

HISTORYMIAMI

Miami-Dade County Courthouse Pre and Post Visit Activities

Introduction:

The following are a list of ideas of how to introduce the rich history of the judicial system. We recommend these ideas be used as pre- and/or post-visit lessons for this historic site visit.

Grades:

3-12

Objectives for PROGRAM:

- Students will have a greater understanding of how our judicial system works.

Vocabulary:

Appellate Court

Arcade

Attorney

Civil Rights

Corinthian Columns

District Court of Appeals

Doric Columns

Judge

Jury

Neo-Classical Revival Architecture

Probate

Segregation

Supreme Court

Ziggurat

Introduction to the site (for teacher to familiarize themselves with the site):

The Miami-Dade County Courthouse was built in 1926. At that point it was the tallest building south of Maryland. The building was originally not only home to the county courts, but also its prisoners. As the county grew so did its needs for a judicial system. The United States system is based on the idea of trial by jury and innocent until proven guilty, this building is a testament to both of those principles.

Pre-Visit Conversations

Activity 1: What is in a museum?

Duration of Activity: 40 minutes

Objectives of activity:

- To introduce students to collections and in particular those at HistoryMiami.
- The museum collects within four categories, Documents, Fossils, Artifacts and Replicas.

Instructions:

STUDENTS:

Take out a piece of paper

Fold the paper in half (vertically)

Number both halves of paper from 1-10

Label the upper left side: My Collections and the upper right side: Museum's Collections

Write down what you collect on the left and what you think the museum collects on the right.

TEACHER:

A book, letter or map (a document), a rock or leaf (can be a fossil someday), an object that is authentic (an artifact like a family heirloom) and an object that is a replica (maybe a piece of costume jewelry)

- After everyone has done this, have students share some of their collections.
- Then have students share their ideas for a museum collection (there is no right or wrong)
 - You can then share with the students the four things you put aside
 - Have them try to put them into categories (documents, fossils, artifacts and replicas)
 - You can share with them that these are the four categories the Museum at HistoryMiami collects in.
 - Have the students try to pull four similar object from their person – their textbooks, something from their backpack – they will see how they are carrying collections with them at all times as well.
 - Have students explain WHY those pieces from the collection are in the category they are in.

Key questions for students:

- What is a collection?
- Why do people collect?
- Why do museums collect?

Activity 2: What is a Crime

Duration of Activity: 45 minutes

Objectives of Activity:

- To gain an understanding of what people in the country see and do not see as a crime.

Instructions:

1. Discuss with your class if the following are crimes or not, please encourage them to give reasons.

This can easily be done as a “take a stand” activity.

- Murder
- Stealing
- Abortion
- Euthanasia

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- Libel
- Drug use
- Drinking under 21
- Plagiarism
- Pirating movies

Post-Visit Conversations

Activity 1: What are some different careers?

Duration of Activity: 90 minutes

Objectives:

- The students demonstrate that they have learned, understood, and remembered the content of the Courthouse program.

Instructions:

1. Divide students into groups, groups of 4 students are ideal.
2. Assign each group a different career in the judicial system. Have them research the careers and then present to the class.

Activity 2: Log writing

Duration of Activity: 15 minutes or homework

Objectives:

- Students will reflect on their visit and connect with their growth.

Instructions:

After the museum visit, students will spend time on writing a personal log. This will help with retention of information they have gathered.

Key Questions for students:

- Where and when did you go?
- What did you see, hear, touch, do?
- What was your favorite part? – Why?
- What new piece of information changed the way you thought about the world? – Why?
- Which words and ideas stood out the most? – Why?
- What do you think about the experience?

Thank You!

Thank you again for your participation and we look forward to working with you again soon!

We have many programs available, as well as professional development workshops for object and inquiry based approaches to learning and the Picturing America series.

At HistoryMiami we offer more than 10 different educational programs. These are listed on our website www.historymiami.org and can also be seen in our brochure.

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Regards,

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