

Ten questions to Ask Students about Art

Get the dialogue going, and let their ideas lead the way...

1. What do you see?
2. What did you see, hear or sense that made you say that?
3. Do you see more? What more can you find?
4. How does this work of art make you feel?
5. If you were the artist, how would you have made this? What different materials and processes would you use?
6. Does anything you see in this work of art remind you of something else you have seen or experienced?
7. What is this work of art about? Is there a message that goes beyond the subject matter?
8. What is the title of this artwork? How does the artwork relate to the title? If you could rename the artwork, what would your new title be?
9. Compare and contrast this work of art with:
 - another work of art in the Collection
 - another work of art you find while researching in a book or on the Internet
 - another work of art in a famous museum
 - an illustration you find in a book
 - a current events article
 - a story, poem, song or novel you have read, heard or written
 - an event in history
 - a famous person or someone you know
 - something you would find in nature
 - a modern or ancient invention
 - geometry, algebra or calculus
 - Anything! The possibilities for comparison are endless!
10. How does this work of art relate to you?



Ten Ways to Use Art In Your Classroom

A work of art is only the beginning...

1. A work of art can be a story (poem, play, song) starter.
2. A work of art can be a take off point for research.
3. A work of art can begin a discussion about history, society and culture.
4. A work of art can create a connection to current events, a social issue or a political theme.
5. A work of art can be a point of comparison to other people, places and times.
6. A work of art can inspire a calculation, scientific investigation or technological discovery.
7. A work of art can improve skills in looking and seeing.
8. A work of art can teach about people.
9. A work of art can be beautiful, ugly, challenging, inspiring or confrontational.
A work of art can stimulate thinking.
10. A work of art can be an inspiration to make more original works of art.



One Dozen Questions About Contemporary Art

Contemporary art brings to light many issues which span the history of art. Use these questions as a take off point for discussions with your students! *(Please note that some of these questions are more appropriate for upper level grades and some are appropriate for all levels.)*

1. Does contemporary art reflect society, individuals, or particular groups in society? Or, all of these?
 2. Can art that doesn't last really be considered art?
 3. Does art have to be beautiful? Why or why not?
 4. What does art communicate? Should art have a message?
 5. Is popular culture art?
 6. How has the role of the artist in the world changed over time?
 7. What is the relationship between tradition and contemporary art?
 8. What is the relationship between technology and contemporary art?
 9. Should some contemporary art be censored?
 10. Why do artists make art?
 11. How is contemporary art different than other movements in art history?
- Thinking about these issues may lead to the broadest question of all:
12. *What makes it art?*

Ten Artist's Quotations

A good take off point...

1. "Creation is a patient search."

Le Corbusier, architect

2. "A man draws with his brains and not with his hands."

Michelangelo, painter, sculptor, architect

3. "The element of risk is part of the challenge of art."

Robert Blair, painter

4. "No amount of skillful invention can replace the essential element of imagination."

Edward Hopper, painter

5. "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up."

Pablo Picasso, painter, sculptor

6. "Art is in harmony parallel with nature."

Paul Cezanne, painter

7. "Every good painter paints what he is."

Jackson Pollock, painter

8. "Creativity takes courage."

Henri Matisse, painter

9. "Art should be something that liberates the soul, provokes the imagination and encourages people to go further. It celebrates humanity..."

Keith Haring, painter, sculptor

10. "Sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

Lewis Carroll, author



James A. Michener Art Museum
138 South Pine Street Doylestown, PA 18901
215-340-9800 • www.michenerartmuseum.org



Top Ten from the Michener Art Museum

What makes the Michener great...

Walter Emerson Baum (1884 – 1956) • *The Narrows, 1936*

One of the few Pennsylvania Impressionists born in Bucks County, Walter Baum painted the Pennsylvania landscape in the styles of Impressionism and American Realism. He was one of the founders of the Allentown Museum of Art, the Kline-Baum Art School in Allentown and the Bucks County Traveling Art Gallery.

The Bucks County Prison

The massive stone walls and warden's house that make up the core of the Michener Art Museum today began as the Bucks County prison in 1884.

Daniel Garber (1880 – 1958) • *A Wooded Watershed, 1926*

Daniel Garber's *Wooded Watershed*, painted for Pennsylvania's Sesquicentennial, is the largest painting in the Museum.

Thomas Hicks (1823-1891) • *Portrait of Edward Hicks, 1836*

Thomas Hicks was best known for his naturalistic portraits, many of which depicted celebrities including Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, and Charles Dickens.

