

# AGA Teacher Welcome Package



Dear Educator:

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

Included in this package you will find:

- An overview of AGA School Programs
- A Teacher's checklist including tips to plan your visit
- Gallery Guidelines to share with your students
- Chaperone Guidelines to share with your adult volunteers
- A letter to send home to parent(s)/guardian(s)

Please take the time to review everything in this package.

Please do not hesitate to contact me 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!

Thank you!

Jessie Beier  
Education Programs Manager  
[Jessie.Beier@youraga.ca](mailto:Jessie.Beier@youraga.ca)

# School Programs Overview

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 and encourage questioning while providing a wider context for the understanding of art and culture in our community. School Programs support the Alberta Education Programs of Study in the areas of Fine Arts, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, French and Spanish. School Programs strive to make specific cross-curricular connections to assist teachers in developing an integrated approach to teaching and learning.

## AGA School & Teacher Programs:

- Provide a point of entry to the AGA and current exhibitions that is engaging and accessible for people of all ages with a variety of backgrounds and experiences.
- Provide high quality, unique programming experiences that allow students and teachers to play, experiment and 'un-know' through gallery explorations and studio projects.
- Strengthen visual literacy and visual thinking skills through the both the conceptual and technical side of art and the art-making process.
- Provide leadership in art education in the community through various initiatives and partnerships including a variety of Teacher professional development opportunities.
- Support the goals of the *21st Century Skills Framework* through programming that builds and strengthens innovation skills and information literacy skills.

## AGA and 21st Century Learning

School Programs at the AGA provide unique art experiences for students that contribute to strengthening *21st Century Learning Skills* such as critical thinking, problem identification and solving, and innovation. Through group discussions, collaboration, 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.

# Teacher Checklist

## Before your visit:

- ✓ **Make note of our address. We are located at Sir Winston Churchill Square.**  
2 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, AB T5J 2C1
- ✓ Please arrange your transportation to arrive at the AGA at least 15 minutes prior to your start time. Buses can drop students off at the AGA Front Entrance facing Churchill Square on 102A Ave and 99<sup>th</sup> St. **School groups can enter through the main door.** Upon entering, visit the Guest Services desk and let the representative know your school name. Security will then contact the AGA Educators to meet your group.
- ✓ **Prepare your students and parents!** Send home or email the letter included in this package to parents to inform them about your program.
- ✓ **Prepare your adult supervisors.** Prior to your arrival at the AGA, prepare the adult volunteers for what to expect when they get here. Provide them with the form included in this package called “Tips for Supervisors” and other information such as the names of the students in their group. We strongly recommend you have one adult supervisor for every six students if your class is K to Gr.6 and one adult supervisor for every ten students if your class is Gr.7 to 12.
- ✓ **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). Please note that all Full Day and Art Apprenticeship Programs include use of these facilities and do not require a booking.
- ✓ Be mindful that there are **no water fountains** at the AGA. Please bring a water container if you spend the day at the AGA.
- ✓ **Prepare students for their visit to the AGA.** Go over the Gallery Guidelines and use the Teacher Resources to plan a pre-visit classroom activity.
- ✓ **Cancellations and rescheduling** programs must be done at least **two weeks** prior to your visit. All changes before two weeks will be subject to an administration fee. Contact the Education Business Manager at [Nicole.reeves@youraga.ca](mailto: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. Check out our Teacher Resources to choose and adapt post-visit activities and projects to your classroom’s needs!

# 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 unless the artist indicates doing so. Keep a safe distance of one arms length between you and the works of art at all times.

**Capture the moment, but only in public spaces.** Due to copyright laws and the sensitivity of some artworks, **photography in the Gallery spaces is not permitted.** However, photography in public spaces is allowed.

**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 refrain from chewing gum in the gallery spaces.

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.

Shhh...please turn your **cell phone to the vibrate setting**, and be respectful of other visitors when using your cell phone.

**Enjoy!** By following these guidelines you and your class will be able to fully enjoy your experience at the AGA.

# Tips for Supervisors

Teachers: Please ensure your adult volunteers have a copy of this sheet prior to your program at the AGA. *It is important to make sure that the students are respecting themselves, each other, the artwork, their teachers, the supervisors and the AGA Educators.*

**Please model the museum behaviour/gallery guidelines** we try to teach the students by not eating or drinking in the Gallery spaces, keeping a safe distance between you and the artworks, and not leaving the group to explore on your own.

**Please know the number of students you are supervising and do an occasional head count**, ensuring that **students stay with their group at all times**. It would be helpful to learn the students' names in your group and to use the classroom teacher's method of getting students' attention.

**If supervising small children, remain with them at all times** including lunchtime, self-guided visits, washroom breaks, in the gift shop or outdoors.

**Please set your cell phone to vibrate or silent mode** to avoid interrupting the educators, students, or other visitors in the gallery spaces. Cameras are not allowed in the exhibition spaces.

**We ask that visitors do not bring other children**, including younger siblings or babies, as it takes focus away from helping to monitor the students. Please arrange for childcare if you are volunteering to accompany your child's class to the AGA.

**Your participation may be needed during parts of the programs**. Please be willing to lend a hand with studio activities and encourage students to ask questions in gallery visits! If you do not know an answer, ask an educator! AGA staff is happy to help and answer any questions, but please be kind to not interrupt their presentations.

**Have fun!** Learn with your group: your interest and excitement is contagious!

Thank you for volunteering to keep students engaged! Your participation is the key to a successful day.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Your child's class will be visiting the Art Gallery of Alberta on \_\_\_\_\_.

Here are some suggestions to help your child have an enjoyable and memorable trip:

**Eat a healthy breakfast.** Our in-gallery programs are 90 minutes long and our studio programs are 2 hours long, so there often isn't time for having snacks. Eating in the gallery spaces is not permitted. We encourage your child to eat a big, healthy breakfast to begin their day.

**Emergency information.** Ensure your child's teacher has appropriate contact information in case of an emergency.

**Prepare for the day.** Ask your child what he/she might see at the Art Gallery of Alberta. Refer to previous visits to AGA or other museums. Ask what might be important guidelines to follow while on a field trip.

**Dress appropriately.** In programs at AGA, we often spend time sitting on the floor and we do lots of exploring. Make sure your child wears appropriate clothing and shoes.

**Follow up at the end of the day.** Find out what your child has learned, explored and discovered. Bring the rest of your family to the AGA and ask your child to share some of what they learned on their field trip.

Thanks!

Jessie Beier  
Education Programs Manager  
Art Gallery of Alberta  
[Jessie.Beier@youraga.ca](mailto:Jessie.Beier@youraga.ca)