

Museum Walls—Instructors Guide

Research has shown that movement-based classroom activity can energize students, help them focus, and foster learning. The Museum Walls activity gets students up from their seats to move around the classroom in pairs or small groups as they complete a task. Students visit “displays”—reading excerpts, questions, maps, charts, graphs—that have been posted around the classroom. Students have a predetermined amount of time to complete the activity and return to their seats. Museum Walls is easily adapted to work in an ESL or ABE classroom.

Possible Museum Walls Activities

- Review grammar structure
- Practice reading comprehension skills
- Practice reading charts or graphs
- Answer multiple choice questions
- Practice math skills
- Practice map skills
- Complete a worksheet
- Find answers to questions posted on the board
- Respond to student writing

Time

- 10 to 45 minutes, depending on task

Student Grouping

- Individuals, pairs, groups up to 4

Materials Needed

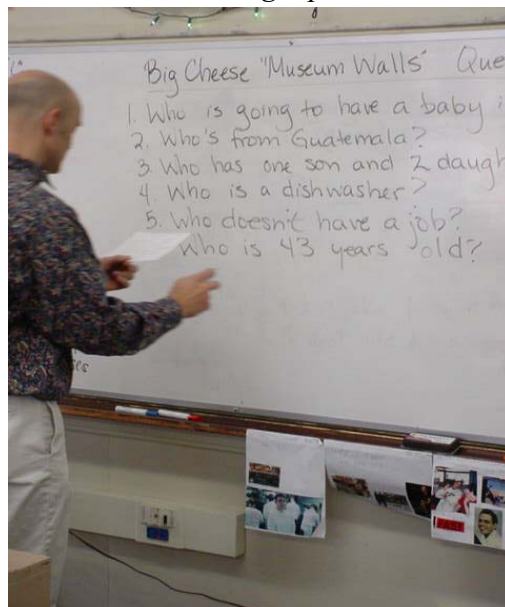
- Worksheets or other handouts for activity
- Museum Walls “displays” (items may be enlarged or used “as is.” They can also be taped to larger sheets of paper, such as self-stick Post-it easel pad sheets).

Procedure

- Plan and prepare lesson in which Museum Walls activity will be included.
- Identify objective of Museum Walls task.
- Determine number of Museum Walls “displays” and the content (e.g., reading excerpts, maps, charts, student writing, questions).



Students in Dave Coleman’s Beginning High ESL class at Mid-City Adult Learning Center review personal information questions as part of a Museum Walls activity (above). Working in pairs, Coleman’s students look for answers to questions about classmates. Before beginning the activity, Coleman wrote the questions on the blackboard (below). The Museum Wall “displays” were poster sheets created during a previous class.



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- Determine grouping, length of activity, and any other particulars.
- Prepare board questions, handout, or worksheet for task to be completed.
- Create Museum Walls “displays” (worksheets, reading excerpt, map, chart, graph, student writing, questions, etc.)
- Prepare classroom for Museum Walls activity.
- Explain activity to class and any special roles students may perform (such as the role of the group secretary rotating among the students in the group as each “display” is visited).
- Announce (or post) time allocated for the entire activity or for each portion of it.
- Conduct the activity.
- Conclude the activity. Groups sit down together and class checks work.

Suggestions

- Before conducting the activity, decide how students will move around the room: in an orderly, chronological rotation; after a predetermined amount of time has passed; or randomly from one “display” to another.
- If you predetermine the length of time allowed at each “display,” realize that not all groups will finish all portions of the activity. Tell your students this. You may want to provide one last segment of time for everyone to finish up.

Museum Walls activity submitted by Dave Coleman, ESL teacher, Mid-City Adult Learning Center (Belmont CAS).