



SECTION TWO: ART-BASED LEARNING

ART-BASED LEARNING: A DESCRIPTION

This Curriculum Resource Guide uses art-based learning as its basis. This approach assumes that each person, however young, brings his or her own unique life experience to an encounter with a work of art, and that learning is an active process of inquiry (asking questions), dialogue (exchange of ideas), and interaction. This pedagogical space creates room for speculation, interaction, and new learning.

Besides providing an opportunity for inquiry-based learning that addresses cultural diversity and inclusion, art-based learning serves different learning styles especially well. It does this by employing approaches and strategies ranging from those centred in concrete actions and sensory responses all the way to the evidence-based methodologies of science. You will find these approaches and strategies described in the grade-by-grade suggestions for using Aga Khan Museum resources in your teaching, and in the detailed lesson plans.

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum expectations are provided for all subject areas. In many cases, Museum works of art can be used as springboards for the fulfillment of expectations in multiple subject areas. The *Guide* also includes a section called “Cross-Curricular Connections” that identifies ways in which the same learning activity with a work of art can fulfill multiple curriculum expectations.



Visits to the Aga Khan Museum and use of the *Curriculum Resource Guide* will facilitate learning across several disciplines. A focus on big ideas and key understandings invites clustering of curriculum expectations and interdisciplinary learning.

The following big ideas about Islamic arts and Muslim societies are evident in this Guide:

- Islamic artistic production varies immensely in range and breadth across time and geographical boundaries.
- There is a wide spectrum of kinds of Islamic art, ranging from religious to secular and from courtly to utilitarian.
- Calligraphy has a prominent place in Islamic art.
- Islamic art is a wonderful source of inspiration for creative design projects.
- There are numerous mathematical principles and proficiencies inherent in Islamic art that can lead to understanding of both art and mathematics.
- There are numerous connections between art and science in Islamic art that can lead to understanding of both art and science.
- The diversity and plurality characteristic of many Muslim societies in the past can lead to understanding of diversity and plurality in contemporary Canada, and in the world.

Note: The *Curriculum Resource Guide* relies upon and owes a particular debt to the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) Curriculum documents. The OME Curriculum is the basis for the planning and delivery of K-12 education in every school, whether public or private, in Ontario. It provides an invaluable template and guide.



GRAPHIC TOOLS: LEARNING FROM A MAP

A teacher can use graphics to aid students' inquiries:

- 1) The map showing the places where works of art were made can stimulate explorations of how geography has influenced and determined the ways or life of various peoples. For example, the Egyptian Mamluk Fountain in Figure 49 can be used as a starting point for an exploration of engineering innovations involving the efficient use of water. Students can put pictures of other sites on the map and connect them to the fountain to show how ideas and innovations travelled around the world.
- 2) The label graphic breaks down a museum label into its component parts to show students what they can learn from it about a work of art and how art is created in a geographic and historic context.

1. A MAP SHOWING SITES OF ORIGIN



Figure 4:
This map shows the places
of origin of several paintings
and objects in the *Guide*.

Learning Through Inquiry and Learning by Doing: Prompts and Activities

The following are examples of geography-related questions and activities you can use in the classroom, based on the three key geographic questions: What's there? Why there? And why care?

1. Why do you think there are no boundaries of countries on this map? Are the boundaries as they existed at the time of origin of the works of art the same as they are now?
2. What is the modern location of the works of art on the map? What is different about these locations and what do they have in common?
3. How do discoveries of scientific knowledge, mathematics, literature, cultural arts, civilization, architectural traditions, and religions spread from place to place? What are the benefits of discoveries spreading?
4. How were locations connected in these regions during the times when the works of art were made? Investigate the Silk Road, the spice routes, and the gold routes between continents.

2. A LABEL OF A MUSEUM OBJECT

Whether in the Museum or on the website, all works of art have a label. What is in a label, and how can you use it as an active process of inquiry (asking questions), dialogue (exchange of ideas), and interaction?



Figure 5:
Panel
Egypt, 15th century
Marble and stone mosaic
225 x 49 x 5 cm
AKM571
(See Figure 24
for more about this object.)



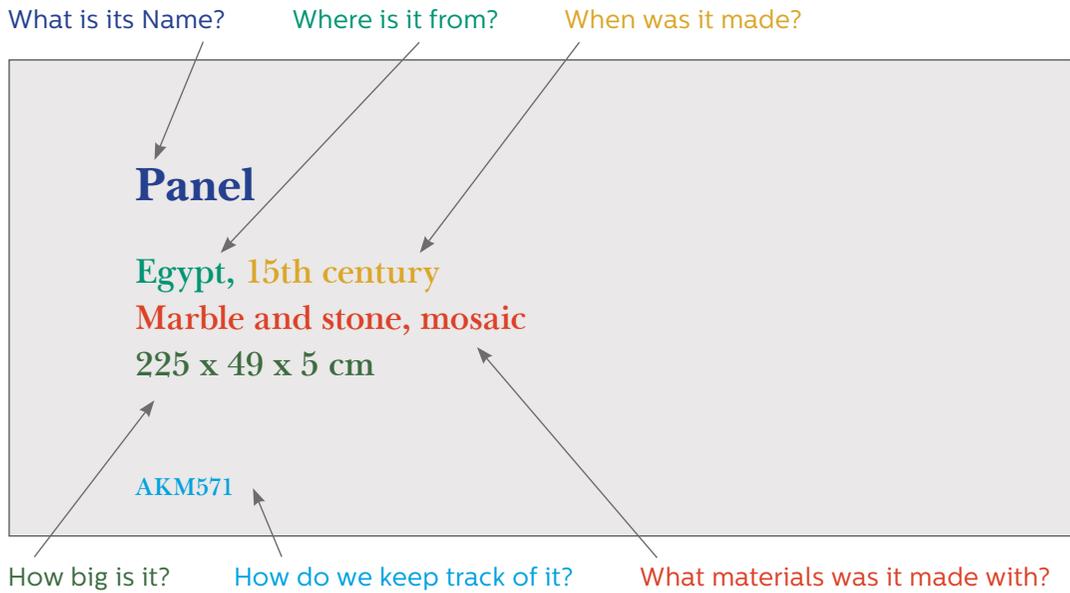


Figure 6:
An example of an Aga Khan Museum
label with explanations of its various parts.

Learning Through Inquiry and Learning by Doing: Prompts and Activities

Using the label for the marble wall panel as a guide, select an object in the classroom and write a label for it as if it were an object in a museum.

3. THE CREATIVE PROCESS

For a description and graphic of this model, please refer to *The Ontario Ministry of Education Arts Curriculum, Grades 1–8*, pages 19–22. A PDF of the document is available at: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/arts18b09curr.pdf.

