

AGA School Programs: Teacher Welcome Package

Thank you!

Thank you for booking your School Program to the Art Gallery of Alberta!

Included in this package you will find:

- An overview of AGA School Programs
- Tips for Preparing for your visit
- Gallery Guidelines to share with your students
- Suggested activities for before and after your program

Please take the time to review everything in this package.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Education Programs Manager at Jessie.beier@youraga.ca if you have any questions or concerns about your visit to the Art Gallery of Alberta. We look forward to seeing you and your students soon!

School Programs Overview & Goals

The Art Gallery of Alberta's School Programs build bridges between viewers and artwork, strengthening the connection of art to life. Through interactive explorations of exhibitions, an array of studio opportunities and dynamic full-day programs, AGA School Programs relate artwork to students in an engaging and meaningful way.

School Programs are designed to stimulate dialogue, facilitate questions and cultivate knowledge about art while providing a wider context for the understanding of art and culture in our community. School Programs support and address the Alberta Education Programs of Study in the areas of Fine Arts, English Language Arts, Social Studies and FSL or FLA. School Programs strive to make specific cross-curricular connections to assist teachers in developing an integrated approach to teaching and learning.

AGA School Programs provide:

- Diverse learning opportunities that elucidate the connection of art to life.
- In-gallery and studio learning experiences that strengthen 21st Century Learning skills including critical thinking, problem solving and innovation.
- Learning opportunities for students to build visual literacy skills.
- Unique educational experiences that connect AGA exhibitions and interpretive messaging to the Alberta Education Programs of Study.
- Leadership in arts education in our community.

AGA and 21st Century Learning

School Programs at the AGA not only provide unique art encounters for students, but also contribute to strengthening *21st Century Learning* skills such as critical thinking, problem identification and solving, and innovation. Through group discussions, collaborations, exercises in visual literacy, and projects based on critical inquiry, students at the AGA engage in a variety of learning opportunities that connect the classroom to current exhibitions and to students' past, present and future.

Tips for Preparing for Your Visit

Before your visit:

- **Make note of our new address. WE HAVE MOVED BACK TO OUR LOCATION AT SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SQUARE:**
2 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, AB T5J 2C1
- Busses can drop students off at the Singhmar Centre for Art Education Main Entrance (South Facing door) on 102A Ave. **ALL SCHOOL PROGRAMS SHOULD ENTER THROUGH THIS DOOR** to access the Singhmar Centre for Art Education.
- We strongly recommend you have one adult supervisor for every six students if your class is K to Gr.9 and one adult supervisor for every ten students if your class is Gr.10 to 12.
- Student discipline during your visit is the responsibility of the teacher and adult supervisors. Adults are to remain with the children at all times including lunchtime, self-guided visits, and washroom breaks.
- Nametags are encouraged! Gallery educators like to refer to students by their names.
- Plan where to eat lunch. You must book the AGA Lunch Facilities in advance if you would like to use them to eat lunch (no added cost).
- Prepare students for their visit to the AGA. Go over gallery rules and do a pre-visit classroom activity (see ideas attached).
- Cancellations and rescheduling programs must be done at least **one week** prior to your visit. Contact the Education Business Manager at Nicole.reeves@youraga.ca for any cancellations or scheduling issues.

After your visit:

- You will be provided a link to an Online Evaluation Survey to fill out at your earliest convenience. Your feedback is very important to the ongoing development and improvement of AGA School Programs and is very much appreciated.
- Review what you have learned at the AGA by doing a post-visit activity in the classroom (see ideas attached).

Gallery Guidelines:

The guidelines listed below are intended to ensure that all AGA visitors are able to enjoy the artwork and gallery spaces. Please share the following guidelines with your students before visiting the AGA to ensure a positive experience for all.

- **Respect the artwork and artists by not touching.** Artworks, sculptures, installations and other forms of art are often fragile or vulnerable to environmental changes. Even the slightest touch can harm them. When we touch something we leave behind fingerprints which contain oils and acids that eat away at surfaces. Even if something looks sturdy or indestructible, we ask all gallery visitors to respect the artwork and artist by not touching.
- **Leave backpacks and large bags at school.** Large bags can cause damage to artworks if they are accidentally bumped. They are also a security risk so we ask that large bags and backpacks are left at school or in the coat room in the studio.
- **Food and Drinks in lunch spaces only.** Food and drink could cause damage to artworks or create unnecessary distractions for students.
- Please **walk** in the gallery and make sure to stay with your assigned group.
- **Respect** other classes and visitors in the museum by using an inside voice and being quiet as you move through the gallery.
- **Enjoy!** By following these guidelines you and your class will be able to fully enjoy your experience at the AGA.

Suggested Activities

A visit to an Art Gallery is an experience full of discovery and one that can enrich classroom learning experiences. At the AGA we believe that your gallery visit should not be an isolated learning experience, but one that builds upon learning occurring in the classroom. Make the most of your visit to the gallery by considering the following suggested activities.

Pre-visit Activities

1) What is an Art Gallery?

Discuss the role of an art gallery with your students. What function does an art gallery have within a community? What role does it have in Edmonton? What do people do at the art gallery? Who goes to the art gallery? Get students to explore these ideas by looking online at the new Art Gallery of Alberta building design. Compare the AGA with other museums or galleries you know.

Info about the new AGA building: <http://www.youraga.ca/about-aga/the-building/>

2) Practice Looking at Art

Practice looking at art with your students. Use reproductions or images from the internet to strengthen visual literacy skills and to get students comfortable talking about art. Use the “FRAMES” (see below) critical analysis framework to help students practice ‘reading’ art. (Decide which section(s) of “FRAMES” are best suited for the age level and cognitive ability of your students.

The Frames: Art Critical Analysis Framework

Subjective Frame	Describe what you see in the artwork. Describe how you feel What does it remind you of? What do others see and how does this compare to what you see?
Structural Frame	Describe the materials and techniques of the artwork. Describe the elements and principles used in the composition. How do the elements, materials and techniques contribute to the meaning of the work?
Cultural Frame	Can you tell what time period or culture the piece belongs to? Describe what the artwork reveals about that culture/time. What style or movement does the artwork belong to? Describe any influences you think the artist may have had.
Postmodern Frame	Have any images been appropriated and/or re-contextualized? Elaborate on the meaning the work has today, or in the context of recent news and current events.

Source: *How to Look at Art- Critical Analysis Frameworks*, Curriculum Council of Western Australia

3) KWL Chart

Complete a KWL before and after the gallery visit. With this tool you can activate students' prior knowledge by asking them what they already **K**now; set goals specifying what they **W**ant to learn; and after visiting the gallery discuss what they have **L**earned. By using this chart, students apply higher-order thinking strategies which helps them to construct meaning during their gallery visit.

K	W	L
What I KNOW	What I WANT to learn	What I have LEARNED

Post-visit Activities

1) Reflect about your Gallery experience with your students

If you used a KWL chart, review what students have learned. Allow class time for students to share what they found interesting or what they learned at the gallery. Students can share orally, through sketches, stories or even presentations.

2) Create a Gallery or Hold an Opening

If you participated in a Studio Project, set up a 'gallery' in your classroom and hold an 'opening'. Students can present and explain their own work and listen to what others have to say. Practice art criticism with students using the FRAMES critical analysis framework (see above) or use a Critique Sandwich where students offer positive commentary followed by an idea for improvement and another positive comment.