



اللوفا أبو ظبي
LOUVRE ABU DHABI

EDUCATORS' GUIDE



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Y E A R S
O F

LUXURY

MAD
MUSÉE DES ARTS
DÉCORATIFS

This Educators' Guide helps teachers conduct self-led tours of the Special Exhibition as part of their school visit to Louvre Abu Dhabi. Its purpose is to foster learning through students' observational, analytical, communication and critical thinking abilities. The in-gallery activities are intended for different age groups and curricula. We encourage you to adapt and build upon them to suit your classroom needs.

ABOUT THE CURRENT EXHIBITION

The notion of 'luxury' has always been a changing reflection of various ideas. Its different definitions have been influenced by human, historic, social, cultural and economic factors. Drawing upon a rich collection of loaned artworks, decorative arts, fashion and jewellery and even works of graphic design, the exhibition explores many forms of art through which luxury has been able to enclose and reveal itself.

This Special Exhibition features 350 works of art from the collections of local and international museums like The Sheikh Zayed Museum, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Musée de Louvre, and Musée de Quai Branly. The collection also includes the important haute couture 'maisons' that form part of France's heritage. The exhibition ends with a contemporary, inward-looking analysis of the luxury of experience and emotion, which intends to leave the visitor contemplating the architecture of Jean Nouvel, bathed in light and looking out onto the blue sea – an ultimate luxury in our present time.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is luxury?

When do we describe an object as 'luxurious'?

What are the different forms of luxury?



EXPLORE the general questions with your students.



ENCOURAGE them to observe closely and read the artwork labels to help them answer questions.



REMINDE your students that there are no wrong or right answers, but to think about what they see and recognise in the artworks.



ACTIVITIES

The activities in this guide are based on a selection of artworks and are suitable for a range of age groups and subjects. You may modify the activities to suit your curriculum and learning objectives. The artworks introduce different aspects of luxury, and a number of activities that you can conduct in the museum galleries and back in your classroom.

Portrait of a Woman

Antinoe, Egypt

2nd century AD
Painted wood

Suitable for Cycles 2 & 3

Possible subject connections:

Visual Arts, History, Language Arts

ARTWORK # 1



Painted portrait, Egypt, Antinopolis, Mid-2nd century, Wood (ycamore fig) painted in encaustic. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Department of Egyptian Antiquities © Musée du Louvre, Dist. RMN/Grand Palais/Georges Poncet



ABOUT THE ARTWORK

A young woman's face is portrayed while her bust is turned slightly to the left. The type of jewellery she is wearing was created during the Roman period and was fashionable between 1700 and 1900 years ago.

The necklace is made of dark green stones and emeralds, each alternating with a group of two or three pearls. During Roman times, there was a preference for pearl jewellery even though it was rare and expensive.

Pearls were brought from the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf. Pearls from the Island of Dilmun (modern-day Bahrain) were considered the most beautiful.



OBJECTIVES

Students learn about **Egypt** during the Roman period.
Students think about **realism** and **human representation** in art.



HEAD TO THE ORIGINS OF LUXURY AND FIND THE PORTRAIT.



ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 What is the woman wearing?
- 2 Who could this woman be?
- 3 Why do you think her jewellery was very expensive?
- 4 How would you describe this portrait?
- 5 Is it realistic or unrealistic?
- 6 What makes it different from the other Egyptian representations you can see in the showcase?



IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY

- **ASK** your students to look at the jewellery in the room and find jewels similar to the ones in this painting.
- **LOOK** at the similarities and differences between them.
- **DESCRIBE** the style of jewellery during the Roman period in comparison to the jewellery styles that are popular today.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: ROLE PLAY

- **INFORM** your students that they will be writing and performing a small play.
- **ASK** them to prepare for their scenes by adding props and costumes from home.
- **EXPLAIN** that they will be working in pairs: one student will play the role of an Egyptian lady buying jewellery, and the other student will play a merchant who often travels to the Arabian Gulf.
- **ENCOURAGE** them to use their imagination to create a conversation that would have taken place 1800 years ago.
- **INVITE** the students to present their role plays in front of their peers.

SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Fayum mummy portraits
- Egyptian art and jewellery during the Roman Empire
- Trade with the Arabian Peninsula
- Pearl diving

Dress

Lyon, France

Second Empire, circa 1867
Gold embroidered silk velvet

Suitable for Cycles 1, 2 & 3
Possible subject connections:
History, Language Arts

ARTWORK # 2



Dress in two parts. France, Lyon, for the Ottoman Turkish market c. 1867. Sapphire silk velvet embroidered in gold thread with berceles rinceaux and grape-bunch motifs, with gold lace trim. Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, gift of E. Hayaux du Tilly, 1935 © IMAD, Paris - Jean Tholance



ABOUT THE ARTWORK

Crafted in Lyon, France, around 170 years ago, the gold thread embroidery on this silk velvet dress is a characteristic of Lyon's silk manufacturers' exceptional quality of work. This type of embroidery is made of gold metallic thread, and uses a Turkish technique called *dival*, which Lyon manufacturers learnt while trading with the Ottoman Empire. The interwoven and arabesque motifs belong to the decorative arts of Islam.

During the second half of the 1800s, distinguished people in Lyon developed a taste for the Islamic arts. In 1864, a Museum of Art and Industry opened, with the Islamic arts well represented. Islamic art motifs subsequently became a signature of Lyon's garment industry.



OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the **trade in luxurious materials**, such as silk, between western Europe and the Ottoman Empire.



HEAD TO LUXURY BEYOND LUXURY AND FIND THE DRESS.



ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 Describe the lines and the texture of the dress.
- 2 Look closely at the dress. Can you identify its different parts?
- 3 Can you identify the materials used to make it?
- 4 How much time do you think was spent in making it?
- 5 In your opinion, what makes this dress unique?



IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY

- ASK your students to find other dresses in the different artworks around this dress.
- COMPARE the Lyon dress to the one depicted in *The Allegory of Commerce* (the artwork behind the dress) and ask students what they think about the dresses' details and different purposes.
- LOOK at the Islamic decorations on the blue mosque lamp and compare them to the patterns on the dress.
- DISCUSS how artists around the world are influenced by each other's styles and techniques.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

- INTRODUCE students to different Ottoman patterns (such as arabesque flowers or geometric patterns). Refer to the following link for inspiration: <https://bit.ly/2mMsd2r>
- DISCUSS the details of these patterns with your students. For example, look at the colours, lines and motifs within the dress.
- ASK students to create a textile design inspired by the patterns of the dress.

SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Lyon silk manufacturers
- Ottoman patterns
- The connotations of gold and silver in clothing from different cultures

Hourglass

Marc Newson

2015

Suitable for Cycles 2 & 3

Possible subject connections:

Language Arts, Visual Arts, Maths

ARTWORK # 3



ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The hourglass is among the oldest and most basic objects that have helped different civilizations measure time throughout the ages. This artwork shows Marc Newson's interpretation of this iconic object. Technically complicated to make, it consists of two glass parts that are blown at the same time. The difficulty lies in the ability of the glassblower to adjust the point of connection between the two parts, so that only one nano bead can pass at a time.

This object also highlights one of the fundamental characteristics of luxury that has remained a constant: time. In the West during the Middle Ages, the luxury of leisure described an activity that took time and emphasised that one did not work. Luxurious objects themselves are related to time. They are often the source of many hours of work for the artisan or a long journey to obtain raw materials. Marc Newson's gold-plated nano beads highlight the preciousness of passing seconds.

In today's world, luxury manifests itself in the simplicity of taking a step back and enjoying your own time.



OBJECTIVES

Students explore the concept of **luxury in our present time.**



HEAD TO THE GREAT LUXURY OF TIME.

Come closer to the hourglass and invite your students to observe it.



ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 *What are you looking at?*
- 2 *What materials were used in making it?*
- 3 *What is its function?*
- 4 *How do you think it was made?*



The Hourglass (L.e. Sablier), Marc Newson, HG Timepiece - Switzerland, 2015. Verre borosilicate, 7 727 248 miniature gold-plated steel nanoballs © Philippe Joner, 2015



IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY

- **ASK** students to remain silent and focus on the hourglass and their surroundings for a few minutes.
- **DISCUSS** the idea of time with your students by asking the following questions:
 - How do you think this artwork represents time?
 - What is the artist trying to say?
 - Do you think it is important to keep track of time? Why?
- **ASK** students to write or draw about their feelings during their time of reflection, and the message they believe that the artist was trying to convey.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

- **DISCUSS** the concepts of 'material' and 'immaterial' luxury.
- **ASK** students to share their writings or drawings from the hourglass in-gallery activity with a partner.
- **COMPARE** the ideas from the in-gallery activity together.
- **CONDUCT** a class discussion stemming from students' opinions on the most luxurious objects in the exhibition.
- **FOLLOW** this discussion by asking what they think is the ultimate immaterial luxury.

SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Immaterial luxury
- Definitions of luxury throughout time and civilisations
- What is luxury today?