

School Group Gallery Tours

The Clark's collections and special exhibitions connect with many areas of study for all ages and class levels. All our gallery tours enhance student learning by helping them develop and exercise critical and creative thinking skills. Our tours support specific areas of the curriculum and state education standards. Our approach involves in-depth conversation and engagement around a few works of art rather than a broad overview covering many objects. You can choose from individually tailored thematic tours (*see below for more information*), unique signature tours (*see page three for full descriptions*), or, when available, special exhibition tours.

Thematic Tours

Thematic tours are drawn from the [Clark's permanent collection](#) and can support many areas of the curriculum for all ages and grades. Engaging with art encourages greater understanding of the human experiential dimension of any subject. We work with teachers to plan each thematic tour to meet the learning goals for the visit.

Exploring Art

This tour is designed to share the joys and value of engaging with art. Students will be introduced to a variety of works in the collection and will learn how to think about and talk about art in general. More experienced art classes can focus on particular concepts or ideas that they may be studying. Classes studying photography, drawing, and printmaking can arrange to visit our [Manton Study Center for Works on Paper](#). All students will consider how the arts can enrich human understanding. Suitable for all ages. This tour can be tailored for different grades and learning goals.

Art and the Language Arts

Students at all grade levels can use works of art to explore different types of writing. Some works of art illustrate specific narratives or relate directly to mythology, literature, and poetry, while others may offer excellent starting points for students to create their own stories, essays, or poems. Looking at art offers a wonderful opportunity to think about people—the artists, the subjects in their pictures, and ourselves—and to gather inspiration for creative or expository writing. Writing activities for students may be incorporated into a gallery tour or independent writing time can be organized before or after a tour. Suitable for all ages. This tour can be tailored for different grades and learning goals.

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 general themes such as families, communities, diversity, and conceptual ideas like change. For older students, a tour can be shaped to explore systems of belief, cultural values, assumptions, and even bias. This tour can be tailored for different grades and learning goals.

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 tours will focus on these works, France's central position in Western art, and the rapid and radical changes in French and European society during this time period. This tour can be tailored for different grades and learning goals.

Identity and the United States

Art often conveys personal or national identities and can illustrate particular social customs. The Clark's Henry Morris and Elizabeth H. Burrows Gallery and Lauzon Glass Study Gallery feature silver, glass objects, 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 displays help students consider what life was like in the early days of the United States and reveal evolving ideas about national identity. This tour can be tailored for different grades and learning goals.

Art and Nature

Inspired by our 140-acre [campus](#) as well as our collection, this theme embraces one of the Clark's most treasured relationships: art and nature. Tours can include both an outside experience and a gallery experience and can connect to a variety of topics and curricula, from a philosophical and contemplative query exploring the relationship between nature and human beings to a focus on specific STEAM learning objectives. View landscape paintings in the galleries and consider how artists have interacted with the natural world. Learn about the Clark's sustainability efforts and ethics as the Institute grows, and how the three-tiered reflecting pool is part of an advanced water management system. This tour can be tailored for different grades and learning goals.

Please see our signature tours on next page. Like our thematic tours, signature tours are offered year-round!

Signature Tours

The Clark's signature tours are designed to demonstrate the power and joy of engaging with art and its ability to offer important perspectives on human dynamics. Our signature tours are rooted in our philosophy that engaging with art can enhance people's lives, both at an individual and at the community level. These tours can be adapted for any grade or developmental level. *Check back soon as new signature tours are under development.*

Curating a Culture of Respect (CCR)

Curating a Culture of Respect encourages students to think about what it means to be a human being, to appreciate the concept of shared humanity, to trust and learn from their own inner experience, and to consider that they have choices about how to live their lives as they journey towards adulthood. We recommend CCR as a full-grade experience as the focus can help to set a class culture of shared respect. This tour is designed with middle school aged students in mind but can be adapted for any grade or developmental level.

A pre-visit activity will be shared with teachers in advance of a CCR visit and a complementary activity of making t-shirts that express Art/I/We Can Change the World can be included at the end of a visit. Plan for at least two hours for this signature tour.

CCR is a joint initiative between three museum education departments in Northern Berkshire County. Please contact the education departments at the Williams College Museum of Art to explore opportunities to learn about Art and the Power of the Individual and at MASS MoCA to explore Art and Social Justice with your students.

Disruption and Emergence

Though change is a part of life, some periods are more volatile than others. Youth today have experienced a great deal of change, rapidly, and they face the future with a conscious sense of uncertainty. *Disruption and Emergence* offers students a chance to consider the fact of change—individual change, collective change, and social change—and the opportunity to process their own experiences over the past few pandemic years by engaging with art. This signature gallery tour, designed for upper elementary – high school aged students, focuses on artworks that represent various kinds of change and disruption, as well as those that reflect the ways that people have dealt with and emerged from challenging times.

Complementary writing and art-making can be included with this signature tour, as part of your visit to the museum or to bring back to your classroom. When you [book your visit](#), speak to Lily McGartland, the Education Department Coordinator, to learn more about this option.

Meet the Museum

Meet the Museum introduces very young students to the Clark and encourages a life-long appreciation of museums and the joys of engaging with art. Children will consider what a museum is all about, they will learn about the different jobs that people have at museums, and they will be introduced to the Clark's galleries and some of the artworks in our permanent collection. This tour is appropriate for preschool – first grade aged students.

Pre- and post-visit activities are provided to enhance the experience for both the teacher and the students.