

School Group Gallery Talks

The Clark's collections connect with many areas of study for all ages and class levels. Gallery talks can enhance student learning in general by helping students develop skills such as observation, analysis, reasoning, and appreciating perspective and ambiguity. Gallery talks also support specific areas of the curriculum; we tailor each gallery talk in collaboration with classroom teachers. Our approach involves in-depth conversation around a few works of art rather than a tour-like visit with many objects from our collection. Below are some popular themes supported by our collection that enhance typical areas of study. We also offer themes to complement our special exhibitions.

Featured Gallery Talks

Featured Gallery Talk: *Looking North and South*

Visit the Clark with your students and view the special exhibition, *Looking North and South: Renaissance Prints and Drawings 1500–1650*, featuring more than thirty outstanding prints and drawings made by artists working in Italy and Northern Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Works by Renaissance masters such as Albrecht Dürer, Peter Paul Rubens, and Rembrandt tell the story of the artistic process during a time of unprecedented circulation of ideas, practices, and traditions in Europe—resulting in a rich dialogue of inspiration and innovation across the continent. Older students studying drawing, history, or art history are especially encouraged to attend. Possible topics include artistic techniques and processes during this time period; the impact of the printing press on arts and society during the Renaissance; and the unique character and style of artists from Northern and Southern Europe.

This talk is most appropriate for high school and college students. Available through May 26, 2017.

Featured Gallery Talk: Water by Design

This talk raises questions and encourages discussion about the relationship between people and water. We explore how human beings need water, how we feel about it, how we understand it, and how we take care of it. The experience includes engaging with the water sustainability features on the Clark campus, learning about the aesthetic and engineering considerations of our water management efforts, and engaging with “watery” works of art. Appropriate for all grade levels and can be tailored to meet specific curricular goals.

This talk is appropriate for all ages. Available April 26 through June 16, 2017.

Suggested Themes

Exploring Art

Students will be introduced to a number of works in the collection and will learn how to think about and talk about art in general. First-time visitors will be introduced to basic concepts such as composition and subject matter, and will consider the dynamics of looking carefully. More experienced students can focus on more advanced concepts such as how and why different artists employ different materials and techniques or how an artist uses light. All students will consider how the arts can enrich human understanding. Suitable for all grade levels; each talk will be tailored for each group.

Art and the Language Arts

Looking at works of art offers a wonderful opportunity to think about people—the artists, the subjects in their pictures, their personal stories, and ourselves. Some works of art illustrate specific narratives, while others may offer excellent starting points for students to create their own stories. Students at any grade level can enjoy exploring different types of writing using works of art as a starting point. Many of our works of art relate to mythology and the classics as well as other literary periods, and a talk can be tailored to enhance this unit of study. Suitable for all grade levels.

Art and Society

Works of art reflect the period in which they were made and can be used as evidence of how people lived and thought about life in different places and times. While the Clark's collection is not encyclopedic, it relates to many different cultures, historical periods and human concerns both universal and idiosyncratic. Younger grades can focus on more general themes such as families, communities and diversity. For older students, a talk can be shaped to address specific issues of social justice such as slavery, cultural elitism, and the status of women, or can be shaped to explore a more general topic such as the impact of war on civilian life.

French Art and Culture

The Clark is famous for its collection of French Art from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. French Art and Culture gallery talks will focus on these works, France's central position in Western art at the time, and the rapid and radical changes in French and European society during this time period. Depending on their education level, students can discuss the works of art in French or in a mixture of English and French with direction from a French-speaking educator. Best suited for middle and high school grade levels. Each talk will be tailored for each group.

Identity and the United States

Art often conveys social customs or illustrates personal or national identities. The Clark's new Henry Morris and Elizabeth H. Burrows decorative arts gallery features silver, furnishings, and portraiture from Colonial America and the Federalist period, while the Manton Study Center for Works on Paper allows students to investigate imagery from these times, including nineteenth-century magazine illustrations and early photography. Along with paintings in the permanent collection galleries, these new displays help students consider what life was like in the early days of the United States and reveal evolving ideas about national identity.