RIVER ROAD AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Preparation
How to prepare for a visit?

Key Concepts
What to expect during your visit to the museum?

Post Visit
How should you apply what you have learned?
Scheduling a Field Trip

Call 225-474-5553 or email melanie@aamuseum.org to book a tour to the museum.

$10.00/person

Children 6 & under are FREE

All groups by appointment only

Hours: Wed – Sat, 10:00am – 5:00pm

Closed: Sunday – Tuesday

2018 Holiday Schedule

Dr. Martin Luther King Day, open
Mardi Gras, closed
Good Friday, closed
Easter Saturday & Sunday, closed
Memorial Day, closed
July 3, 4, & 5, closed
Labor Day, closed
Thanksgiving Week, closed
Christmas Eve & Day, closed
New Year's Eve & Day, closed
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Preparation

How to prepare for a visit?

We want to make sure your field trip is a success for you and your students. To prepare for a visit:

✽ Review & discuss this guide including key concepts and terms with your students

✽ Watch the First African in Louisiana video on the museum’s YouTube page

✽ Explain to your students the rules exist to protect the collection and to respect other visitors. Museum rules are as follows:
  o Do not touch the artifacts
  o Backpacks should remain on the bus
  o Food, chewing gum, and drinks are not allowed in the galleries.
  o Use your indoor voice
  o Cell phones must be put on silent while in the galleries.
  o Photography is permitted without flash in most galleries.
Key Concepts

Self-guided tours draw upon the universal appeal of music, art, and history to promote an appreciation for diversity and encourage creative expression for children visiting the museum and plantations along the Mississippi River.

*What to expect during your visit to the museum?*

- Upon arrival, students will be greeted by museum staff and/or volunteers
- Students, chaperones, and teachers will receive a brief introduction on the history of Donaldsonville and the River Road African American Museum
- Students will be oriented to the museum space and exhibits
- To ease your navigation at the museum, please divide your students in groups of 10 prior to arrival. One chaperone or teacher should be assigned for each group
- Currently, there is one public restroom on the museum grounds. Restroom breaks should be taken during the designated tour time
- Students should enter and exit through the doors as indicated by museum staff and/or volunteers
Terms

Specific terminology is used throughout the exhibits; please review the following terms with your students prior to your arrival:

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<tr>
<th>Amendments</th>
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<td>Census</td>
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<td>Free People of Color</td>
<td>Reconstruction</td>
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<td>Freedom</td>
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Permanent Exhibits

The River Road African American Museum permanent exhibits include topics that are aligned with Louisiana Department of Education Social Studies Curriculum Standards. Educators should visit the museum prior to scheduling a field trip to grasp a better understanding of exhibits to facilitate learning.

- **Slave Inventories**
  This exhibit illustrates stories of freedom and slavery in South Louisiana’s *Plantation Country* including topics of emancipation, entrepreneurship, and rebellion

- **Free People of Color**
  This exhibit lists the names of hundreds of individuals who either obtained their freedom in Ascension or moved to the parish

- **Louisiana Black Inventors**
  Experience the amazing stories of Louisiana’s African American inventors and their inventions

- **Louisiana Reconstruction**
  Learn more about local African American elected officials in Ascension Parish. Make sure you visit the exhibit on Pierre Caliste Landry, the first elected African American mayor of Donaldsonville in 1868

- **African Influences on LA Cuisine**
  Explore the origin of foods that traveled on the Middle Passage

- **Rural Roots of Jazz**
  Although New Orleans is known as the birthplace of Jazz, a lesser-known fact is that many African American jazz musicians were born in the river parishes

- **Rural Black Doctors**
  Rural African American physicians provided healthcare for the community

- **Rural Folk Artists**
  Discover the works of artists using various themes of African American culture and life

- **Freedom Garden and Louisiana’s Underground Railroad**
  The Freedom Garden reveals the history of Louisiana’s Underground Railroad and shows a variety of vegetation that was cultivated through the use of slave labor
### Louisiana Department of Education Academic Standards

#### Brazier House (Main Building)

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### Freedom Garden and Louisiana’s Underground Railroad

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Red Room

**Slave Inventories**
- ✨ What are some of the occupations held by enslaved Africans? Discuss the reasons why Africans were brought to the United States.
- ✨ Find the **1858 Plantations of Mississippi River** map. Name a plantation located in Ascension parish?

