



NATIONAL
ART EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

Platform: Instruction

Position Statement on the Benefits of Art Museum Learning in Education [Adopted March 2012; Reviewed and Revised March 2015; March 2020; March 2025]

NAEA believes art museum learning is a fundamental component to a high-quality, effective, and comprehensive education. Visiting art museums not only deepens one's knowledge and interest in art and culture but also highlights the relevance of art in everyday life, fostering a lasting appreciation for cultural organizations.

Knowledge, Meaning-Making, and Understanding in Museum Environments

- Art museums are valuable cultural resources that offer a rich physical and social environment where individuals can experience and engage with original works of art from different time periods and cultures.
- Facilitated learning experiences with works of art cultivate global perspectives and an appreciation of diverse cultures, ideas, and human experiences.
- Firsthand study through facilitated discussion of original works of art engages people in making connections across disciplines and enriches their understanding of other subjects.
- By closely examining artworks and participating in guided discussions, people can practice visual literacy and gain insights into creative processes, techniques, and materials.

Personal and Social Learning

- Studying works of art promotes the development of creative and critical-thinking skills including inquiry, analysis, and interpretation. This process also enhances skills such as flexibility, imagination, observation, communication, empathy, problem solving, and reflection.
- Learning in art museums offers opportunities for individuals to discover new perspectives, deepen their experiences, and strengthen their connections with themselves, others, and the broader world.
- In art museums, people learn from each other, as well as from volunteer docents and guides, museum educators, artists, and other professionals. This allows them to gain confidence and knowledge about museums, and discover the range of museum careers.
- People who visit art museums have demonstrated an increased capacity for historical empathy and display higher levels of tolerance.

RESOURCES

NAEA Position Statement on Visual Literacy:

<https://www.arteducators.org/resources/platform-and-position-statements/naea-position-statements-curriculum/546-naea-position-statement-on-visual-literacy/>