

Milwaukee Art Museum JDSP

5th Grade – Tour 1: American Stories

Pre-visit Mini Lesson

We are looking forward to seeing your 5th graders at the Milwaukee Art Museum. Here are some activities to help prepare the students for the visit.

Watch:

1. Please show them the MAM *Museum Manners* video again. It is short and fun.

From YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=Jn7K4_HFTXo

From the MAM website: <https://mam.org/learn/>

2. Please have a name tag (first name in big readable letters) for each student. This allows the docent to call them by name and engage with them more personally.

Introduce:

Today on this “**American Stories**” tour, we will look at paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts that will help us explore how America has grown and changed from past to present. Some topics for discussion might include: natural resources, immigration, economics, democracy, diversity, geography, freedom, equal rights, and/or labor. The artwork we see today will help us imagine what life in America was like long ago and how it continues to change today. Each work of art helps to record the artist’s experience of history.

Ask:

- What are some American History events and celebrations that you already know about?
- What are some things that America is known for in other parts of the world?
- Who records history? Why are multiple points of view in history important?
- What are some ways that artists have recorded American History?
- How do you think life in America is different today than 200 years ago?



Optional follow-up activity: Ask your students to describe or sketch a historical work of art that really stood out to them on tour. Then ask them to write why it was memorable and what story it told. You could also ask them to describe or sketch a work of art that would tell a story about America today. How is it the same or different than the work of art from the tour?