



Impressionism

Self-guided group activity

Grades 4-12
Plan on spending time with 8-10 artworks.

Many of these questions are designed to prompt close looking and critical thinking. Read each artwork's label to find answers to fact-based questions. Artwork not on view? Don't worry: There are plenty of others to visit!

Start your exploration of French Impressionism with an example of academic painting, like *The Carpet Merchant*. For discussion purposes, this tour also includes examples of American Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting.



GALLERY 357 Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Carpet Merchant* (detail), 70.40

Before Impressionism

- What comes to mind when you hear the term “academic”?
- How would you describe this painting?
- What is going on?
- What do you see that makes you say that?



GALLERY 351 Claude Monet, *The Seashore at Sainte-Adresse* (detail), 53.13

Early Impressionism

- What words would you use to describe this painting?
- How do you think Monet captured the “feel” of being on the seashore?
- How does this compare to *The Carpet Merchant*?
- Which artwork do you prefer? Why?



GALLERY 321 Jean-Frédéric Bazille, *Landscape by the Lez River* (detail), 69.23

- What about this painting appears most real?
- In what ways does it look more real than *The Carpet Merchant*?
- Describe the brushstrokes in the sky. How do these differ from the brushstrokes in the leaves?



GALLERY 351 Claude Monet, *Still Life with Pheasants and Plovers* (detail), 84.140

Impressionism

- What’s going on in this painting?
- What do you think happened before? What will happen next?
- What appears impressionistic here?
- How closely do you think Monet observed these birds? What do you see that makes you think that?



GALLERY 355 Claude Monet, *Grainstack, Sun in the Mist* (detail), 93.20

- Describe the range of color you see.
- Some people think this is a realistic painting; others find it more decorative. What do you think? Why?
- What events do you think led up to this moment?
- What season do you think this depicts? Why?
- What do you wonder about?



GALLERY 351 Berthe Morisot, *The Artist's Daughter, Julie, with her Nanny* (detail), 96.40

- What do you think is going on here? What do you see that makes you say that?
- What time of day do you think it is? How do you know?
- Do you think the painting is finished or unfinished? Why?
- What impressions do you see?



GALLERY 355 Camille Pissarro, *Place du Théâtre Français, Paris: Rain* (detail), 18.19

- Where do you think the artist was when he painted this?
- What time of year do you think it is? What do you see that makes you think that?
- How has Pissarro presented an "impression" of the weather?
- Is this a place you'd want to visit? Why or why not?



GALLERY 355 Blanche Hoschedé-Monet, *Landscape, Snow Effect; le Val near Giverny* 2025.39

- What do you see in this painting? What more can you find?
- How does this painting of a snowy landscape make you feel? What about it makes you feel that way?
- What is similar and different to the landscape we see here in Minnesota during winter? What do you see that makes you say that?
- If you were to paint *en plein air* (painting outdoors), what time of year would you choose to paint? Why?



GALLERY 351 Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Mlle. Hortense Valpinçon* (detail), 48.1

- What's going on in this painting?
- What details did Degas paint to help you see that?
- Does this painting remind you of a photograph? If so, in what ways?
- What strikes you as unusual or remarkable about it?



GALLERY 355 Vincent van Gogh, *Olive Trees* (detail), 51.7

Following Impressionism

- Describe this painting. What do you notice first?
- How has the artist expressed his feelings about nature?
How would you describe those feelings?
- How does this compare to Monet's *Grainstack* painting?
- Which do you prefer? Why?