

BEAUTIFUL THINGS · PILOT DRAFT, IN DEVELOPMENT

For teachers and schools

Beautiful Things is a free exhibition up one flight of stairs at the Occidental Fine Arts Center in Pioneer Square, Seattle: a room of everyday things from Seattle's first hundred years, about 40 paintings, and old machines kids can actually use. We are building a field-trip program for art classes, grades 3 to 8, and testing it now.

What a class does

- **Before:** about 7 or 8 minutes of short videos in class, then three questions. Students learn that everyday things have designers. Two longer lessons and a slide deck are there if you want them.
- **The visit, 60 minutes, about 20 students:** a short talk and video on the first floor; upstairs for design (type on old typewriters, crank a movie viewer, look at TVs from 1948, play an Atari) and art (a wall of cat and dog paintings, and guessing which portrait is the real Sargent); then back down to draw.
- **After:** one drawing: draw something from the trip from memory, then redesign it for today. Paper and pencil. A longer cardboard design project is in the guide.

Why it fits an art class

Every object in the room was designed and made by real people. Students meet named designers (Raymond Loewy's globe radio, Henry Dreyfuss's telephone), see how painters make fur look soft and eyes shine, study the lettering on tin signs, and compare a painting with its copies. The guide maps each part to the Washington arts standards, such as VA:Cn11.1.4a, VA:Cr2.3.6a and VA:Re7.2.4a.

What's free

Admission is free. The teacher guide, deck, field journal, looking hunt and chaperone sheet are free to print. We can help pay for your school bus (details TBD). [TO CONFIRM]: that school-group visits, with staff at the stations, are free.

About the place

It is a fine-arts building, and it looks the part: brick, wood floors, paintings on the walls. The exhibition room is made to be used, though. Normal voices are fine. Talking about what you see is the point.

Ideas we're testing

These are ideas, not offers yet.

Pilot school mornings. A few booked visits for one class at a time, before public hours, with staff running the hands-on stations. In return we'd ask for the teacher's honest notes on what worked. [TO CONFIRM]: days, number of classes and staffing.

A teacher try-out hour. A free after-school hour for art teachers to type, crank and play at the stations themselves, and take the printed materials home. [TO CONFIRM]: date.

Student work on our wall. Pilot classes could show their "beautiful useful things" at the center for a few weeks, with real museum labels. [TO CONFIRM]: space and dates.

Who we are

Kirsten leads school visits, with Noy and Neal. They are Foundation staff, not trained teachers, and will complete child-safety training and background checks before school visits. That is why this is a pilot: we want art teachers to try it and tell us plainly what works and what doesn't.

Get in touch

Booking contact [TO CONFIRM]. For now, write to us through the [contact page](#) at occidentalfinearts.org. The full guide is at occidentalfinearts.org/beautiful/classroom.

Occidental Fine Arts Center · 311½ Occidental Ave S, Seattle, WA 98104 · Public hours Wednesday to Saturday, 12 to 5