Self-Guide to The Art Institute of Chicago
Grades 1–4

SELF, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY

HOW TO USE THIS SELF-GUIDE

In the classroom, prepare your students by using the images, information, and classroom applications in the Faces, Places, and Inner Spaces teacher manual. Explore six additional objects from the museum’s permanent collection on your visit that touch on the topics of personal identity, family, and community ritual and celebration. Compare these objects with the related works in Faces, Places, and Inner Spaces. Each object included in this self-guide references, by thumbnail image, the Faces, Places, and Inner Spaces connection. Find the gallery locations of the self-guide objects by contacting the Elizabeth Stone Robson Teacher Resource Center (see below).

BEFORE YOUR VISIT

- Contact the Teacher Resource Center at (312) 443-3719 or trc@artic.edu for additional ideas on preparing your students for their visit.
- Divide your class in advance into smaller, chaperone-led groups. Chaperones must stay with their groups while at the museum.
- Photocopy this self-guide for your chaperones and also provide them with floor plans and reproductions of the transparencies from the teacher manual.

AT THE MUSEUM

- Remind students that food, drinks, large bags, and umbrellas are not allowed in the galleries.
- Remind students to look, not touch. Touching leaves oils and residues that may damage the artworks.
- Make sure students bring notebooks to use as writing surfaces and to use pencils only.
- Remind students not to use cases, pedestals, or walls as writing surfaces.
- Consult a museum floor plan, a volunteer at an information desk, or other museum staff for assistance in finding specific galleries.
- For grades 1–4, it is suggested that the teacher/chaperone lead the students through the galleries and facilitate the discussion and activities outlined in this self-guide.
COLOR

Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida, Spanish (1863–1923).
Oil on canvas (1911.28)

Two Sisters, Valencia

The Spanish artist commonly known as Sorolla (soh-ROY-ah) was well known for his beach scenes, which demonstrate his love of vibrant colors and light. After completing formal art training in Spain, Sorolla traveled in Italy and France where he was influenced by the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. These artists used bold paint application and color combinations to reproduce the continual movement and play of light in nature. In Two Sisters, Sorolla’s bright colors, reflections, and the older girl’s raised arm inform us that the warm Mediterranean sun is shining down on these two frolicking figures. The artist’s visible brushstrokes echo the movement of the waves and the wind that blows the girl’s dress. This activity and Sorolla’s warm colors make us feel as if we are part of this sensory experience.

Have students identify the colors in the painting. Pose the following questions to the students.

- How do these colors make you feel? Are they warm (reds, oranges, yellows) or cool (blues, greens) colors? Why do you think the artist chose these particular colors for this beach scene?
- Compare Sorolla’s colors with those used in Motley’s Self-Portrait and Karl Wirsum’s Screamin’ Jay Hawkins. What kinds of sensations did these artists create with the colors they selected?

This painting activates all five of our senses. Encourage students to pretend they have stepped inside this picture and are playing on the beach with the two little girls. Ask students the following.

- What do you smell?
- See?
- Touch?
- Hear?
- Taste?

Have students describe a beach experience they shared with a sibling, friend, or parent. Ask students the following.

- What do you remember about your experience?
- How did the beach make you feel? Who or what did you encounter at the beach?
- Does the sun seem stronger at the beach than away from it? What time of day is it in the painting?

Discuss the reflections in the painting using the following questions:

- What creates a reflection? Where do you find reflections? What is being reflected? Is the reflection bigger or smaller than the thing being reflected?
- As a class, experiment making reflections on your way home from the museum.

*Contact the Teacher Resource Center for gallery locations.
Paul Klee (1879–1940). 
*In the Magic Mirror*, 1934. 
Oil on canvas on board (1991.321)

**In the Magic Mirror**

Paul Klee (clay) trained and taught art classes in Germany until 1933, when Nazis took control of the country. At the time this painting was created, Klee had returned to Bern, Switzerland, the city in which he had grown up. The painting illustrates what Klee called his method of "taking a line for a walk." His wandering red line twists and turns down the canvas, creating the outline of a wrinkled forehead, small nose, open mouth, and painted chin. This line forms a face that combines features seen straight on and in profile. The halo of orange-red paint around the face resembles a mass of red hair, which gives definition to the figure's form and calls attention to the pink cheeks. The droopy eyes and black heart make us wonder about the emotions of this strange figure who stares back at us. The features of this figure communicate inner emotions, in the same way that a mirror often reflects hidden truths.

