

HIGHLIGHTS TOUR PRESENTATION PREPARATION

1. Theme selection

- a. This is very important because everything flows from this point
- b. Example of a theme: "Light and Enlightenment"
 - i. Mithras (Roman God of Light); Kaemwaset (light creates deep shadow on shoulders which gives the impression of power and strength); Jongkind, *Notre Dame de Paris* (light drenched scene of everyday life); Monet (light for light's sake); Tibetan Thangka (enlightenment of Buddha); Seated Buddha (fully enlightened)

2. Art selection

- a. One piece from special exhibit
- b. Pieces from at least 4-5 galleries
- c. Variety of paintings, sculptures, photos, modern, antiquity
- d. Appropriate for your theme
- e. Approximately 10-12 pieces
- f. Things that you are passionate about, or willing to fall in love with

3. Consider efficient flow of tour

- a. How much time in front of each piece
- b. How much time to transition from piece to piece
- c. Use elevator or stairs?
- d. Logical flow from piece to piece
- e. Logical flow from gallery to gallery

4. Research art selections

- a. Object sheets
- b. Look at each piece and note detail
- c. Consider their significance, history, and art elements
- d. Determine your objective for each piece
 - i. How it fits your theme
 - ii. To have visitors look at colors, composition, art elements

- iii. To share the context of time in which it was created (example: invention of paint in tubes got people painting outdoors, thus helping Impressionism)
- e. To share information about artist, technique, or genre (example: Barbazon School, Ash Can, Abstract Expressionism, Cubism, Fauvism)
- f. Simplify down to the most important/interesting thing to say about each piece
- g. Remember that art should be a visual activity
 - i. Draw the viewer into the work of art through your presentation
 - ii. Have the viewer focus on the work of art and not you

5. Develop transitions

- a. Should be appropriate to theme
- b. Should be interesting
- c. Should help viewer shift focus from one piece to another
- d. Example:
 - i. UNINTERESTING: “We have just seen a painting that shows how an American Artist used light, now let’s see how a French painter used light.”
 - ii. INTERESTING: “We have just seen how light can create a sense of grandeur and connection with the divine; now let’s go see a painting that uses light to enlighten the viewer about death.”

6. Create talking points for each piece

- a. Introduce your theme
- b. Bullet point the information that you want to share
 - i. Always include name of piece, artist, date, and medium
 - ii. Weave pieces in your tour together to provide comparison and continuity
 - 1. Example: Talking about Jules Bastien-Lepage, *The Ripening Wheat*: “His large paintings combined areas of almost photo-like realism, (like we just saw in the Bierstadt), with areas of the canvas merely suggesting detail (like we saw in the Jongkind painting).”

- c. End each piece with transition
- d. Create a tour conclusion recapping your theme and inviting the visitor to see more of the museum
- e. Share your proposed talking points with trainers and mentor to get feedback on interest, sequence, and accuracy of information

7. Practice, practice, practice, and then practice some more

- a. Read your talking points to commit them to memory
- b. Think about where you stand to present piece
- c. Be aware of your speaking pace, variation of tone to create interest, and volume
- d. Avoid distracting movements or mannerisms
- e. Time yourself
- f. Get rid of “land mines”
 - i. If you keep tripping over a pronunciation or some other aspect of your talking points detail, get rid of it!
- g. Practice your tour with your mentor and selected class mates
- h. Practice again
 - i. On the treadmill, while you are driving, in the shower...

8. Have fun and enjoy the process