

Eight Activities for Families with Young Children Visiting the Des Moines Art Center

Young children are drawn to artworks that feature people, animals,
bright colors, bold shapes, or natural elements

1. Find an artwork that interests you and think about your five senses:

1. If you were able to climb into the artwork describe what you see around you.
2. Describe how those items feel (example: rough, smooth, cold).
3. What do you hear (example: dog barking, clock ticking, water dripping)?
4. What do you smell (example: oranges, flowers, fresh cut grass)?
5. Can you taste anything (example: hot chocolate, fresh baked bread, fruit)?

2. Play “I spy” in a gallery

- I spy something...(example: I spy something with a blue stripe or something made from wood).

3. Find an artwork you really like

- Make up your own title and discuss why you named it that.

4. Go on a treasure hunt and find:

- Something green
- Something made from metal
- Something round
- Something bumpy
- Something shiny
- Something heavy
- Something that moves
- Something square
- Something you make up

5. Find an artwork that features a person or people

- Move your body to mimic the pose of the people in the artwork. Talk about how that body position makes you feel.

6. Find an artwork with a pattern

- Talk about the pattern and discuss what shapes make up the pattern. Then, see if you can find that same pattern in another artwork.

7. Find a painting with a frame and one without a frame

- Look at the two paintings. Do you prefer the painting with the frame or the one without? Discuss why you made that decision.

8. Find a sculpture you like

- What did the artist use to make this sculpture (wood, metal, mirror)? Talk about why the artist used those materials.