AUDIENCES:
WHO’S LISTENING
Plato’s Divided Line

A B C D E

[visible world] [intelligible world]
LEARNING DOMAINS

Cognitive
Blooms’ Taxonomy

Affective
Krathwohl’s Taxonomy

Psychomotor
Harrow’s Taxonomy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cognitive</th>
<th>affective</th>
<th>psychomotor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>receiving phenomena</td>
<td>perception, set</td>
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<tr>
<td>comprehension</td>
<td>responding to phenomena</td>
<td>guided response mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>application</td>
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<tr>
<td>analysis</td>
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<td>complex response</td>
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<tr>
<td>synthesis</td>
<td>organize values into priorities</td>
<td>adaptation</td>
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<tr>
<td>evaluation</td>
<td>internalizing values</td>
<td>origination</td>
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PIAGET’S STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

- The Sensorimotor Stage (Infancy to Age 2)
- The Preoperational Stage (Ages 2 to 6)
- The Concrete Operational Stage (Ages 7 to 11)
- The Formal Operational Stage (Ages 12 to adult)
The first stage of Piaget’s theory lasts from birth to approximately age two and is centered on the infant trying to make sense of the world. During the sensorimotor stage, an infant’s knowledge of the world is limited to their sensory perceptions and motor activities. Behaviors are limited to simple motor responses caused by sensory stimuli. Children utilize skills and abilities they were born with, such as looking, sucking, grasping, and listening, to learn more about the environment.
The preoperational stage occurs between ages two and six. Language development is one of the hallmarks of this period. Piaget noted that children in this stage do not yet understand concrete logic, cannot mentally manipulate information, and are unable to take the point of view of other people, which he termed egocentrism.

During the preoperational stage, children also become increasingly adept at using symbols, as evidenced by the increase in playing and pretending. For example, a child is able to use an object to represent something else, such as pretending a broom is a horse. Role playing also becomes important during the preoperational stage. Children often play the roles of "mommy," "daddy," "doctor" and many others.
The concrete operational stage begins around age seven and continues until approximately age eleven. During this time, children gain a better understanding of mental operations. Children begin thinking logically about concrete events, but have difficulty understanding abstract or hypothetical concepts.
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The formal operational stage begins at approximately age twelve and lasts into adulthood. During this time, people develop the ability to think about abstract concepts. Skills such as logical thought, deductive reasoning, and systematic planning also emerge during this stage.
PIAGET: PROS AND CONS

Pros

- Piaget’s focus on qualitative development had an important impact on education.

- A number of instructional strategies have been derived from Piaget’s work, including the provision of a supportive environment, utilizing social interaction and peer teaching, and helping children see fallacies and inconsistencies in their thinking.

Con

- Piaget focuses on a small research sample.

- Underestimates children’s abilities. For example, some children do have the ability to take the perspective of another person.
THE DOCENT EDUCATOR

Communication at Age Level
4 TO 6 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

- may be described as thoughtful
- are eager to please and have a sense of responsibility
- have an increased awareness of the world outside their family circle
- think of themselves as the center of the universe and find it difficult to understand that other people may have a different point of view.
- can tell time, but have no sense of historical time
- can identify colors and shapes
- enjoy recognizable subject matter
- respond in an egocentric and subjective manner, focusing on personal associations.

Source: The Docent Educator
7 TO 8 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

- are self-reliant, sociable, more outgoing, active, and conscientious
- are beginning to be concerned for rules and conventions
- are critical of others
- cooperate with others and participate in team sports
- are confident in their own immediate environment
- are eager to learn; have a high level of absorption of new information, especially when related to familiar concepts or personal experiences
- have active imaginations that are greatly influenced by television and film characters and images

Source: The Docent Educator
9 TO 10 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

- are becoming more practical and fastidious
- are more academically focused
- are generally more self-confident but sometimes shy when they are the center of attention.
- are well-mannered, self-controlled, and concerned for proper behavior
- are likely to be part of a clique, or social group, and to depend on peer group approval
- are able to make fine distinctions, such as between hues and intensities of color
- are conscious of patterns in nature and landscapes
- can focus on detail with great accuracy
- have increasing interest and attention spans
- can discover figurative elements in abstract works

Source: The Docent Educator
11 TO 12 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

- are gaining confidence and becoming more aware of the requirements of adult standards in their own work, however are also aware that their own manual skills are often less well developed that their critical capabilities
- are beginning to make informed and personal judgements
- have an increasing capacity to perceive the world outside their own experiences
- have the ability to deal with abstraction
- are becoming more self-conscious and fearful of appearing foolish
- may be hesitant to volunteer ideas

Source: The Docent Educator
12 TO 13 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

- enjoy a sense of fun and laughter, and have acquired a sense of the ridiculous
- accept information as offered, but also want to know reasons for things
- like participating in the discovery of new ideas and finding out about other people’s ways of doing things
- vary enormously in stages of physical, intellectual and emotional maturity
- have become very self-conscious
- include some individuals who seem to be bored easily

Source: The Docent Educator
14 TO 17 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

- are very self-conscious
- can be very susceptible to peer group pressure
- may reject what they do not want to see, feel or learn about
- can feel alienated in a gallery environment
- may participate well in lively discussions when their ideas seem well considered
- are confident in their self-awareness and have well-developed perceptual skills
- can formulate complicated abstract ideas and make solidly based judgments and decisions
- are interested and interesting
- if engaged and well-mannered, can be toured as though they were adults in most circumstances.

