

# Lesson Plan – How Do You Rest?

*An accessible<sup>1</sup> lesson about and visit to the “Rest Is Power” exhibition<sup>2</sup>*

**Developed by:** Rachel Stein

**Date:** December 2023

**Subject:** English Language Arts

**Grade level:** Sixth

**School:** Close to Manhattan’s Bowery neighborhood, where the gallery is located

**Locations:**

1. Pre-visit: school classroom
2. Visit: NYU’s Center for Black Visual Culture’s gallery, [20 Cooper Sq. New York, NY](#)
3. Post-visit: school classroom (split over two days)

## Outcomes

Students will

- Practice observation, using descriptive language, and (to a lesser extent) building visual literacy.
- Think about the importance of rest and at least one form of it in their lives.
- Recognize that rest is an act of resistance for Black people.

## Materials

*Note: Add student-specific assistive technology where appropriate. For example, a student whose [504](#) states they can use a computer to type instead of writing something out by hand*

## Pre-Visit Materials

- Classroom projector and teacher laptop
- Fruit for the activity (lemons or similar)
- Printouts

1 A social narrative and sensory guide for this one small room (especially one with little of sensory note), likely adds little value, but I want to introduce the concepts and so included templates from the “Sensory Resources Guide For Museum” by NYU’s Ability Project.

2 Curated by the Center for Black Visual Culture at NYU. It focuses on how Black people’s “rest is resistance.” It ran from September to October 2023. In this imagined lesson plan, the exhibition is current.

- Site-specific [Social Narrative Template · Resources Guide For Museums](#)
- ["How Rest Is An Act Of Resistance For Black People" \(Wilson, 2023\)](#)

## Visit Materials

- Printed Handouts
  - Worksheet
  - Site-specific [Sensory Guide Template · Sensory Resources Guide For Museums](#)
- Clipboards
- Writing implements

## Post-Visit Materials

- Laptops for students
- Visual component of [assessment](#), if applicable

## Technology<sup>3</sup>

- Teacher laptop
- Classroom projector
- Computers for students
- Color printer
- Any applicable student-specific assistive technology. *Examples:*
  - Audio player (such as headphones and the student's cellphone with pre-downloaded MP3s)
  - [FM/DM system](#)

## Prior Learning Connections

- ["Where I'm From"](#) poems – due to this assignment, students will already be familiar with using descriptive language, discussing personal topics like family, and sharing respectful feedback on other students' work.

<sup>3</sup> [Relatedly](#): Documents should pass [Grackle's](#) (or similar) accessibility audits to support people looking at digital versions.

## Differentiation

### English writing skills

- The [Assessment](#) intentionally allows a wide range of English writing skill levels. For example, it is not prescriptive about vocabulary or even minimum length. Students can choose their format (e.g., paragraphs, drawings, etc.) for the second of the two parts.
- Students will spend most of their time at the gallery working independently. If they finish the activity quickly, then they can select another artwork.
- As currently written, this lesson plan does not make specific accommodations for students with [emerging English multilingualism](#). The assignment could be written in any language, but the class discussion and sharing activities would likely need person-specific accommodations for students early in their English language acquisition.

## Accommodations

This lesson plan is intended to be reasonably widely accessible; however, it assumes that specific accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

This section focuses on accommodations specific to the gallery visit.

### Written word

- The site visit worksheet includes the teacher's example for students who want to refer back to it. While this helps anyone who wants it, it especially aids students with extra needs, such as those with limited hearing or shorter-term memory.

### Students with limited sight<sup>4</sup>

- Depending on the student's level of sight and comfort, it might make sense to go through the exhibition catalog beforehand with the student to select an artwork whose description resonates with them. During the gallery visit, that student and a sighted student could work together. If this occurs, and the two students are willing, they should share their descriptions and experiences crafting it with the class!