**The artist described his method "taking a line for a walk."** Ask students the following.

- Describe the walk the line took. Is it straight or winding? Is this the quickest way to get from top to bottom? Why do you think Klee drew the line the way he did? What does each bend in the line create?
- Have students sketch a face using only a few lines. Ask students to describe the lines they used (squiggly, curvy, straight) and compare drawings.

**Look at the painting and discuss what this figure might be thinking and feeling.** Instruct students to base their responses on visual evidence. Ask students the following.

- How does color play a role in communicating information about the feeling of the painting? Contrast this figure with Warhol's *Screamin' Jay Hawkins*. Choose a color that represents your own personality or present mood.

**Bring a small, unbreakable mirror with you at the museum. Pass the mirror around so that each student can see his or her reflection.** Ask students to think about the title of this painting. What about the painting reminds them of a mirror's reflection?

**Connections:**
- faces
- portraits
- personal identity
Mary Cassatt, American (1844-1926).  
*The Child's Bath*, 1893.  
Oil on canvas (1910.2)

**The Child's Bath**

Pittsburgh-native Mary Cassatt spent much of her adult life in Paris, France, where she settled with her parents and sister in 1877. In the same year, she was invited to become a member of the Impressionist group by her friend and mentor Edgar Degas. Cassatt concentrated on the human figure, painting more scenes of family life, particularly of women and children, such as this scene of a woman bathing a young child. By the late 19th century, a new interest in bathing reflected France’s progressive approach to health care and hygiene. Parents were encouraged by the government and medical community to bathe their children in order to prevent disease and promote cleanliness. In fact, Mary Cassatt installed indoor plumbing in her country house the year after she made this painting.

The artist depicts the pair’s relationship through their poses and the concentrated attention they give to the bathing ritual. The woman’s elongated lap and large hands create a sense of security and pull the two figures closer together. The flat space, bold outlines, and active patterns demonstrate Cassatt’s love of Japanese woodblock prints (see Gallery 107), some of which depict similar scenes of women in private interiors.

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**Faces, Places, Inner Spaces**

**Connections:**

- Ask students to contrast this bath ritual with their own. Why do they think the artist chose this subject for the painting? Discuss the reasons why bathing is so important. Ask students to consider who in their family teaches them about rituals and chores such as bathing. What are some other lessons they learn from their parents or other family members?

- Have students describe the sense of touch in this painting, and the figures’ hands. Ask students the following.
  - How does the woman touch the child? Is it a caring touch or a rough touch?
  - Discuss how touching can communicate emotions in a different way than words can.

- As a class, identify the patterns in the painting. Have students reproduce one of the patterns in The Child’s Bath using colored pencils. Share these in front of the painting.

- Have students name other household rituals or chores. Compare The Child’s Bath with Doris Lee’s Thanksgiving and discuss how duties are distributed within families.

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*Contact the Teacher Resource Center for gallery locations.*
**Japanese Interior, Traditional**

This is one of 68 miniature rooms that were assembled between 1920 and 1940 by Mrs. James Ward Thorne and a team of 30 craftsmen. This room replicates traditional Japanese domestic architecture, using wooden panels and paper shutters for the exterior and fixed or sliding panels of wood and rice paper as dividers in the interior. Such dividers offer flexibility in the arrangement of interior spaces. The miniature display replicates the main room of a traditional Japanese home and also the adjoining room customarily used as a private space for the mistress of the house. The floor of the main room is covered with tatami (tah-TAH-mee) or straw mats, each of which normally measures about three feet by six feet and is bound with cotton borders. The translucent sliding doors give easy access to the garden at the right. The floral motifs painted on the sliding doors integrate the garden into the interior. The only other decoration in the room is found in the alcove to the right, which houses a single work of art, such as a vase or scroll. These works of art are commonly rotated depending on the current season or ritual.

Ask students to consider how this home is different from their own and identify some differences. Have students speculate about what the weather and geography of Japan are like based on the materials used to make this house. Compare the home furnishings in this interior with Richard Snyder's Cabinet of Four Wishes and the objects in the painting The Terrace.