Paul Keene (b. 1920) • *Street Quartet, n.d.*

In his work, Keene has created new icons of black urban life in his anonymous portraits of jazz musicians. He has documented the movement and vitality of city life.

William Lathrop (1859 – 1938) • *Chilmark Moor, 1930*

William Langson Lathrop helped to establish the Pennsylvania Impressionist community of artists soon after he moved into Phillips' Mill in New Hope in 1899.

James A. Michener (1907 – 1997) • *Bucks County Office*

James Michener was a Pulitzer Prize-winning author of novels, short fiction, and nonfiction, much of which was based on his extensive research and travel. He is considered one of the most prolific and popular writers of the 20th century. The James A. Michener Art Museum is named after him.

George Nakashima (1905 – 1990) • *The Nakashima Reading Room*

George Nakashima was a master woodworker and furniture maker whose spiritual mission was to bring out the character of his wood. The George Nakashima Reading Room was designed by Mira Naskashima-Yarnell in 1993. It is a highlight of the James A. Michener Art Museum.

Edward Redfield (1869 – 1965) • *The Burning of Center Bridge, 1923*

Among the New Hope Impressionists, Edward Willis Redfield was the most decorated.

Ben Solowey (1900 – 1978) • *Rae Seated, 1935*

Ben Solowey had an international reputation for his canvases, watercolors and drawings in a wide variety of genres and styles, yet was part of no school or movement.



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Top Ten Buildings

Significant architectural works...

Angkor Wat • Angkor, Cambodia • early 12th century

Angkor Wat is a temple that was built for King Suryavarman II as the state temple in his capital city.

Brunelleschi's Dome • Florence, Italy • 1420-1436

The distinctive dome of the Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore of Florence, Italy, was built by Renaissance master Filippo Brunelleschi. The octagonal design was ingenious and unprecedented.

Chartres Cathedral • Chartres, France • 1220 - 1260

Chartres Cathedral is located about 50 miles from Paris, France. It's exemplary Gothic design includes flying buttresses, rising spires and delicate stained glass windows.

The Chrysler Building • New York, New York • 1928-1930

The Chrysler Building is a skyscraper and distinctive symbol of New York City, standing 1,046 feet high. The Chrysler Building was the first structure in the world to surpass the 1,000-foot threshold.

The Dome of the Rock • Jerusalem • 687-691

The Dome of the Rock is a notable Islamic shrine in what Muslims call the Noble Sanctuary and which Jews and Christians call the Temple Mount.

Fallingwater • Bear Run, Pennsylvania • 1935

Fallingwater, also known as the Edgar J. Kaufmann Sr. Residence, is an organically designed modernist house built over a waterfall by American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

The Pantheon • Rome, Italy • 125 AD

The word Pantheon derives from the Greek, meaning "Temple of all the Gods". It was built in Rome as a temple to the seven deities of the seven planets in the state religion of Ancient Rome.

The Parthenon • Athens, Greece • 5th Century BCE

The Parthenon is a temple of Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom. It was built on the Acropolis in Athens. It is a fine example of classical Greek architecture.

St. Basil's Cathedral • Moscow, Russia • 1555-1561

St. Basil's Cathedral is a multi-tented church on the Red Square in Moscow traditionally perceived as symbolic of the unique position of Russia between Europe and Asia.

The Taj Mahal • Agra, India • 1631-1634

The Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan commissioned the construction of the Taj Mahal as a mausoleum for his favorite wife. It is made entirely out of white marble.



Top Ten Artists

Grades Seven through Twelve

Diane Arbus (1923-1971) • *Identical Twins, 1967*

Diane Arbus was an American photographer noted for her images of people living on the fringes of society.

Alexander Calder (1898-1976) • *Red Mobile, 1956*

Alexander Calder was a Pennsylvania-born artist who is credited with the invention of the mobile and the stabile. Calder was also a painter and printmaker.

Keith Haring (1958-1990) • *Radiant Baby, n.d.*

Keith Haring was a painter, sculptor and social activist who had a significant impact on graffiti and public art throughout his lifetime. His death from HIV-Aids also called international attention to the disease.

Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) • *Self Portrait with Monkey, 1938*

Frida Kahlo was a Mexican painter who created many self-portraits and images of Mexican culture in a realist style using much symbolism. She was an active communist and the wife of muralist Diego Rivera.

Wassily Kandinsky (1879-1959) • *Small Pleasures, 1913*

Wassily Kandinsky was a Russian painter and writer who is credited with the creation of the first modern abstract works of art.

