

# TEACHERS: RESOURCES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

## Self Guided Tour For Students Grades 7-12

### Masterpieces Speak For Themselves: Finding Treasures in the National Gallery of Canada Collection

#### Introduction

During this self-guided tour, discover the qualities that make a great work of art and realize that every age has its masterpieces. Find four artworks that you like and that you would consider masterpieces. Then answer the questions.

#### In the galleries

Select your first two favourite artworks from the European or Canadian or Inuit galleries. The last two works will be selected from the Contemporary galleries.

#### Artwork #1

**Artist:**

**Title:**

**Date:**

#### What do you think makes a great work of art?

Select and prioritize your answer from the list below and add your own thoughts.

- Innovation
- Quality
- Historical relevance
- Truth to nature
- Rare
- Expensive materials
- Technique, skill
- Artists transcend the expectations of their time
- Anything else?

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Draw a thumbnail sketch

## Artwork # 2

**Artist:**

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Artists create works to trigger a response in the viewer. How do you respond to this work?**

Select and prioritize your answer from the list below and add your own thoughts.

- I see something I like
- I feel something new
- I feel disturbed
- I feel excited
- I like the way the artist has arranged the composition
- I like the subject matter
- I see a reflection of myself
- I like the colours
- Why have you chosen this work?

Draw a thumbnail sketch

**Now visit the contemporary galleries**

Find two artworks in the **Contemporary** galleries that you like and that you think are masterpieces.

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## Artwork #3

**Artist:**

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Artwork reproductions in books and posters are not the same as the original.  
How different is the original work of art?**

Select and prioritize your answers from the list below and add your own thoughts.

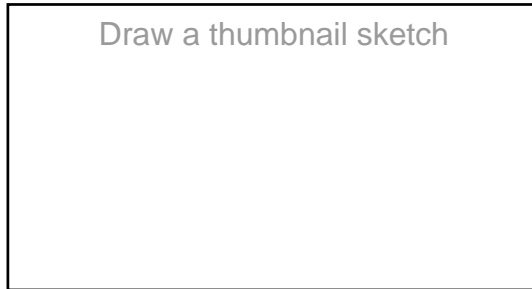
- Size
- Texture
- Frame
- Medium
- Anything else?

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Draw a thumbnail sketch



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## Artwork # 4

**Artist:**

**Title:**

**Date:**

### Why do contemporary artists create non-traditional artworks?

Select and prioritize your answers from the list below and add your own thoughts.

- To be innovative
- To be of their time
- To use new technologies
- Everything has been done before in art
- They are tired of making beautiful things in an ugly world
- To challenge conventions
- To work with different, non-traditional materials
- Any other thoughts?

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## Optional question

### What do you think is the role of an art gallery?

Select and prioritize your answers from the list below and add your own thoughts.

- To collect artworks
- To preserve artworks
- To entertain visitors
- To display artworks
- To define a nation's culture
- To teach about art
- To change society
- To engage the viewer
- To help visitors form an identity
- Anything else?

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## After your gallery visit

Pretend you are a curator and you have to select one artwork for your collection. Which one would you choose? Research the selected artwork on [CyberMuse](#) and learn about its many interpretations. Justify your selection by writing a statement. After your research, would you still consider it a masterpiece? Why?