Source: The Docent Educator
INTERPRETIVE TECHNIQUES

- Lecture-Discussion
- Inquiry-Discussion
- Guided Discovery

Source: The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents and Tour Guides
“The Lecture-Discussion tour, in contrast with those of Inquiry-Discussion and Guided Discovery, presents information within an instructional format that provides limited opportunity for visitor-guide interaction. The technique is useful in surveys of the museum’s collections for groups with limited time. Guides do most of the talking. Questions are welcomed, however, and visitors are encouraged to participate in discussions. This technique is particularly suitable for high school and adult groups because people in these groups, relative to younger age groups, will have greater background knowledge and responsiveness to in-depth information. It is unsuited for younger groups because the Lecture-Discussion format cannot hold the attention of young people across the average length of a tour.”

Source: The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents and Tour Guides
INQUIRY-DISCUSSION

“The Inquiry-Discussion technique is a dialogue tour which consists of questions, answers, and discussion between guides and visitors. Visitors explore ideas and relationships under a guide’s direction while observing exhibits and objects. Guides give background information and facts at appropriate intervals during the discussion. Questions are used as a means to direct discussion toward the attainment of tour objectives. The Inquiry-Discussion technique is the one most satisfactory for groups in general, for it invites interaction at all levels of learning. It is especially successful with student groups and is a natural format for children, where the technique enables guides to draw upon children’s natural curiosity and zest for new ideas and experiences.”

Source: The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents and Tour Guides
The Guided-Discovery technique offers visitors a structured activity in which they determine their own touring directions and connections with the exhibits. Learning by Discovery varies from other tour techniques in that the learning connections often are unanticipated, because only the tour skeleton is supplied by guides. Visitors impose their own pathways within it. Learning can conceivably take place at another time entirely because the concepts gained in the museum settings can trigger learning in another place. Visitors may use all domains of learning at once with this tour technique. Motor, affective, and cognitive learning may occur. What transpires will be affected by the elements of museum exhibits that are pre-chosen for emphasis by guides.”

Source: The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents and Tour Guides
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Developmental Descriptions</th>
<th>Learning Approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood, 3 to 5</td>
<td>Egocentric, curious, nondiscriminatory</td>
<td>Guided Discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Children, 6-7</td>
<td>Awareness of world; imaginative, refined motor skills</td>
<td>Guided Discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Children, 8-11</td>
<td>Socialized; allow interaction; literal minded</td>
<td>Inquiry-Discussion/Guided Discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Adolescence, 12-14</td>
<td>Emerging sense of self</td>
<td>Inquiry-Discussion/Guided Discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents, 14-18</td>
<td>Abstract thought; like realism; Goals: to get through school, go to college or get job</td>
<td>Inquiry-Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adults, 18-30</td>
<td>Independent; interests: building career, starting family</td>
<td>Inquiry-Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults, 30-62</td>
<td>Motivated by life needs and curiosity; knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>Lecture-Discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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THE DOCENT HANDBOOK

Sponsored by the National Docent Symposium Council
Tours should be kept short, no longer than 30 to 45 minutes. Limit the number of objects - less is more - and encourage children in front of an artwork, artifact or diorama and help them focus their attention. Children in this age category are ready for an open-ended challenge that provides opportunities for observation and comparisons among objects.
LOOK FOR A THEME FROM WORK TO WORK AND OVER TIME.

- We’ll see families in different countries and eras.
- Let’s try to imagine what the characters in the painting are thinking.
EXPLORE THE ELEMENTS OF ART AND INTRODUCE A BASIC ART VOCABULARY

- We are going to look at colors.
- We are going to look at shapes.
We are going to try to find a black dog in each painting.

We are going to try to find a meat eater in each diorama.
“Children translate a picture into a simpler language of pictorial symbols. You can gain a lot of insight into the child’s mind by presenting a drawing activity and comparing the results with the original artwork.”

The Docent Handbook
Try doing a body sculpture or a movement activity by asking children to mimic the actions in sculptures and dioramas.

Let children tell a story about what they are seeing and what in the work makes them see it that way.

Touch and describe the skin textures of mammals, birds, and reptiles.

