

Very Virginia

GRADE 4



Based on images of two works of art from VMFA's collection, these activities will provide your students with background information before their visit and, afterwards, encourage them to draw conclusions from what they saw. The works may or may not be shown on your guided tour, but they are related to the tour theme, and the pre-visit activities will help prepare the students for the interactive component of the tour.

Tour Description

Discover Virginia's rich history through art! Students will discuss important people, places, and things that reflect the significance of the Commonwealth.

Tour Objectives

1. Students will develop a greater understanding of Virginia's rich history, from the founding of Jamestown to the present.
2. Students will identify how historical events have influenced works of art.

Virginia Standards of Learning for Grade 4

The following SOLs are for the tour and follow-up activities:

Visual Arts

- 4.12 The student will describe the roles of crafts and artisans in various cultures.
- 4.15 The student will identify a variety of artists and art careers.
- 4.16 The student will identify ways that works of art from popular culture reflect the past and influence the present.
- 4.18 The student will analyze works of art based on visual properties and contextual information.

History and Social Science

- VS.2 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the physical geography, past and present, of Virginia by:
 - b) Locating and describing Virginia's Coastal Plain (Tidewater), Piedmont, Blue Ridge Mountains, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian Plateau.
 - c) Locating and identifying water features important to the early history of Virginia (Atlantic Ocean, Chesapeake Bay, James River, York River, Potomac River, Rappahannock River, Lake Drummond, and the Dismal Swamp).
- VS.3 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the first permanent English settlement in America by:
 - a) Explaining the reasons for English colonization.
 - e) Identifying the importance of the arrival of Africans and English women to the Jamestown settlement.
 - g) Describing the interactions between the English settlers and the native peoples, including the contributions of Powhatan to the survival of the settlers.
- VS.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of life in the Virginia colony by
 - a) Explaining the importance of agriculture and its influence on the institution of slavery.
 - d) Describing how money, barter, and credit were used.
 - e) Describing everyday life in colonial Virginia.

(continued)

History and Social Science (continued)

- VS.5 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the role of Virginia in the American Revolution by:
- a) Identifying the reasons why the colonies went to war with Great Britain, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence.
 - b) Identifying the various roles played by whites, enslaved African Americans, free African Americans, and American Indians in the Revolutionary War era, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and James Lafayette.
 - c) Identifying the importance of the Battle of Great Bridge, the ride of Jack Jouett, and the American victory at Yorktown.
- VS.6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the role of Virginia in the establishment of the new American nation by:
- a) Explaining why George Washington is called the “Father of our Country.”
- VS.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by:
- b) Describing Virginia’s role in the war, including identifying major battles that took place in Virginia.
 - c) Describing the roles played by whites, enslaved African Americans, free African Americans, and American Indians.
- VS.8 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the reconstruction of Virginia following the Civil War by:
- a) Identifying the effects of Reconstruction on life in Virginia
 - b) Identifying the effects of segregation and “Jim Crow” on life in Virginia for whites, African Americans, and American Indians.
 - c) Describing the importance of railroads, new industries, and the growth of cities to Virginia’s economic development.
- VS.9 The student will demonstrate knowledge of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Virginia by:
- c) Identifying the social and political events in Virginia linked to desegregation and Massive Resistance and their relationship to national history.

Pre-Visit Activities

Object 1: American Galleries



Dismal Swamp Canal, 1830

Robert Salmon (American, 1775–ca. 1848/51)

Oil on wood panel

Gift of Eugene B. Sydnor, Jr., 88.161

During the Colonial period (before railroads and highways), waterways served as the most important routes of commerce. When George Washington visited the Great Dismal Swamp in 1763, he suggested draining the section that traversed the Virginia-North Carolina border and digging a north-south canal in order to connect the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina.

This painting was produced as a lithograph (a type of print) and later was depicted on paper currency because it was seen as an icon of progress. Both the canal and the steamboat (*Lady of the Lake*) exemplify advancements in technology.

