

# Honolulu Museum of Art

## **SCHOOL TOUR GROUP AGREEMENT**

Many students have never been to a museum before. While we want children to respect the museum and its artwork, tours emphasize interaction—we encourage students to talk about what they see and ask questions. Tours aren't a lecture—they are a chance for your class to explore and express themselves.

## **HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR TOUR**

### **Understanding basic rules:**

The tour will be most successful if you and your students agree to and understand three things:

- Be safe
- Engage
- Have fun

Before your visit, lead a class discussion to help the students determine how to be safe, engage and have fun in the museum.

### **What does it means to be safe in a museum?**

- Keep three feet away from the art, walls and pedestals.  
Why? The artwork is old, fragile, and irreplaceable—it is our job to keep it in good shape for the community to enjoy for generations to come.

- Leave food, gum and drinks in the designated place.  
Why? Food can damage art and can attract bugs that destroy art.

- Walk carefully and avoid running or climbing. No one wants to bump and knock over the art or temporary walls.
- Take as many photos as you want—without a flash. Light may damage some artwork.

### **How do we engage with art?**

- Focus on the tour activities (no phone use, small group chatter, etc.)
- Look quietly and carefully when directed.
- Think of questions you have about art.
- Raise your hand and ask your questions!
- Listen to what everyone has to say—your classmates, docents and teachers. Everyone's opinions and questions are important.
- Think about how the art relates to you and your life. Does the art remind you of something or someone?
- Express your feelings and opinions about the art!

### **What is fun at an art museum?**

- Hearing about all the different ways everyone sees, likes and understands the same work of art.
- Figuring out what a work of art means.

- Expressing what you see or think.
- Participating in hands-on group activities in the galleries.
- Creating art.

## **What is the class signal to get students attention?**

Your docent will want to know what signal your class uses to get the group's attention when they are on tour. (clapping, hand signals, a class word, etc)

## **Practice looking and talking about a work of art**

To prepare for a tour, you and your students should practice looking at art and asking questions. You will find that with practice, your students will enjoy exploring new art and that they have a lot to say. They will become skilled at reading the art and understanding what the artist is saying. This exercise is more fun than if we tell them what we know.

Select any work of art. You may look on the museum website tour description page for some works included in your tour.

Here are the steps for deep looking:

### 1. Observe

Ask them to look quietly at the work of art. Set a timer for two to five minutes. With practice they will want to look longer. There is no need to tell them anything about the work of art before you start.

## 2. Describe

Ask them to describe what they see and point to where it is in the artwork. You may be surprised at the details your students identify. This exercise helps them focus and build language skills.

## 3. Question

Ask your students what questions they have about this work of art. Bring all their questions for the tour—the docent will be thrilled to have so many things to discuss on the tour! From these descriptions and questions, they can then interpret the work of art and connect it to their world.