

Check-out Tours: Guidelines and Expectations Summer 2016

Congratulations! You have reached a significant milestone in the docent training program! Check-out tours will take place between June 14 and July 29, 2016. The checkout process will take about two hours. One hour is for the tour, one hour for a discussion with your evaluator.

We ask you to invite a small group of supportive adults (4-6) as your audience. We don't recommend bringing children on a checkout tour, as they will present an additional challenge for you when you are essentially being "tested." Having a group makes the inquiry part of the tour easier, more effective, and more like a real tour. Remind any guests that you will need to stay for about an hour after the tour and that they should plan to wait for you or make arrangements to leave separately.

This tour will round out the collections we have studied this year. The tour topic is "Treasures of European Art." This is a topic that is often requested, and our goal is for you to prepare a tour that you can eventually give to museum visitors. Here is a brief tour description:

View masterful works of art that trace Europe's rich history from the Medieval world through the Renaissance and Baroque ages up to the 18th century.

Using this topic, you will develop a specific theme that fits the topic. Some theme examples for this topic might include: Art and its Patrons, Art Made in the Service of Religion, or What Makes a Work of Art a Treasure? (See attached Tour Description.)

Plan to include **7-8 objects** on your tour. Include at least **one object from each designated period**. (Because we have so few Mannerist objects, that period is optional.) Also include **at least one sculpture and one decorative arts object**. (See the list of periods and possible objects posted on ipevolunteers.org.)

Once you have decided on the theme and objects please discuss with your evaluator (by written note or email) before you proceed. We recommend you consult and use the Tour Planning Worksheet along with "Putting Together a Tour" from the Docent Program Handbook. Also be sure to review our comments on your Art of Ancient Cultures tour papers as you prepare.

We will be evaluating the following aspects of your tour:

- **Format:** Introduction/welcome to the museum (introduce yourself, review museum rules, etc.); carefully thought-out theme statement; body (7-8 objects); relevant transitions; references to works seen earlier on the tour; conclusion.
- **Open-ended questions:** Use of appropriate open-ended questions in order to engage your audience and create an atmosphere of discussion and learning.
- **Content:** Information is accurate and relevant to your tour theme. Note-cards are not used on tours (check-out or otherwise).

- **Pace:** Time for looking at the objects. Use of inquiry, props and visual aids.
- **Pronunciation:** Pronunciation is as accurate and consistent as possible. Ask us or a classmate for help if you have questions.
- **Voice, positioning, and gestures:** Volume and projection. Pace of delivery. Placement in front of objects (1 foot away, facing the group). Appropriate hand gestures (use an open hand or flashlight to point instead of one finger).
- **Awareness of time:** Tours last one hour, including your introduction, getting from place to place, etc. Plan to arrive early and begin on time. Maintain an awareness of time; you don't want to spend 45 minutes on the first three objects and 15 minutes on the next four or five.
- **Tour route:** Logical sequence and comfortable flow to the tour.
- **Flexibility:** Ability to accommodate the interests and level of the group, as well as to make changes to your tour route, as needed.

You can expect the following things to happen on the tour:

- We may (or may not) respond to inquiry questions and props/visual aids like any member of the tour group.
- We will take notes throughout to aid us in the evaluation process. This does not mean you made a mistake. We are noting the things you did well, too!
- We will not make adjustments or answer content or tour technique questions during the tour. The tour is presented in the same way you would give it to the public.
- Following a discussion of your tour, we will write an evaluation (see the Gallery Tour Review form). You will receive a copy of the evaluation for your reference and one will go into our files.

Please call your evaluator with questions about content or tour methods before the day of your tour. Keep in mind that the check-out tour is part of the on-going learning process. You have absorbed an amazing amount of information during the first year of training. A sincere thank you for your hard work and dedication to "Inspiring wonder through the power of art." Good luck and have fun!