Develop map skills by using maps with brightly colored continents, countries and oceans.
Children are eager to explore, discover and learn. They are interested in why and how things were made, how long it took to make them and what they were used for. They enjoy participating in discussion and observing similarities and differences among objects. Children begin to step out of the imaginary world and develop a greater awareness of facts and reality.
Examine how art and artifacts reflect other times, people and places.

Examine the materials, tools and techniques that artists use in creating paintings, prints, ceramics and sculptures.

Explore various cultures and people with different heritages by comparing and contrasting styles in clothing, houses and tools.
GRADES 3-6 (AGES 8 TO 11)

✧ Examine how art and artifacts reflect other times, people and places.

✧ Examine the materials, tools and techniques that artists use in creating paintings, prints, ceramics and sculptures.

✧ Explore various cultures and people with different heritages by comparing and contrasting styles in clothing, houses and tools.
Introduce the concept of a time line with the following activities:

- Use a long string with a knot at the end, representing human evolution.
- Visualize a skyscraper with a coin placed on top.
- Think about “2 seconds before 12 o’clock.”
- Assign a certain number of years to each step in the staircase of your museum and have visitors mark events that occurred ten, fifty and one hundred or more years ago.
Adolescents enjoy fun and laughter and a sense of independence. Socializing is of great importance. The museum tour is looked upon as freedom from the classroom. They enjoy discussions among themselves, holding hands and leaning on each other. A tour of adolescents can very quickly become fragmented.
Students in this group want to know what they are supposed to learn on the tour and what should be accomplished; they want a meaningful experience. You contribute to a successful tour by setting rules for the tour and for the discussion. Provide guidance and leadership. A well-prepared tour with focus on discovery and inquiry is essential. The following suggestions may be a good starting point.

• How would you describe this work to a visitor who has never been to a museum?

• Try to describe this painting or diorama to a blind friend.

• Compare family life of the past, as illustrated in the paintings, rooms or dioramas, to present-day customs.
Teenagers are a terrific museum audience - if you are prepared to accept them as equal partners in your tour and discussions. Ideally, groups should be no larger than 10 to 12 students per docent. Small groups will allow you to present information in ways that will reach everyone.
THE WORLD OF TEENAGERS

Approach them as adults, treat them with respect - and accept that they will act like children at any given moment. Teenagers can sound rude, expressing themselves in their own language, and yet they are eager to connect and embrace new ideas and experiences.
At the beginning of the tour, ask teenagers what they are interested in seeing and discussing, and what they want to accomplish during the tour. Give teenagers the opportunity to demonstrate and discuss their interests, knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Take into consideration what they already know and let them select some of the objects for discussion. Allow them to establish their own identity; allow them to choose their partners for group activities.
Focus on questions that require decision making and explore the reasoning behind the decisions:

If you could choose one of the artworks you have seen, which would you choose and why?

Choose specific questions that are of interest to teenagers. Try asking questions that evoke feelings:

What do you feel this artist is expressing in this landscape?

Ask questions with focus on the exploration of styles and subjects:

How does the interior of a 19th century home differ from that of a modern home?
Adults are in many ways the perfect audience for museum tours. They come to the museum not because they have to fulfill a learning requirement, but because they enjoy discovery, expanding their horizons and exploring new frontiers. They bring to the museum experience their own insights and knowledge and can contribute in exciting ways. Assess their interests and include information about the history of the region and the history of your institution. Avoid treating adult visitors like students. Use an engaging tone of voice and sophisticated vocabulary.
The needs of older adults can be met when you are prepared to go beyond your standard tour. A firm gentle handshake and a warm smile immediately set the tone of your tour. Speak distinctly, not loudly, and face your audience. If possible, direct your visitors to a place where they may be seated for your introduction. Make your route clear to everyone and, in general, slow your pace. Consider wearing clip-on microphones for voice amplification and carry large scale labels that all can read. Determine the length of your tour after evaluating the physical abilities of your group.
OLDER ADULTS

Give older adults an opportunity to “tell stories” and “share their own experiences.”
VISITORS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Carefully choose exhibits that you want to introduce to **visually impaired visitors**. Discover how a visually impaired person experiences your museum. Where permitted handle an object with your eyes closed and describe what you hold, as if you had never seen it. Ask your museum to make available special museum gloves, Braille labels and clear and effective signs. With proper preparation, encourage visitors to touch with both hands or guide their hands around an object. Use meaningful descriptive terms in describing objects; emphasize texture and shape.
Hearing-impaired visitors appreciate a variety of methods of interpretations to help them interact with exhibits. Inquire whether the hearing-impaired visitor will be accompanied by an interpreter. Make sure that the interpreter has a clear idea of what you plan to present and discuss. If time allows, make available a list of objects and subject matters.
HEARING-IMPAIRED VISITORS

- Stand at a comfortable distance.
- Ensure that your mouth is not obscured so that lip reading is possible.
- Speak clearly and without shouting.
- Speak neither too slowly nor too fast.
- Make one point at a time.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Use facial expressions.
- Use hand gestures.