



Philosophy Statement Regarding Art Museum Visitation

When preparing students to attend an art museum, it's always a good idea to check out a museum showing before the trip so there are no surprises. Please discuss any points of interest with your principal ahead of time, so they are prepared to respond if parents express any concerns. Be cautious when you speak with your principal - remember it is possible that he/she is probably not an artist and may not have significant experience with the nature of art. "Non-artists" tend to view the situation (an aesthetic experience) in an entirely different way than artists do.

Please assure your principal that you have this handled ...but that you want them to know about possible "rumblings" from parents ahead of time. Please have thorough discussions with your students attending the museum event. Discuss with them the fact that the human body was, and still is, considered to be a work of art. Discuss that artists interpret the human body in many different ways and that **there is no right way or wrong way** to do this. Every artist is unique and has their own perspective when creating their piece of art. Speak with your students about maturity and the fact that they should be able to view a piece of art and see it as **art** and not something nasty or naughty....and since they are viewing it as art, they shouldn't have the giggles or elbow each other in the ribs. One idea is to suggest to students to view the art as if they are art critics from an art magazine and they have to act very important! They have to view the art very carefully in order to "write their art piece for the magazine".

It is important to prepare students as best you can but realize that you can't control what they say when they go home or how upset parents are going to react. But try not to make a big deal out of this - if you do, the students (and admin) are going to pick up on it and think *they* should make a big deal of it too.

Try to have talking points for yourself and your administration for referral. This information could also be made available for parents.

(Some of this content was adapted from a statement from Julie Driggers, art teacher at Green Hope Elementary.)