Look Together
Make connections with art and each other
Pansies in Washington by Alma Thomas

Alma Thomas drew inspiration for her paintings from the colorful garden views from her window. What do you see in the painting that reminds you of flowers?

While she was painting, Thomas would envision herself in an airplane. What could these dabs of color represent as seen from above? What is in the center?

Thomas was an art teacher for over thirty-five years in Washington, DC, and began her painting career after her retirement in her late sixties.

Many of Thomas’s paintings were inspired by views of her garden through her window. Look out of your window and sketch a scene that inspires you.

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Alma Thomas, Pansies in Washington (detail), 1969, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Corcoran Collection (Gift of Vincent Melzac)
Look Together
For visitors of all ages
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Find  *Shaw Memorial by Augustus Saint-Gaudens*

This sculpture honors Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, one of the first African American regiments to fight in the Civil War. Each soldier is a unique portrait.

Look  Do you see a drummer boy? A soldier carrying a flag? Canteens? Bedrolls? What else?

Imagine  You are a figure in the scene. How are you unique or similar compared to the others? What might you be thinking or feeling?

Did you know?  The original plan for the *Shaw Memorial* was Colonel Shaw alone on a horse, but his family thought it important to include the regiment. How does that change its impact as a war memorial?

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Find  
*Number 1, 1950 (Lavender Mist) by Jackson Pollock*

Observe
Look closely at the painting. What colors do you see? What lines and shapes can you find? Step back and look again. What do you notice now?

In action
Imagine you are artist Jackson Pollock, who invented a style of painting where he poured, flung, and dripped paint onto canvases spread on the floor. To make this painting, where did you start? What color did you use first? How did you decide when to stop?

Did you know?
Jackson Pollock did not actually use any lavender paint in this work. Where the pink, black, gray, and blue colors meet, some say it looks like lavender. Do you agree? What other title would you give this painting?

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Jackson Pollock, *Number 1, 1950 (Lavender Mist) (detail)*, 1950, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund
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Discover the National Gallery of Art with your camera. You can share on social media with #myngadc.

Find a work of art that makes you laugh and take a selfie with it (make sure to laugh out loud for the picture!). #museumselfie

Find an artwork with an interesting pose or shape. Strike your own pose and take a photo. #musepose

Zoom in on one part of a painting or sculpture. Snap a picture. #partofpaintings

Observe a work of art from multiple points of view. Stand up close. Stand at a distance. Tilt your head and see if it makes a difference. Snap pictures from the angles you find interesting! #artdetail

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Katharina Fritsch, Hahn/Cock (detail), 2013, on long-term loan from Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland. © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn
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Find **The Japanese Footbridge** by Claude Monet

Move and Look

Carefully take five big steps back from the painting. Now approach it slowly. As you move closer, how does it change? What new details do you notice?

Did you know?

Monet loved his garden bridge so much, he painted it more than 250 times. He painted it at many times of the day and year to capture how it looked in different light and weather conditions.

Make an impression

Find a space that inspires you in your home, yard, or neighborhood. Sketch, paint, or photograph it at least three times. How does this influence what you see?

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For visitors of all ages
Find  
*Niagara* by Frederic Edwin Church  
Imagine you are painting this picture. Where are you standing? What do you see? What do you hear? Don’t miss the rainbow!

Create  
Make a six-word story about how you feel when you look at this view. Work together or craft your own.

Compare  
Look at the paintings in this room. Can you find calm water? Moving water? Which landscape in the room best matches your mood? Why?

Did you know?  
This exact view of Niagara Falls doesn’t exist. The artist combined several views for dramatic visual impact.

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Frederic Edwin Church, *Niagara* (detail), 1857, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Corcoran Collection (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund)
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Maquettes are small-scale models or rough drafts of sculptures. There are several maquettes in this room. Can you find them? Do you see the model for the big mobile in our Atrium?
Alexander Calder Tower Gallery

This gallery has the largest display of works by Alexander Calder on view in the world. Calder was the first to create the hanging, moving sculptures you see, called mobiles.

Explore this gallery. Find the biggest and smallest sculptures. Compare them. Which mobile is moving the most?

Using your finger, make an outline of your favorite sculpture in the air. What did you notice about its shape?

Calder was an inventive artist who never went anywhere without a pair of pliers in his pocket. Although most of his work is abstract, he was known to explore subjects such as animals and the circus. Can you find examples in this room?

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For visitors of all ages
Lick and Lather by Janine Antoni

Without looking at the label, can you guess what these busts are made of? Do the materials look or smell familiar to you?

All fourteen busts were made from the same mold of the artist’s head and shoulders, but the licking and lathering process changed them. Which bust seems the most complete? Which is the most erased?

What common household item from your bathroom or kitchen would you use to make a portrait of yourself? Why?

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Try with any work of art!
The National Gallery of Art is made up of two large buildings and a sculpture garden. In the West Building you’ll find paintings and sculptures from the medieval period through the late nineteenth century, while the East Building contains works from the twentieth century through today. Use the prompts below to create your own personal journey!

Choose
Find a work of art that catches your eye. Look at it for sixty seconds.

Share
Discuss three details you notice. If you could, what would you ask the artist?

Compare
Look at an artwork nearby. What is similar or different? Why do you think they are in the same room?

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left to right Richard Norris Brooke, A Pastoral Visit, 1881, Corcoran Collection (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund); Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi, The Adoration of the Magi, c. 1440/1460, Samuel H. Kress Collection; Edward Hopper, Cape Cod Evening, 1939, John Hay Whitney Collection; Vincent van Gogh, Self-Portrait, 1889, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney; André Derain, Mountains at Collioure, 1905, John Hay Whitney Collection. All images are details from the National Gallery of Art collection.