Teacher Preparation Materials  
Plein Air Art Experience

For their 2-hour field trip at Filoli, your students will paint along the Estate Trail and in Filoli’s historic formal garden. It is an exhilarating experience to be immersed in both art and nature in Filoli’s garden and nature preserve.

The curriculum is designed for 3rd – 8th graders. Students will create two small watercolor paintings. The careful and deliberate observation needed to study a subject closely and capture it in art is a great foundation for so many academic activities.

Students will first take a short hike along the Estate Trail and paint the sweeping view of the agricultural fields and Santa Cruz Mountains. Then they will visit formal gardens where they will closely study plants and flowers and choose one to paint. Throughout the morning, Filoli Guides will use examples of artwork from plein air masters and modern artists to engage the students in conversation about composition, color, and expression.

Pre- and post- field trip materials are included in this document. We hope you will use them to prepare students before the field trip and to continue the lesson in the classroom afterwards. This follow-up will strengthen the student’s connection to what they learned at Filoli.

Filoli’s staff and volunteers look forward to hosting your class. Please contact us with any questions prior to your field trip.

Reservations:  
Taken online only at filoli.org/field-trips

Reservation Changes & Field Trip Day Contact:  
Lisa Chai, Youth Programs Assistant  
youthprograms@filoli.org, (650) 364-8300 x 252
Preparing For Your Field Trip

Field Trip Day
• Filoli is located at 86 Cañada Road in Woodside. You will be directed to bus parking by staff after the children unload.
• Meet staff at the picnic tables outside the Visitor Center.
• Arrive by 9:40 am to use bathrooms in the Visitor Center and have a snack.
• Field trip starts promptly at 10:00 am.*
• Field trip ends at 12:00 pm. Your class is welcome to use the picnic tables for lunch.
• Divide each class into two groups before you arrive.
• Our guides appreciate when students and chaperones arrive wearing nametags.
• There is nowhere to store backpacks or lunches. Please leave them in the car/bus. Filoli will provide your chaperones with a tote bag to carry the children’s water bottles.
• Field trips are only canceled in heavy rain. Contact us the day prior to your field trip if you are concerned about rain. Filoli’s cancellation policy is listed on filoli.org/field-trips.

*Filoli can accommodate late start schools or schools with a long drive. Contact us immediately after making your reservation to change your start time.

Note that your field trip includes a visit to the Garden and Nature Preserve but not the House.

Information For Parents
Please ask parents to prepare their children for their garden adventure by doing the following:
• Pack a water bottle, hat, and clothes appropriate for the weather.
• Generously apply sunscreen at home. Students will be outside for the entire field trip.
• Field trips are held in light rain. If it is raining, send students with a raincoat and a change of shoes and socks for after the field trip.
Preparing For Your Field Trip

Chaperone Policy
- Is your class taking a bus? The maximum number of adults is 5, including the teacher.
- Is your class taking cars? You may bring 1 adult for every 3 students, including the teacher.
- These ratios will be strictly enforced. Classes that exceed the number of allowed adults will be asked to pay general admission prices for the additional adults. Payment for additional adults can only be made on the day of the field trip. Additional adults may not accompany the students. They may explore the House and Garden on their own.

Preparing the Chaperones
Filoli values the contributions and involvement of chaperones and we thank them for being part of this experience. We’d like to share ways in which chaperones can enhance the students’ experience, and also ask them to avoid situations that detract from the experience.

Add to the experience!
- Set an example for the students by following the field trip rules.
- Be responsible for the safety of the students by ensuring they follow garden rules.
- Keep the focus on the students’ learning experience by limiting your own questions and comments to the guide.
- Carry the students’ water bottles. Filoli will provide a tote bag.

These actions detract from the students’ experience:
- Talking on your cell phone, with the teacher, or with other chaperones in your group.
- Photography is distracting for the students and guides. We encourage taking a few photos to capture and share the experience, but please limit photography.
- Asking students or guides to stop and pose for photographs.
- Asking the guides many questions. Please let the students ask and answer questions.

Siblings are not permitted on the field trip.
Pre-Field Trip Activities

Checklist
☐ Watch video on how to use water color pencils and water brush
☐ Review vocabulary words
☐ Discuss Zones and Claude Monet paintings
☐ Email parents how to prepare their children for the field trip
☐ Email chaperones expectations

Video
Please show students this 5-minute video that demonstrates how to use a water brush and watercolor pencils: https://youtu.be/tT0yXU3vrYc

Vocabulary
Painting Plein Air - the act of painting outdoors; translates to “in plein air” in French

Abstract - painting real objects in a way that may be difficult for other people to recognize through the use of simple lines, simple shapes, and simple color choices; abstract elements in paintings are about what’s in your heart and brain, whether or not the viewer recognizes that object is less important

Realism - painting things as they really look

Composition - placement of shapes in the painting

Perspective - a way of painting how big things actually look; for example, things that are farther away seem smaller than they actually are

Horizon Line - the horizontal line in a painting that divides the sky or the base of mountains from flat land or water

Vertical Line - a line that goes from top to bottom on your painting

Color Palette - the range of colors used in your painting

Light Source - a real or imaginary source of illumination on the subject of your painting (i.e. light from the sun, moon, or a lamp)
Discussion – Zones

Zones
When planning a painting it helps to divide a landscape into three zones:
  • foreground
  • middle ground
  • background

Objects at the bottom or directly in front of us are perceived as closest to us and are in the foreground.

Objects towards the top are in the background are usually the furthest away.