Paul Klee (1879-1940) • *Fish Magic, 1925*

Paul Klee was a Swiss painter, watercolorist and printmaker whose images relied heavily on child psychology and development. The Nazis, who termed his work “degenerate,” dismissed his art.

René Magritte (1898-1967) • *The Son of Man, 1964*

René Magritte was a Belgian surrealist artist. His realistic images are based on dreams and fantasy, and are often puzzling, witty and amusing.

Claude Monet (1840-1926) • *Water Lily Pond, 1899*

Claude Monet was a leading French Impressionist painter who studied light in several important series of paintings, including haystacks, the Rouen Cathedral and water lilies. His painting, *Impression Sunrise* (1872), led to the term “Impressionism.”

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) • *The Starry Night, 1889*

Vincent van Gogh was a Dutch draughtsman and painter well known for his expressive brushwork, his letters to his brother Theo, and his short-lived and tragic career as an artist.

Andy Warhol (1928-1987) • *Campbell's Soup Can, 1968*

Andy Warhol was an American artist, filmmaker, writer and celebrity, publisher, music producer and actor. He was one of the founders of the Pop Art movement in the United States in the 1950s.



Words to Know

Art Vocabulary for Middle School Students

ILLUSION - something that *deceives the senses or mind by appearing to exist when it does not, or by appearing to be one thing when it is in fact another.*

IMPROVISE – *to create something without any preparation or specific idea for an outcome.*

EXPRESSIONISM - *a term that describes emotional art, most often boldly executed and making free use of distortion and symbolic or invented color.*

IDEALIZED – *art in which people, places or objects have been made to appear perfect.*

PALETTE KNIFE – *a flexible metal knife used by an artist to mix paint and apply paint to his or her work surface. The use of a palette knife often results in a thick application of paint.*

RELIEF SCULPTURE – *sculptures with a flat surface on one side and a raised surface on the other side; a sculptural art form in which the top surface of the art work demonstrates some carving or three dimensional qualities.*

STYLE – *the use of materials, the design qualities, the methods of work and choice of subject matter. In most cases, these choices show the unique qualities of an individual, culture or time period. The style of an artwork can help you to know how it is different from other artworks.*

THEME – *the major subject or idea behind a discussion, a piece of writing or a work of art. A theme can also be the idea that brings meaning to a work.*

TRIPTYCH – *a work of art created in three separate panels.*

TROMPE L'OEIL – *a French painting term that means “fool the eye.” Trompe l’oeil paintings are usually so realistic that the viewer is fooled into believing they are real.*

VALUE – *difference in the lightness of darkness of a hue (or color).*



Words to know

Art Vocabulary for High School Students

ACADEMIC ART - refers to the style of painting and sculpture produced under the influence of formal academies, where many artists received their formal training.

AVANT-GARDE - in French, it means “advance guard”, or “vanguard.” People often use the term to refer to people or works that are novel or experimental, particularly with respect to art, culture and politics.

CONSERVATOR – a museum professional who is trained in the study, care and restoration of works of art.

CURATOR – a museum employee who is a department head or manager; can also be someone who collects, studies, interprets and displays a Museum’s collection.

MODERNISM—Modernism is a cultural movement that generally includes progressive art and architecture, music and literature which emerged in the decades before 1914, as artists rebelled against late 19th century academic and historic traditions.

MOVEMENT - a collective effort by a large number of people to try to achieve something, especially an artistic, a political or a social reform.

NON-OBJECTIVE – art that is made intentionally to not represent anything in real life.

OBJECT LABEL – an object label is the information printed and displayed next to an object in a museum. It contains facts that are informative to the person interested in reading the label, including the name of the artist, the medium and the title of the work.

REGION - a large land area that has particular geographic, political, or cultural characteristics which distinguish it from others, whether existing within one country or extending over several countries.

PHOTO-REALISM – an artist’s attempt to portray an object so realistically that the final result could be confused with a photograph.



For the Chaperones
Thank you
for volunteering your time....

Thank you for volunteering to be a chaperone for your school's visit to the James A. Michener Art Museum. Your role is important in facilitating a smooth and enjoyable visit for your group.

Please stay with your assigned group throughout the visit, during lunch, and at the Museum shop. Students follow your example.

While in the Museum, please make sure your group follows museum decorum. The docents are your students' educational leaders. In the event of misconduct, we hope that chaperones and classroom teachers will step in so that the rest of the group will not be disrupted.

Thank you for helping us create a successful museum experience for both you and your group. We appreciate your cooperation.

Enjoy your visit!



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