### Students with limited mobility

- If the student's level of mobility makes it difficult for them to study an artwork in its current configuration, the artist and gallery might allow the student to use a high-quality printout of the work's photo during the lesson.
- The gallery is wheelchair accessible.

### Neurodivergent students

- [Combating Sensory Overload: How Zoos and Museums Are Redefining Inclusion \(Cleaver, 2022\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> While not applicable for this visit, [swell](#) printing seems like an intriguing way to potentially interact with two-dimensional art, especially as three-dimensional printing continues to be more widely accessible. The Guggenheim Museum's [Mind's Eye Programs](#) have previously used it.

- If applicable, request the gallery's permission beforehand to bring Magic Model clay or similar fidget tools.

## Special Concerns

*(Classroom management items, medication information, etc.)*

- Allergies: Do not use food students are allergic to in the "lemon identification activity."

## Assessment

### Formative Assessment

The teacher will monitor, without grading, student learning throughout their participation (both verbal and non-verbal). During the independent work time at the gallery, the teacher will circulate.

### Summative Assessment

See the "Assignment Details" section of the worksheet.

## Procedure

### Pre-Visit

*In-class (45 minutes)*

**Part one:** ["Rest Is Power" Social Narrative](#) and an introduction to tomorrow's plan. *(5 minutes)*

- The larger the site, the more critical we talk through the visit beforehand.

**Part two:** Lemon identification activity ["When Life Hands You a Lemon, Peel It"](#) *(15 minutes)*

- The activity encourages students to look closely at objects and describe what they see. It further allows students to explore through touch and sight, allowing them to participate in learning beyond verbal discussion. As stated in the activity description, this activity also reminds students that "despite outside differences, people are often similar on the inside."
- Passing out two or three different types of fruit may simplify and streamline the activity.

**Part three:** Read and discuss the Huffington Post article ["How Rest Is An Act Of Resistance For Black People" \(Wilson, 2023\)](#) *(25 minutes)*

- *Rationale:* This article is more approachable to sixth graders than the “Curatorial Statement” in the [exhibition catalog](#) (p. 6) or the [Nap Ministry](#) website. The seven different kinds of rest listed are also helpful for preparing for our visit.
- *Note on activity ordering:* Students will do the lemon identification activity before this because (1) it will allow the students to move around and be silly before needing to be serious, and (2) the class will end on this topic, making it easier for students who wish to continue to think about and discuss the article do so.

## Visit

*On-site (60 minutes)*

See the worksheet .

## Post-Visit

**Part one:** On the day after the visit, the class will spend the first part of class reflecting on the visit. *(5–15 minutes)*

**Part two:** On the day the summative assessment is due, students will spend most of the class period sharing their work in small groups.

## Acknowledgments

- Naturally, this course, Professor [Newhouse’s Foundations of Curriculum for Diverse Learners](#), primarily shaped and informed this lesson plan—not least her lesson plan template. I also want to thank her for providing detailed feedback, which I aimed to incorporate into my post-course revisions.
- This lesson was also inspired and informed by Professor [Ko’s Museum Education](#) course—and, to a lesser extent, Professor [Leou’s Using Non-formal Resources to Teach Science and Sustainability](#) course.

## Additional Notes

- [UDL Guidelines](#).
- The [Guggenheim for All](#) initiative is great for learning more about museum accessibility.
- **Social Narrative**
  - Note on terminology: “[Social Stories and Social Narratives](#)” The Autism Program at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.
  - “[Steps for Implementation: Social Narratives](#)” by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders.
  - *Examples:* the Met’s for [families with children with autism](#). Also, see [related Met](#)

[visitor resources.](#)

- **Verbal description**

- “[Verbal Description Training](#)” by Art Beyond Sight, a museum education institute.
- Guide to (one way) to write one–note: this is intended for websites and has a different use case than the others: “[A Picture Is Worth 300 Words: Writing Visual Descriptions for an Art Museum Web Site](#)” by Karlen Communications.
- *Examples:* the MoMA’s “[Verbal Descriptions](#).”