- Printed or digital copies of Portrait of Henry Walters (37.1682)
- Printed or digital copies of Worksheet 1: Pre-selected Artworks Worksheet
- Printed or digital copies of Worksheet 2: Categorizing Art to Design an Art Exhibit Worksheet
- Cut and Paste Images for Categorizing Art to Design an Art Exhibit Worksheet
- Scissors and Glue
- Computers
- Pens/pencils

ACTIVITY
1. Give basic background information on the history of the Walters Art Museum. The Walters Art Museum began as the private passion of William T. Walters (1819–1894) and his son Henry (1848–1931), but grew into a public mission to bring art to the people of Baltimore. The men assembled more than 20,000 diverse and incredible artworks—the majority of the art objects that constitute the Walters Art Museum as we know it today. The museum’s new installation explores William and Henry’s lives and legacy.
2. Have students describe and analyze the Portrait of Henry Walters. What do you notice about him? What type of a man does he seem to be? Why is he portrayed the way he is? Look carefully at the works of art in the portrait. Why do you think the artist chose these works, and what do they tell you about Henry’s collecting habits?
3. Give background information on Henry Walters and how he formed his art museum. Henry Walters envisaged a museum that would fulfill an educational role within the community. He continued his father’s collection of European, Asian, and American art, adding 19th-century artworks, prized rare books and manuscripts, Egyptian, ancient Near Eastern, and Islamic art, as well as a number of key classical and Western medieval objects. In 1900, he purchased a number of properties on Charles Street, in Mount Vernon Place, to serve as a site for a future gallery that opened to the public in 1909. He died in 1931, bequeathing the building and its contents to the mayor and city council of Baltimore “for the benefit of the public.”
4. Tell students that they are going to work in groups to organize their own art museum, just like Henry Walters. Students must have an overarching theme, idea, or purpose to their exhibit that ties it all together. They will also need an exhibition title!
5. Use the Worksheet 1: Pre-selected Artworks and the Works of Art Website (http://art.thewalters.org/) to determine information on 15 pieces of art. Then use the Worksheet 2: Categorizing Art to Design an Art Exhibit to separate art into categories and explain their own exhibition.
Encourage students to think outside the box—they don't necessarily need to sort them by time period, geographical location, or media type.

Groups should discuss their plans, categorization, and art choices and question and challenge each other to make the strongest groupings.

POSSIBLE EXTENSIONS

- If space allows, have students actually set up their art exhibitions using print-outs of the artworks.
- Students could also practice writing label copy, which consists of the artist’s name, date of the artwork’s creation, and a brief description of the work.
- In his portrait, Henry Walters is shown with three objects from his collection: a Mosan enamel plaque of the 12th century (44.101), a Limoges enamel reliquary of the 13th century (44.288), and a German brass statuette of St. Sebastian of the early 16th century (53.34). Have students choose objects that they would select for their own portraits, either from the Walters’ collection or from their own.
- More advanced students can search the Works of Art Website found at http://art.thewalters.org/ and choose 15 works of art on their own. Sort objects into 3-5 categories—there must be at least two artworks in each category. They may then use the Worksheet 2:Categorizing Art to Design an Art Exhibit to separate art into categories and explain their own exhibition.
## WORKSHEET 1: PRE-SELECTED ARTWORKS

### DIRECTIONS
Using the Walters Art Museum Works of Art Website ([http://art.thewalters.org/](http://art.thewalters.org/)), fill in information about the objects. Use the accession number (below each photograph) to easily find the objects.

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<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>YEAR / LOCATION</th>
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CUT AND PASTE IMAGES FOR WORKSHEET 2: CATEGORIZING ART TO DESIGN AN ART EXHIBITION
WORKSHEET 2: CATEGORIZING ART TO DESIGN AN ART EXHIBIT

STEP ONE DIRECTIONS
Analyze all of the artworks. With your group, categorize and group the artworks into categories that make sense. Think creatively and deeply. There must be at least two artworks in every category.

EXAMPLE 1

These artworks are grouped together because they all show lions.

Cut and paste the artworks in this category below.

EXAMPLE 2

These artworks are grouped together because they were made out of ivory.

Cut and paste the artworks in this category below.
**CATEGORY 1**

These artworks are grouped together because ____________________________
______________________________________________________________.

*Cut and paste the artworks in this category below.*

**CATEGORY 2**

These artworks are grouped together because ____________________________
______________________________________________________________.

*Cut and paste the artworks in this category below.*
STEP TWO DIRECTIONS
Answer the questions below to help both clarify the purpose behind your exhibition and explain the significance of your collection.

What is the overall theme, idea, or meaning of your exhibit? What ties it all together?

What is the title of your art exhibit?

Think about the physical space where you would want to display your art. Which works should be shown first and last? Which artworks need to be shown up higher or lower? Why?

What would be the most interesting artwork to show the visitors?

Do you think Henry Walters would agree with your arrangement? Why or why not?