

The Science of Art Summer Camp

Summer Youth Enrichment Program

The African American Museum

Fair Park – Dallas, Texas

The Science of Art

Science • Critical Thinking • Financial Literacy • Teambuilding • Cultural Literacy

June 10 – July 19, 2019 Ages 8-15

Abstract

This summer, students enrolled in the Science of Art Camp at the African American Museum will engage in the creation of art projects through the lens of science, problem solving, and research of African and African American history.

One six week comprehensive camp period will be offered by the museum. To guarantee maximum and high quality learning, enrollment will be limited to 50 students. Students will develop skills that support their academic growth and learning goals such as team building, strategic thinking, project planning and execution. Three central objectives of The Science of Art Camp are:

- 1) To provide an environment where young people can discover and utilize the resources and collections at the African American Museum
- 2) To connect the imbedded principles of science, technology and art to cultural identity and expression
- 3) To create and launch the **Science of Art** blog to interact with their peers throughout the Diaspora providing information, art work, original stories and news about their work that connects them to young scholars and artists worldwide

Project Description - Through daily interactive experiences, students will produce art projects that encourage research, creative thinking and logical reasoning. To expand their knowledge of African American artists and scholars, students will research stories of historic and contemporary creative thought leaders such as Louis Armstrong, Marion Anderson, Madame C. J. Walker, Elizabeth Catlett and Clementine Hunter, Benjamin Banneker and Paul Williams. From this research, they will create and launch the Science of Art blog, challenging and stimulating dialogue about perceptions and ideals of cultural expression.

Reading, reading, reading! Reading time for research, fun and discovery is a critical component of The Science of Art Camp. Children will be encouraged to use the special inventory of books and reading material assembled for the camp. Forty-five minutes of reading time is scheduled throughout the day so that campers can enhance their library protocol skills and advance reading and comprehension levels. Students will discover that investigating books, art, science and history...is *fun!*

At least eighty percent of students in all programs will meet low-income guidelines as established by the Federal Community Development Block Grant Program. The African American Museum will give priority admission to students living in the neighborhoods of South Dallas.

Classes will be held from 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and taught by professional teachers and master teaching artists. Parents and community partner organizations may drop children off as early as 7:30 a.m. and pick them up by 5:30 p.m. All classes are held at the African American Museum in the Educational Plaza, library and auditorium.

Program Focus

The African American Museum is committed to continuing its work to develop educational programs that help children and young people connect the traditions and cultural expression of cultures of the African Diaspora to the scientific and cultural achievement of African Americans.

One way of accomplishing this goal is to develop programs that are relevant to lower and middle school learners and increase their knowledge of specific contributions of African and African American artists, scientists and scholars. Ideally, this approach helps young people form a broader view of the museum as a resource for life long learning.

For example, based on the 5th grade standards TEKS of education, students will experiment with design using the traditional African art form Batik – learning to recognize how heat loss or gain is associated with a change in the state of matter. This experiment will help them plan the appropriate metric unit of measurements to create original works of art.

Timeline

The six week camp period will provide age and grade level specific classes that feature tracts of discovery – all making connections between art, science, African and African American history, and art production. The target age group for this camp is 8-15 year olds.

The daily schedule is divided into time periods that allow students periods of research, reflection and discovery; followed by studio time to learn techniques of design and production. Breakfast, afternoon snacks and lunch are provided, featuring **Fun Fruit Fridays** – introducing new and fresh fruits each week.

Track one

Textiles and Masks

Campers will learn about plants, dyes, fibre, symbols and ceremonial uses of masks, household items and objects made from **fabrics** and **textiles** in the African and African American cultures.

Through exploration of batik and dyeing, mask making, quilting, drawing and design on a variety of fabrics and materials, campers will produce an exhibition of banners, etchings, decorated gourds and other three dimensional work showcasing contemporary uses of traditional art forms.

Track Two

The Science of Paper, Paint, and Pots

Campers will study the ancient technologies and diversity of materials used in creating the sophisticated objects of art and ceremony in African cultures – from the Nok terra cotta sculpture (500 B.C. to 200 A.D. Nigeria); to the use of gold and bronze by the Ashanti of Ghana; the Fang group of tribes (Cameroon and Guinea) whose sculptures were dominated by geometric patterns; to the manuscripts of ancient Mali, written on papyrus-like paper and fish and animal skins.

This knowledge will serve as a backdrop for campers to create their own exhibition attributed to these legacies of art.

Track Three

Connecting the Diaspora

More than four million Africans were transported to North America and the Caribbean Islands in the Atlantic slave trade. Despite this disbursement, African descendents retained cultural traditions through religion, language, and folklore.

Study and research skills will be developed on a parallel track to create and write stories of family and traditions through poetry, drawing, painting, and weaving- culminating in the end-of-camp “*Homecoming Celebration and Exhibition*” that presents the commonalities and distinctions of the Diaspora.

Rotation Workshops

A variety of daily and weekly rotation workshops will offer 45 minute activity periods to offer a well rounded camp experience.

These age-specific, fun learning activities include:

- **Body in Motion** – a 45 minute dance and workout period- filled with creative movement exercises
- **Reading Corner** – in addition to daily visits to the library, the reading corner is an open destination before and after camp hours
- **Language of Art** - Budding artists learn the techniques of sketching “nouns” and using adjectives to create original masterpieces
- **Financial Freedom** – surveys ancient forms of currency in West Africa, and contemporary values of currency
- **Game time** – hand clap games, puzzles, chess, jacks, double-dutch, hop scotch and fiddle sticks, all support math and strategic thinking skills

- **Gallery tours** – small group tours of current exhibitions in the museum will give campers a back-room view of museum operations, careers and career possibilities
- **Your turn to learn!** – Parents and care givers are invited every Friday afternoon to learn from campers, and create an art object of their own!

Evaluation and Indicators of Success

The African American Museum Science of Art Camps will develop and embed new models of museum education that incorporate learning standards for ages 8-15 in the sciences, grammar and language development. The following outcomes are expected:

- Pre and post testing to determine students' familiarity and knowledge of a set of vocabulary and levels of grammar.
- A growing network of talented educators and arts professionals will have worked collaboratively to produce a Science of Art curriculum to meet the learning standards for grade level specific learning.
- A body of high quality training materials is created and made available to support student learning.
- The Museum's collections are made available to a wider audience, particularly targeting children and their families in the Fair Park and South Dallas neighborhoods.
- Student knowledge of African and African American artists and traditions is enhanced.
- Children develop library research skills and understand the scientific principles involved in creating art objects.

Longer term outcomes anticipated are:

- A stronger, more efficient summer museum experience for children.
- An increase in the number of partnerships and collaborations between area service agencies, schools and parents.
- Greater access to and awareness of the Museum's collections.
- Parents and children will view the Museum as a safe learning environment for both summer and year round activities.

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