

## Field Trip Extension

# Making Meaning:

## Why Museums Matter

GRADES: 6–12

During their visit to The Phillips Collection, students will learn how collections are created, preserved, and interpreted, and how we can make them relevant to visitors. What goes on behind the scenes of a museum? How do we make the museum experience meaningful? They will consider how museums flourish as institutions for lifelong learning by harnessing the talents of a diverse group of individuals with a broad range of skills. Students will be encouraged to think about how their own talents and interests may apply to such an environment.

Before or after your field trip at The Phillips Collection, consider teaching with one or more of the following lesson plans connected to your tour theme. Adapt these lessons to your classroom by expanding on existing curricular units or sparking ideas for new units. The lessons utilize the Phillips's [Prism.K12 arts integration strategies](#) and include a range of discussion topics, artmaking activities, guiding questions, writing prompts, strategies for looking at art, contextual information, and more.

### [Alma Thomas and Expressionism](#)

#### SEL

Learn about Alma Thomas's search for beauty through art while exploring some of the characteristics of expressionist art more generally. Students will understand Alma Thomas's contributions to this artistic style and create their own expressionist art.



### [Lawrence's Legacy: Who We Are](#)

#### SOCIAL STUDIES

Study depictions of African Americans and Black people through the art of Jacob Lawrence in comparison with contemporary artist Kehinde Wiley, who creates naturalistic portraits to celebrate Black identity. Students will explore the legacy and impact of Lawrence, and express their own self-identified narratives through creating self-portraits.

### [Reading Archival Materials as Art:](#)

#### [Pierre Bonnard](#)

#### ELA

Through intentional pairing of an artwork and the archives, students will apply close looking strategies to one of Pierre Bonnard's paintings and a piece of his correspondence. They will connect information in the painting with historic details to contextualize the past. Lastly, they will express their own artistic point of view by reinterpreting a painting in an artmaking activity.

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Discover more lesson plans at [phillipscollection.org/lesson-plans](https://phillipscollection.org/lesson-plans)

Carol Antezana, *Las Gringas*, 2021, Digital photographic print, 20 x 16 in., The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC, The Dreier Fund for Acquisitions, 2021

PHILLIPS  
The Phillips Collection

# Making Meaning

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## The Legacy of the Harlem Renaissance

### **ELA, MUSIC, SOCIAL STUDIES**

Examine the legacy and influence of the Harlem Renaissance on subsequent artistic movements such as the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Arts Movement, both of which focused on political power for Black people. Students will investigate similarities and differences between the two movements and create art that expresses major themes of each.

## Centering Black Art: The Legacy of David Driskell

### **SOCIAL STUDIES, SEL**

Over several class sessions, examine the work of David Driskell and how he supported and showcased the work of Black artists throughout his career. Students will understand Black artists' contributions to American art over two centuries, research American artists from historically excluded groups, and create their own curated exhibition featuring these artists.

## Exploring Identity through Photography

### **ELA, SOCIAL STUDIES, SEL**

Understand how photographs can reveal insights into the identities of the photographer and/or the subject of a photograph. Examine how photographs can serve as mirrors to our own identities and life experiences, and windows to that of others. Create a photo journal that illustrates aspects of students' personal identities.

## From Representational to Abstract:

### The Art of Alma Thomas

#### **ARTS**

Students will explore the life and work of Alma Thomas, focusing on how her artistic style changed over time from representational to abstraction. After defining the two styles through close observation of Thomas's art, students will create a two-piece series demonstrating each style.

## Embrace Your Power Through Art

### **ARTS, SEL**

What makes you powerful? How can you use art to showcase your inner beauty and strengths? Contemporary Black artist Janet Taylor Pickett combines painting and collage to create art about women in Africa. Through movement activities and collage, understand your own identity.

## Art Inspires Art

#### **ARTS**

Observe how Jacob Lawrence found inspiration from not only his surroundings, but other artists as well. Students will take a look at a work of art, either in person or virtually, and find inspiration for their own artworks. Students will also understand that artists, across different art mediums, often inspire other artists.