**Free People of Color**
- ✨ What are some of the occupations of Ascension Parish's Free People of Color?
- ✨ Discuss why some people received their freedom before others. What does freedom mean to you?
African Influences on Louisiana Cuisine

- What were some of the occupations held by enslaved Africans? Discuss why Africans come to the United States.
- Louisiana’s cuisine is a blend of West African & Caribbean flavors. Name a dish that you would eat that has ingredients brought from Africa or the Caribbean.

Rural Folk Artists

- Find and read Malaika Favorite’s Dream Home poem. Describe the symbolism in the poem.
- Explore the museum with your group to find your favorite folk artist. Discuss why their piece is your group’s favorite. Share with your classmates on your ride back to school.

“This flag fascinates me as an image, I guess because it carries a lot of weight; it represents us whether we agree with the county or not, we, in a sense, are our flag.”

-Malaika Favorite
In Gallery Activity

**Gallery 3: Yellow Room**

**Louisiana Black Inventors**
- What is Madam C. J. Walker's birth name? Name two of her inventions.
- How did the invention of the sugarcane planter help farmers?

**Louisiana Reconstruction**
- Describe some of the obstacles early African American politicians may have faced.
- What are some of the ways rural Africans Americans worked together to better their community?

**Gallery 4: Green Room**

**Rural Roots of Jazz**
- Find the story of Claiborne Williams. What role did he play in the history of Jazz music?
- Name two rural Jazz musicians and their instruments. Discuss the movement of music up and down the Mississippi River.

**Louisiana Black Doctors**
- Read through the exhibit. What is the name of one of the schools attended by early African American doctors?
- Find the names of a rural black doctor that practiced medicine in Donaldsonville.

“I had to make my own living and my own opportunity. But I made it! Don’t sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them.”

-Madam C. J. Walker
“I see trees of green, red roses too
I see them bloom for me and you
And I think to myself
what a wonderful world”

-Louis Armstrong
What A Wonderful World
Post Visit Activities

How should you apply what you have learned?

Use the classroom discussion questions and post-visit activities to build on the concepts and lessons learned during your visit to the museum.

**Classroom Discussion**

1. Which piece of art did you like or dislike? Explain why.

2. There were several images of families found throughout the kitchen exhibit. Why do you think the museum curator selected pictures of families for that space? How does it relate to food and/or cooking?

3. Review the Emancipation Proclamation. Why did President Abraham Lincoln exclude Louisiana parishes that were occupied by the Union?

4. You are planning to escape the plantation. What are some of the items you will need on the road to freedom? Explain why.

5. Review and discuss the 13, 14, and 15th amendments. Why were these amendments significant to the success of freed enslaved Africans?

6. Benevolent societies were some of the earliest forms of burial and health insurance. Why was it important to have mutual aid societies and African American doctors in the rural community?

**Activities**

1. Jazz music traveled up the Mississippi River to cities like St. Louis and Chicago. Imagine you were a journalist visiting Baton Rouge, Louisiana. You walk into the Wilbert Theatre and you saw Claiborne Williams performing. Write a story or draw a picture about what you may have seen on your visit.

2. Using the themes found throughout the museum, develop an exhibit for your classroom or school.

3. Conduct an oral history project. Visit the museum’s YouTube page for inspiration.

4. Start a classroom garden using plants that are native to Louisiana.

5. Find a recipe that uses two or more herbs from the Freedom Garden.

6. Construct a timeline of the events, places, and people of the museum.