



Marshall Steam Museum

at Auburn Heights Preserve

What is a museum?

Grade Level: For grades K-3

Standards and curriculum connections are available at the end of the document.

Background: Museums by definition are buildings in which objects of historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural interest are stored and exhibited. But they can be so much more than that and provide all sorts of unique learning experiences. In this lesson, students learn what museums are, why they exist, and the different kinds.

Museum Resources:

- Philadelphia Museum of Art <http://www.philamuseum.org/>
- *America on the Move* digital exhibit Smithsonian National Museum of American History <http://amhistory.si.edu/onthemove/exhibition/>
- National Air and Space Museum collections <http://airandspace.si.edu/collections/objects.cfm>
- American Museum of Natural History: Pterosaurs Exhibit <http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/pterosaurs-flight-in-the-age-of-dinosaurs>
- Marshall Steam Museum at Auburn Heights <http://auburnheights.org/collections/>

Lesson

1. As a group, have the students try to define what they think a museum is or make a list of words they would use to describe a museum. Have them draw on past experiences if possible.
 - a. Some of them may never have visited a museum before. If they are having trouble, have images available or do a Google search to help the students get started.
2. Using technology, either as a class or individually have students explore different types of museums and what they collect and preserve. Have students compare and contrast:
 - a. The museum building, if there is one. (This is a good time to compare a large museum like the Philadelphia Museum of Art to a small museum like the Marshall Steam Museum.)
 - b. What types of things they collect?
 - c. How does the museum take care of the items? How do they use the items?
 - d. What can you learn from a museum?
3. Once they are done exploring a few museums, have them discuss why they think museums are important.
4. Have students discuss how they people should behave in museums.



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Take it a Step Further: Class Museum

Have students put what they have learned about museums into action by creating a museum that tells the story of their classroom.

Lesson

1. Discuss what a collection is and what it means to collect around a special theme.
2. Have students imagine that 100 years from now there will be a museum that tells the history and story of their classroom and their lives.
3. Have each student bring in one object that is important to them or have them draw a picture of their favorite toy.
4. Have each student explain or write a label of why that item is important to them.
5. Have each student think about ways that they can make sure their item is still there after 100 years, how would they have to take care of it?
6. Display your collection somewhere in the classroom or make an electronic version depending on the ages of the students.
7. To make the activity more complex, students can decide to create a specific organization of their items around themes, write introductions to sections and make their display more like a museum exhibit.



Delaware Standards

- **Civics 4, K-3a:** Students will acquire the skills necessary for participating in a group, including defining an objective, dividing responsibilities, and working cooperatively.
- **History 2, K-3a:** Students will use artifacts and documents to gather information about the past.

Common Core: English and Language Arts

Grade K

- **W.K.2:** Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.
- **SL.K.1A-B:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.K.2:** Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
- **SL.K.3:** Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
- **SL.K.4:** Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.
- **SL.K.5:** Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.
- **SL.K.6:** Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

Grade 1

- **W.1.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.
- **SL.1.1A-C:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.1.2:** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- **SL.1.3:** Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
- **SL.1.4:** Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- **SL.1.5:** Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.



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Grade 2

- **W.2.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.
- **W.2.8:** Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- **SL.2.1A-C:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.2.2:** Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- **SL.2.3:** Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.
- **SL.2.4:** Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

Grade 3

- **W.3.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **SL.3.1A-D:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.3.2:** Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- **SL.3.3:** Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.