Finding Your Way at the DMA: Tips for a Fun Family Visit

**Less is more.** Make your visit child-size and focus on just a few works of art that spark your child’s curiosity. Don’t feel like you need to see everything in one day. General admission at the Museum is always free and you can return again and again!

**Keep your distance.** The art won’t bite, but you still need to keep a safe distance (three feet is great).

**Make it an adventure.** Pass the reins to the kids and follow their interest! Let them choose where to go and what to see, and then give their imaginations a workout. You might search for favorite colors or animals, act out a story you see in the artwork, or play a game of I Spy.

**Take a break.** Little legs tire out easily in this big museum. Feel free to take a seat on a bench or even the floor as you spend time with a work of art. If your child is feeling extra wiggly, go to the Center for Creative Connections and visit Arturo’s Nest, a “please touch” space where kids can crawl, climb, and play.

**Meet Arturo!** Arturo, the DMA’s family mascot, is based on a ceramic vessel from Peru that’s more than 1,000 years old. The artist was probably inspired by the colorful macaws of South America. Look for this parrot-shaped container in the Ancient Art of the Americas Galleries on Level 4.

Flower Power

Roses are red, violets are blue.
Flowers grow in the garden, and in the art too!

Take a stroll through our art garden and find your favorite blooms.
Plant a seed and watch it grow—how many flowers do you know? This bouquet is bursting with more than 10 different types of flowers. Which one is your favorite?

This still life is painted in a realistic style, which means it closely resembles flowers you’d see growing in an actual garden. In fact, it’s so realistic that you can almost imagine the perfume of the blooms filling the air! Look closely and see if you can find tiny ants crawling on a flower, a fly, drops of water, and two butterflies.

Stop and smell the roses! The quilted roses that is. Investigate one of the squares closely. Do you think the white background was stitched before or after the flower designs? The flowers are appliquéd onto the quilt, which means one piece of fabric is sewn on top of another to create the design. Quilts like this were called "Album" quilts because they resemble an album of keepsakes, and each square was often made by a different person. How many types of flower shapes can you find in the designs?

This quilt is believed to have been made by one person—Martha E. Keech of Baltimore, Maryland—because of the regularity of the stitching and the designs. Baltimore "Album" quilts differ from other friendship quilts in that they are usually made with new fabric instead of scraps. As a busy port and the second largest city in the US at the time, Baltimore offered quilt makers access to more materials.

This painting took nearly four years to complete and was finished the same year that the artist married his sweetheart, Julie Blum. Lepage never sold this painting during his lifetime, and it stayed with his descendants until 2012—that’s almost 200 years! Along with the inclusion of traditional symbols of love like doves and butterflies, this hints at how precious the painting must have been to the artist.

April showers bring May flowers. What did the artist do to make these flowers stand out? Japanese artists purposefully leave the background of their scroll paintings empty, believing this allows space for the imagination. This particular scroll was part of a series of seasonal paintings. Which season do you think the artist is depicting? What flowers or plants would you use for the other seasons?

The artist Sakai Hoitsu was born into a wealthy samurai family and studied with master artists as a young man. In his 30s, Hoitsu left his life of privilege behind for the more solitary life of a Buddhist monk. The red symbol near the bottom right of the scroll is the artist’s seal.

Monet once said, “I perhaps owe having become a painter to flowers.” His home in Giverny, France, included a traditional garden with flower beds, as well as a man-made water garden created by diverting the river Epte. The ponds and water lilies that grew there inspired some of the artist’s most recognized works.

Monet was fascinated by light and water, and in this painting he captures both the lilies floating on top of the pond and the reflection of the clouds. In the last 30 years of his life, Monet made around 250 paintings of water lilies!