

Self-Guided Visit Information

Self-Guided visits allow you and your group to explore Shelburne Museum at your own pace, focusing on the exhibitions and spaces that best align with your interests and learning goals. To help you plan your visit, we've curated a list of recommended exhibitions and buildings, organized by category. You can find all these exhibitions and buildings in our [Visitor's Guide](#). You're welcome to browse the guide online before your visit, and printed copies will be available upon arrival.

This resource also includes links to educational materials to further enrich your experience on pages 3 and 4.

You may reach out to Sara Wolfson, School and Youth Programs Educator, at education@shelburnemuseum.org or 802-985-0922 with questions.

Fine Art

If you could like to focus on Shelburne Museum's fine art collection and exhibitions, we recommend visiting the following buildings/galleries/exhibitions:

- Webb Gallery – *Painting a Nation: American Art at Shelburne Museum*
- Electra Havemeyer Webb Memorial Building – Furnished rooms and Impressionist art from the New York City home of Museum Founder Electra Havemeyer Webb
- Pizzagalli Center for Art and Education
 - Murphy Gallery (upstairs – opens on June 21) – [Making a Noise](#) features artworks from three prominent Indigenous artists who are making interactive art that connects sound and textile design.
 - Colgate Gallery (downstairs) – [Sound, Art, and Ink on Paper: Higher Ground Gig Posters](#) features almost 300 silkscreened posters from more than 27 years of musical performances hosted by Burlington-based promoters Higher Ground.
- Pleissner Gallery – [Blueprint of a Collection: Cyanotype Photography by David Sokosh](#) features multimedia cyanotype artwork inspired by objects from Shelburne Museum's collection.

Crafts, Folk Art & Decorative Art

- The Dana-Spencer Textile Galleries at Hat and Fragrance
 - [Dahlov Ipcar: The Possibilities of Pattern](#) highlights whimsical fabric collages, "soft sculptures", hooked rugs, and paintings by the well-loved children's book author and illustrator.
 - Quilts from the permanent collection.
 - Samplers from the permanent collection.
 - Hooked rugs.
- Variety Unit – Decorative arts, glassware, pewter, ceramics, dolls, and more.
- Dorset House – Wildfowl decoy collection.
- Stagecoach Inn – Folk art sculpture, trade signs, weathervanes, and more.
- Vermont House – Historic furniture made in Vermont, historic wallpaper.

Visiting With Young Children

Here are some recommendations for buildings/galleries/exhibitions that our younger visitors usually enjoy:

- Carousel – Take a ride on a 100-year-old carousel! (May be closed during inclement weather and for a brief lunch break.)
- Circus Building – hand-carved, miniature circus models and historic circus posters.
- Locomotive 220, Railroad Station, Railroad Freight Shed and Rail Car *Grand Isle* – for the train lovers in your group!
- Lighthouse – Colchester Reef, Lake Champlain, 1871 – includes a small, interactive space with children’s books and a writing activity.
- *Ticonderoga* – Explore a 220-foot sidewheel steamboat from the engine room all the way up to the pilot house.
- Owl Cottage – An interactive activity center with art activities, books, play spaces and a Rigamajig!
- Blacksmith Shop & Print Shop – live demonstrations of historic trades.
- *Herd: Karen Petersen’s Bronze Horses* – Sculptures of horses reimagined to capture the power and spirit of the noble creature.
- Dana-Spencer Galleries at Hat & Fragrance - [*Dahlov Ipcar: The Possibilities of Pattern*](#) highlights whimsical fabric collages, “soft sculptures,” hooked rugs, and paintings by the well-loved children’s book author and illustrator.
- Toy Shop – vintage toys, including an operating American Flyer toy train display.

History

If the focus of your visit is on history, here are some recommendations for buildings/galleries/exhibitions categorized by theme that will help fulfill your goals:

- Transportation
 - *Ticonderoga* – Explore a 220-foot sidewheel steamboat from the engine room all the way up to the pilot house.
 - Round Barn, Horseshoe Barn & Horseshoe Barn and Annex – Carriages, wagons, sleighs, farm and trade wagons, stagecoaches and specialty vehicles.
 - Locomotive 220 and Rail Car *Grand Isle* – Steam locomotive and a private rail car.
 - Lighthouse – Colchester Reef, Lake Champlain, 1871 – Includes a small, interactive space with children’s books and a writing activity.
- Natural Resources
 - Sawmill – 1787 up-and-down saw and related machinery.
 - Beach Lodge – Adirondack life and hunting trophies. **(Please Note: Beach Lodge displays taxidermy animals.)**
- Daily Life
 - General Store & Apothecary Shop – Nineteenth-century essential items, a post office, barber shop, tap room and pharmacy.
 - Schoolhouse – What did a Vermont school look like in 1840? Visit the Schoolhouse to find out!
 - Blacksmith Shop & Print Shop - Live demonstrations of historic trades.

Educational Resources

Before your visit:

[Museum Manners Slideshow](#)

An overview of Museum behavior guidelines to share with students before your visit.

[Thinking Routine: See/Think/Wonder Lesson Plan for the Classroom](#)

Before your visit, practice the [See, Think, Wonder Thinking Routine](#), developed by [Harvard's Project Zero](#), in your classroom with an image of "The Pemigewasset Coach" by Enoch Wood Perry. This routine encourages careful observations and thoughtful interpretations of artworks and other objects.

Recommended for grades 2 and up. Can also be used as discussion prompts for younger grade levels.

[Thinking Routine: Looking 10 x 2](#)

Practice the [Looking Ten Times Two Thinking Routine](#), developed by [Harvard's Project Zero](#), in your classroom with an image of "A New England Country Grocery" by Albert Fuller Graves. This routine helps students slow down and make careful, detailed observations by encouraging them to push beyond first impressions and obvious features.

Recommended for grades 2 and up. Can also be used as discussion prompts for younger grade levels.

[What We Can Learn from Museums Lesson Plan](#)

Pre-and post-visit inquiry-based lesson plan for visitors of all ages.

During your Visit:

[Webb Gallery Exploration – Printable Resource for Self-Guided visits](#)

Which painting looks "noisy" to you? Which one feels "calm"? Explore our collection of American paintings and find paintings that you think fit these descriptions. There are no wrong answers!

Recommended for grades 2 and up. Can also be used as discussion prompts for younger grade levels.

[Thinking Routine: See, Think, Wonder in Webb Gallery – Printable Resource for Self-Guided visits](#)

Practice the [See, Think, Wonder Thinking Routine](#), developed by [Harvard's Project Zero](#), with "A New England Country Grocery" by Albert Fuller Graves in the gallery. This routine will guide you through a process of close looking, deep thinking, and questioning.

Recommended for grades 2 and up. Can also be used as discussion prompts for younger grade levels.

[Observational Drawings in Beach Lodge - Printable Resource for Self-Guided visits](#)

Get a close look at hunting trophies of large game animals and draw from observation. (Please Note: Beach Lodge displays taxidermy animals.)

Recommended for grades Kindergarten and up.

[Sawmill and Natural Resources Scavenger Hunt – Printable Resource for Self-Guided visits](#)

Explore the Sawmill and Museum grounds in search of different natural resources. Recommended for grades 2 and up. Can be used as discussion prompts for younger grade levels.

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