



ART GALLERY *of* NEW SOUTH WALES

Learning to Look: an introduction to the Gallery

This Art Adventure Tour introduces young visitors to the Gallery and to different ways of looking at and interpreting a range of artworks. It is recommended for first time visitors, in particular Kindergarten groups, and provides children with an opportunity to develop their own visual arts vocabulary through discussion, exploration, activities and role-play.

Learning to Look makes visual arts relevant and accessible to children through comparisons to their own feelings, knowledge, imagination and interests. It is the perfect complement to other Key Learning Areas in the K-6 classroom and as a starting point for exploring visual culture both in the Gallery and in everyday life.

Through an exciting and creative range of interactive strategies children will:

- Discuss their impressions of the Gallery – its size, age, architectural style, atmosphere, its contents, why it is here etc. and how it compares to home, school and other spaces familiar to the children.
- Experience the range and variety of paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures, installations and photographs that form the Gallery's collection. (If appropriate, this tour may also include looking at free temporary exhibitions and displays).
- Focus on between four and six selected artworks for an in-depth investigation; listening to stories, looking carefully, responding, analysing, interpreting and sharing opinions and ideas. (If appropriate, art-making and/or role-playing activities may also be included).
- Relate their discoveries to their own experiences, the world around them and their own art activities.
- Learn about a range of techniques used by artists to create artworks and compare and contrast styles, themes and approaches.

Teachers may request a theme that complements their classroom activities in the Creative Arts and across the Key Learning Areas. We are, however, unable to focus on one particular artist due to the number of works that may or may not be on display at any one time.

Possible themes could be: the harbour; water; the beach; the city; transport; images of Australia; families; people and places; technology and communication.

Tours can also be adapted to cater for children with special needs such as ESL groups, children with learning difficulties or with disabilities.

Preparing for your visit:

Make sure you have read the confirmation letter from the Guides and have a good understanding of what you will need to do upon arrival and that you have looked at the Gallery's website for the Excursion Risk Management Assessment information.

It is a good idea to prepare for your visit to the Gallery with your class through a range of activities and discussions so the visit can become an integrated component of your classroom practise.

The following suggestions are ideas you might like to consider:

Pre-visit activities:

Research the Gallery's history on the website and find out how long it has been there, what it collects and what sort of things you might find in the collection.

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/history

Discuss the difference between looking at art in books and on the internet compared to seeing the real thing in a Gallery. What are the children expecting? What do they hope to see? Write down their responses and do a comparative study after their visit to see what surprised them, etc.

Look at some of the Gallery's collection in books or on the internet; if possible link your research to a theme you are studying in class. Choose a work that you find interesting and find out more about the artist and when it was painted.

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/browse

Create a word bank or glossary of art terms and find out their meanings. For example, subject-matter, composition, perspective, abstract, still life, portrait, cool and warm colours, landscape, pose, tone, technique and symbolism.

Post-visit activities:

Organise the class into the groups they were in for their visit. Ask each group to present to the class which artworks they saw and which ones were their favourites and why.

Create your own exhibition or display of artworks by the children, based on their visit to the Gallery. Inspiration could be taken from the journey to the Gallery, the building itself or some of the artworks seen on the excursion.

Use the Gallery's *MyVirtualGallery* website and create your own exhibition using artworks from the Gallery's collection; exhibitions could be themed to link to classroom practice.

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/ed/myvirtualgallery

Useful Resources:

The Art Gallery of New South Wales Handbook ISBN 0-7313-8948-4

How to talk to children about art by Francoise Barbe-Gall, Francis Lincoln Ltd. 2005, ISBN 0-7112-2388-2

The art book for children published by Phaidon 2005, ISBN 0-7148-4511-6

What colour is that? and *What number is that?* by Jennifer Keeler-Milne 2004, Art Gallery of New South Wales ISBN 0-7347-6363-8 and 0-7347-6362-X