What is bigger if you were to measure them: the trees at the top of the mountain in the background or the tulips in the foreground?

Dividing a landscape into zones shows us what size objects should be relative to objects in other zones.
Discussion: Claude Monet Paintings

Use the two paintings on the following pages to compare Monet’s very different representation of the same bridge over a pond of water lilies. Your students may already have studied the iconic blue painting of the bridge, but perhaps not the red painting.

| Both paintings have two subjects in common: a bridge and the pond. | water lilies | irises and path |
| What subjects are different? | blue and green | red, pink, yellow |
| What is the color pallet? | pond, water lilies | path, irises |
| What is in the foreground? | bridge, grasses | bridge, grasses |
| What is in the middle ground? | trees | trees, sky |

How does each painting make you feel?
*The use of colors and contrast enhance what the viewer feels or express what the painter feels. What do you feel when you see red or blue? If it’s a gloomy day what colors do you use? A muted, darker color or a bright color?*

What shapes did Monet use to paint the bridge?
*Rectangles, arches*

What shapes did Monet use to paint the water lilies?
*Dots*

What shapes did Monet use to paint the irises?
*Lines*

Note: The bridge is painted using *realism*. The water lilies and irises are painted in an *abstract* style – a simple dot or line with the brush conveys flowers and leaves. We may not have recognized what they were if we did not know the title of each painting.
Monet, “Japanese Bridge Over Water Lily Pond”, 1889
Monet, “Japanese Bridge Water Irises”, 1900
Post-Field Trip Activities

Display and Discuss Artwork
Hang artwork in classroom and discuss:
- What is the color palette used?
- Name a foreground object, background object.
- What is the name of the plant they selected?
- Is their painting style abstract or realism, or does it incorporate both

Activity
Have students research the plant they drew in the garden. What country or region is it native to? A native plant is a plant that has developed over thousands of years in a particular region.

Plants you saw on the Estate Trail, like the bay laurel tree, are native to Filoli’s Nature Preserve. Many of the plants you saw in the garden, like the tulips, are not native.

The Bourns and Roths were the two families that lived at Filoli. They brought beautiful non-native plants into the garden from around the world. Some of these plants, like the Irish Yew (left) and Camellia plants (right), reminded them of the places they visited when they traveled. Others, like tulips, added great color and beauty to their garden.
Curriculum Connections

Below is a list of activities students will participate in that can be directly connected to California's Visual Arts Standards identified in the following pages. Grade is represented by the first number, i.e. 3.1.1 applies to 3rd grade.

Students will:
- critique and compare artwork from contemporary and modern artists
- discuss how artists use color to evoke mood and show seasons, and use these methods in their own paintings
- use zones (foreground, middle ground, background) to show perspective in their landscape painting
- discuss how line can direct a viewer to a focal point in a painting and how the bend of a tree in the wind can show the weather
- discuss how complex flowers can be drawn using familiar, simple shapes
- represent objects in nature using complex shapes (realism) or abstract techniques (simple lines and color), or both
- discuss light source and use shadows in their own artwork to display contrast and light
- experiment with a variety of mediums: pencil, colored pencil, and a watercolor brush

Artistic Perception
Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to the Visual Arts

Students perceive and respond to works of art, objects in nature, events, and the environment. They also use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations.

Develop Perceptual Skills and Visual Arts Vocabulary
3.1.1: Perceive and describe rhythm and movement in works of art and in the environment.
3.1.2: Describe how artists use tints and shades in painting.
3.1.3: Identify and describe how foreground, middle ground, and background are used to create the illusion of space.
4.1.1: Perceive and describe contrast and emphasis in works of art and in the environment.
4.1.3: Identify pairs of complementary colors (e.g., yellow/violet; red/green; orange/blue) and discuss how artists use them to communicate an idea or mood.
5.1.2: Identify and describe characteristics of representational, abstract, and nonrepresentational works of art.

**Analyze Art Elements and Principles of Design**
3.1.5: Identify and describe elements of art in works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, texture, space, and value.
4.1.5: Describe and analyze the elements of art (e.g., color, shape/form, line, texture, space, value), emphasizing form, as they are used in works of art and found in the environment.
5.1.3: Use their knowledge of all the elements of art to describe similarities and differences in works of art and in the environment.

**Creative Expression**
Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Visual Arts

Students apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art.

**Communication and Expression Through Original Works of Art**
3.2.3: Paint or draw a landscape, seascape, or cityscape that shows the illusion of space.
3.2.4: Create a work of art based on the observation of objects and scenes in daily life, emphasizing value changes.
5.2.6: Use perspective in an original work of art to create a real or imaginary scene.

**Historical and Cultural Context**
Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of the Visual Arts

Students analyze the role and development of the visual arts in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to the visual arts and artists.

**Role and Development of the Visual Arts**
3.3.1: Compare and describe various works of art that have a similar theme and were created at different time periods.
3.3.3: Distinguish and describe representational, abstract, and nonrepresentational works of art.

**Aesthetic Valuing**
Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgments About Works in the Visual Arts

Students analyze, assess, and derive meaning from works of art, including their own, according to the elements of art, the principles of design, and aesthetic qualities.

**Derive Meaning**
3.4.1: Compare and contrast selected works of art and describe them, using appropriate vocabulary of art.
4.4.1: Describe how using the language of the visual arts helps to clarify personal responses to works of art.
5.4.1: Identify how selected principles of design are used in a work of art and how they affect personal responses to and evaluation of the work of art.