Ask students to consider how artwork is traditionally displayed in Japanese homes, based on this model. How is this different from the way artwork is traditionally displayed in American homes or museums? In Japanese homes, art is often changed depending on the season. Have students speculate on which season the Japanese Interior model represents based on the furnishings.

Ask students to describe what they would hear if they were to sit in this room. Have them point to what would make these sounds.

Have students look inside the room and determine how they would behave if they were invited inside. How would they sit? What would they do inside the room? How loudly or softly would they talk? Discuss how the look of a room can give us information about how we should behave inside that environment.

Western Mexico, Nayarit.

*Model Depicting a Ritual Center*, 100/800 A.D.
Earthenware (1989.639)

*Model Depicting a Ritual Center*

Some of the oldest tomb sculptures in West Mexico are from the state of Nayarit, where chiefdoms and village societies thrived some 2,000 years ago. Earthenware figures and vessels, like this one depicting an important activity of everyday life, were placed in ruling families' temples and tombs as reminders in the afterlife of the purpose and values of life. They were usually molded by hand out of clay and then fired.

This model features nearly 50 lively figures, including humans, animals, and houses. Dancers, drummers, flute and conch-shell players, and groups of women and children are shown participating in an animated festival. Parrots observe the festivities from rooftops. The people of ancient Nayarit and throughout Mexico scheduled festivals of birth, coming of age, marriage, and death according to the annual cycles of rainy season (life) and dry season (death) and to the rhythms of the cosmos.

Ask students to indicate how we know these figures are celebrating. Ask students to think of some festivals and celebrations we hold today. How do these occasions represent what we regard as important in our lives?

Discuss the material and technique that was used to make this object. Ask students to recall how it feels to work with clay. What did they like or not like about it? Bring small pieces of soft and hard clay with you on your visit. Pass them around and have students discuss the physical and pleasing qualities of the material.

Compare this celebratory *Model Depicting a Ritual Center* to the Nayarit *Pole Dance* scene (both tomb sculptures) and Doris Lee's *Thanksgiving*. Ask students, what about these celebrations did the artists want to convey to us?

*Contact the Teacher Resource Center for gallery locations.*
**Mask (Banda or Kumbaruba)**

The area in Africa known as the Guinea Coast stretches from the countries of Senegal to Cameroon (see gallery map). This coastal region of Africa is characterized by thick undergrowth, trees, and dense vegetation of the rain forest that give way to beaches edged with palm trees at the shoreline. This mask, or *bonda*, was used for a ritual performance by either the Baga (BAH-gah) people or the neighboring Nalu (NAH-loo) people. The mask was worn on top of the head like a cap. The identity of the performer was hidden by a raffia ruff and cape, which were attached to the holes on the bottom of the mask. The dancer also wore baggy pants and raffia around his ankles that made noise when he danced. As the dancer moved, the heavy wooden mask was raised and lowered, tilted and twirled. Masks such as this one were made using forms and materials associated with the wilderness. During the performance, the realm of nature was contrasted with the civilized world of community. This mask combines human and animal features, including the horns of an antelope, jaws of a crocodile, ears of a rabbit, and tail of a chameleon. Masquerades continue today in this region and feature similar masks and costumes.

**Guinea or Guinea-Bissau, Baga or Nalu Peoples.**

**Mask (Banda or Kumbaruba), 20th century.**

Wood, pigment, nails (1997.360)

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**Have students identify the human and animal features they see on the mask.** Discuss the traits that we associate with these animals (i.e., antelope are quick).

Ask students why these particular animals were selected. How would these animals move?

**Have students mimic how the dancer might move while wearing this mask.** Remind them that the dancer would have been disguised under a cape. Ask students how the dancer might move differently if he were wearing the Baule Mask.

**Have students think about American equivalents to this type of performance where we wear costumes and perform or entertain to celebrate something.** What do we wear at these events?

**Ask students to name other types of festivals from around the world and consider their functions.** Discuss the similarities and differences between a small celebration, such as a birthday party, and a large community celebration. Show a photograph of Mardi Gras, Carnival, or another festival to put into context a celebration with costumes and to contrast with this mask.

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