

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM

Small group visits to the Art Museum can...

...Hone visual literacy and critical thinking skills.

Beginning with a tutorial on looking at art, students are asked to analyze the components of a work of art (e.g. the artist's use of color, line, etc.) and how these formal elements affect their understanding of the work as a whole. This model can also be incorporated into written assignments or oral presentations.

Jason Puchalla, a lecturer in the department of Physics, brings his freshman seminar on optics, **Lights, Camera, Action (FRS 110)**, to the Museum to apply lessons learned about how the eye sees to a discussion of selected works of art in the galleries. Students analyze Albert Bierstadt's large-scale painting of Mount Adams, Washington (1875) and consider the similarities and differences in the ways in which physicists and art historians might approach this work. A class assignment reinforces these lessons by asking students to compare the experience of viewing a painting in the galleries versus a photographic reproduction of the same work of art.

...Provide students with primary source material.

Presenting art as a primary source encourages students to think more broadly about the types of materials available to them as they seek to understand a specific culture or period.

Artifacts, Images and History: The American Southwest (HIS/ART 491), an undergraduate seminar co-taught in the fall of 2011 by History professor Martha Sandweiss and Bryan Just, Peter Jay Sharp, Class of 1952, Curator and Lecturer in the Art of the Ancient Americas, focused on an under-studied collection of objects from the American Southwest. Through close analysis of these objects as primary source materials, the students explored larger questions relating to the American acquisition of the Southwest and the image of this region and its peoples in the American imagination.

...Inspire students' own creative endeavors.

By looking outside the traditional classroom setting for material, faculty and students can find fresh ideas for their own art making, musical compositions, creative writing assignments, or even oral language presentations.

Each semester, the students in **Intermediate/Advanced French (FRE 107)** develop their oral and written French language skills via a module at the Art Museum on French Impressionist art. They first visit the Museum together as a class and learn how to describe a work of art. Next, they then return to the Museum on their own and select three works for a series of writing assignments. Finally, their midterm exam consists of an oral presentation to the class in the galleries, based on one of these works.

...Reinforce concepts and contexts presented in class.

Expand on concepts covered in class and provide students with a broader understanding of the historical, social, or cultural context of a specific region or moment.

The students in English professor Bill Gleason's spring 2011 course **Literature and the Environment (ENG/ENV 386)** visited the Museum to look at painted landscapes. Students discussed the categories of the picturesque and the sublime in relationship to what they saw as well as what they had read in class. By making connections between works of art and literature, they gained a fuller appreciation for the category of landscape across artistic disciplines.

Interested in bringing your class to the Art Museum?

Johanna (Jody) Seasonwein, Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow for Academic Programs, can provide information on objects in the collection and help design and guide class discussions in the galleries. She can be reached at (609) 258-7136 or via email at jseasonw@princeton.edu.