Commerce is represented by the Lake Drummond Hotel, which hosted many travelers and tourists; the felled timber on the left seems to indicate that more buildings are under construction thanks to the trading initiatives made possible by the new waterway.

Pre-Visit Activities

Questions

- Allow students time to examine the image.
- Why were waterways important to people during the 19th century (1800s)?
This was before the time of railroads and highways so waterways served as transportation.
- How many boats do you see and how do you think they are powered?
Three boats. Two are powered by sails and the other is powered by steam.
- What do you think the boats are carrying?
Answers will vary. The steamboat is carrying travelers. It is unclear what the sail boats are carrying.
- What type of activity has been taking place on the shores?
Construction has been taking place on the left side of the canvas as evidenced by the lumber. To the right there is a completed structure with out-buildings and also logs not yet turned into lumber.
- Imagine you are on one of the boats. What sounds do you hear?
Answers will vary.
- What time of day do you think it is? What do you think the weather feels like?
Answers will vary.
- The building on the right is Lake Drummond Hotel. Since there is a hotel here, what do you think that could tell us about this time period in the United States?
That people were traveling for business or pleasure and needed a place to stay.
- This painting became a symbol of progress. Why do you think that could be?
The boat and the canal pictured were signs of advancing technology.

Pre-Visit Activities

Object 2: American Galleries



Thomas Jefferson, conception 1897, cast ca. 1900–1910
Moses Jacob Ezekiel (American, 1844–1917)
Bronze with brown patina
Floyd D. and Anne C. Gottwald Fund, 2008.44

Moses Ezekiel was a Virginia artist who was influenced by the classical art of Ancient Greece and Rome. Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was a lifelong hero to Ezekiel for his role in drafting the Declaration of Independence and for his staunch advocacy of religious freedom. Ezekiel (according to his memoirs) chose to portray Thomas Jefferson in full-length, dressed in formal colonial costume and “holding the Declaration of Independence in his hand at the moment he was about to read it to our first congress.”

Thomas Jefferson was the third president of the United States as well as a farmer, writer, musician, scientist, and architect. The “revolutionary era” began in the mid 1700s when British colonists living in North America were becoming less tolerant of distant rule from the British Empire. Great Britain imposed a series of taxes (Coercive Acts) intended to demonstrate sovereignty over the thirteen colonies. Since the colonies lacked elected representation in the British Parliament, many people felt it was in direct violation of their rights as Englishmen.

Pre-Visit Activities

Questions

- Allow students time to examine the image.
- What do you think this sculpture is made of?
Bronze
- Who do you think is depicted in this sculpture?
Thomas Jefferson
- What do you think Thomas Jefferson is holding?
The Declaration of Independence
- Why is the Declaration of Independence an important document?
The Declaration of Independence states that authority to govern belongs to the people rather than to kings and that all people are created equal and have rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
- Can you describe Thomas Jefferson's stance? If this sculpture came to life, what do you think would happen next?
Answers will vary. It seems as though he is getting ready to read the document.
- Why do you think the artist has chosen to show Jefferson holding the Declaration of Independence?
Because he is well-known for being the author of this document
- What was the main reason for fighting the Revolutionary War?
Taxation without representation

Post-Visit Activities

- Ask the students what they learned from their visit. Have them fill in the answers on their K-W-L charts. Ask them if the questions they had before their visit were answered.
- Show students the two images again and ask what they remember about the works of art in the galleries. Did they look different from what was expected? What did they learn about the subjects of the works as well as the works themselves?
- Ask the students to think back to the Dismal Swamp Canal and compare it to advancements today. What do they think is similar about the time period of this work and today? What advancements have been made since then?
- Ask the students to imagine they are artists creating a sculpture of someone—from the past or alive today—who has made a positive impact on the world. Whom would they depict and why?
- Make a list of the works students remember visiting on their tour. Ask what their favorite work was and why. Then have them draw the work and add as many details as they can.
- Please let us know how your students have been inspired by VMFA! Visit our tumblr page and submit images of student works at: <http://vmfaeducation.tumblr.com/>



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