

# Museum Moments

## Enjoy Art Together

Activity cards for kids to age 5

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**MILWAUKEE  
ART  
MUSEUM**

Look, talk, imagine, learn,  
and wonder—together!

During a child's earliest years, their brain makes one million neural connections every single second. Inspired by Vroom, these Museum Moments activities provide you with the tools you need to be a brain-builder—while encouraging a love of art.

## Family Tips

- Use the activity prompts in any order. Try a few of the cards, or just one.
- It's OK to talk in the galleries—in fact, it's encouraged.
- Remember to enjoy artworks from at least three feet away.
- Let your child help choose your path through the Museum, and which artworks to talk about.

## Family Tips

- Use these activities at the Milwaukee Art Museum, while looking at art online, or anywhere you might be exploring art together.
- Have fun!

To learn more about Vroom, check out [mam.org/vroom](http://mam.org/vroom).

Find: A MIRROR

## Mirror Mirror

You can often find mirrors in galleries of European and American art. Hold your child up so that they can see themselves. Talk about what your child is looking at: "I see you looking at your nose!"

Ages 0-1

## Brainy Background

Babies learn through their senses. When your child sees their face and you talk about their nose and other body parts, they are making connections between words and objects, which lays the foundation for reading.

Ages 0-1

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Find: A SCULPTURE

## 3-D Explorer

Walk all around the sculpture. Look at it from down low, and pick up your child to view it from higher up. Describe what you are doing, and respond to your child's reactions. "We're walking all around the sculpture. Look at what we can see from this side!"

Ages 0-1

## Brainy Background

Moving your child around and talking about what you're doing helps them learn about important concepts like shape and space. Children learn these concepts through back-and-forth conversations, in which you follow their lead and respond to their reactions.

Ages 0-1

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Ages 0-1

Find: Any Gallery

## Gallery Stroll

Imagine what your child is seeing as you walk through the galleries together. Watch their face, and describe what you think they may be seeing. Make space in the conversation for them to “respond.” Children’s brains light up when you talk back and forth with them.

Ages 0-1

Brainy Background

When your child sees you watching and hears you talking about their experiences, they are making new connections in their brain between what they see and the words you use. As you go back and forth, you’re teaching your child they are valued.

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Ages 0-1

Find: Any Area of the Museum

## Just You and Me

During a quiet moment, sit near your child face-to-face and be silent for a few seconds. Watch them. Do they look at you? If they make sounds or smile, make sounds or smile back. There is so much you can say to each other with no words at all!

Ages 0-1

Brainy Background

Creating a safe and trusting relationship builds a foundation for your child to feel supported as they learn and grow. When you take the time to watch your baby and get to know their style of communicating, you deepen your connection.

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Ages 0-1

Find: A Painting with FACES

## Seeing Portraits

Look at the faces in the painting and talk about what you see with your child. “That woman is smiling. She’s happy!” “He’s wearing a hat. Will he go outside?” How do they respond? Now talk about their response.

Ages 0-1

Brainy Background

One of the best ways for your child to learn about language is by looking at things with you and hearing you talk about them. When you talk back and forth with them, commenting on their responses, you build their brain!

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Ages 0-1

Find: Any Area of the Museum

## Museum Pointing

As you move through the Museum, let your child know what you’re doing: “I’m sitting down with you in this room so we can see all the art.” Identify what you see: point to each object (from a safe distance) and say the word, such as “bench” and “painting.” When they respond, continue the conversation by talking and pointing.

Ages 0-1

Brainy Background

You help your child learn new words by talking and pointing. Also look at what you want them to pay attention to, and then they will learn even more.

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Ages 1-2

Find: A LANDSCAPE

## How's the Weather?

Talk about the weather in the painting. If you could step inside it, would it feel hot, cold, wet, windy? What was the weather like on the way to the Museum today?

Ages 1-2

## Brainy Background

Asking your child these kinds of questions encourages your child to hold a picture of something in their mind. This is an important skill for imagination, creativity, and focus.

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Ages 1-2

Find: Any Gallery

## Gallery Gazing

While you're in the galleries with your child, watch what catches their eye. Point out things you see and say what they are. "There's a brown suit hanging on the wall!" "The children are holding hands." Watch where they're looking and say what it is.

Ages 1-2

## Brainy Background

When you describe what you see or what your child sees, they're making connections between words and what they mean. Children who know words and what the words mean have a head start on learning.

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Ages 1-2

Find: A Sink in the Restroom

## Water Works

Handwashing time? Tell your child, "This is where the water comes out (point to the faucet). It comes out when I put my hands underneath, see? This is the soap. Soap and water make BUBBLES that clean our hands. Now, let's rinse off the bubbles. We use a towel to dry our hands."

Ages 1-2

## Brainy Background

You're teaching your child a routine that will help keep them healthy, and sharing the science of how things work (automatic sensors). If they're just learning to use words, a word they love, like "bubbles," helps them create the connection between making bubbles and washing their hands.

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Ages 1-2

Find: A Painting of a PERSON

## Making Connections

Look for familiar things in the painting and chat about them. "Look at the blue shirt the lady is wearing—I have one, too." "She's holding a baby just like how I hold you." Let your child pick the next work of art, and talk about what you see together.

Ages 1-2

## Brainy Background

Around age one or later, babies become capable of understanding that pictures stand for real things. As you talk about the connections between pictures and real things—especially things they know—you help them understand symbols. This is a critical step in learning to read later.

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Ages 1-2

Find: A WINDOW

## Window Watchers

Look out a window with your child (on the east side of the Museum, you can see Lake Michigan!). Follow their gaze as you point and say what you see. Show your child where you are looking. Talk about what each thing you see can do.

Ages 1-2

### Brainy Background

When your child is going back and forth with you about what each of you sees, they are learning from you. Naming what you are looking at will help your child increase their vocabulary in meaningful ways.

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Ages 1-2

Find: Any Gallery

## Seeking Sounds

As you walk through the Museum, identify familiar things you see. Play with the vowel and consonant sounds of the words as you say them to your child. For example, identify a dog (dawwwGH) or an image of a woman (WUHH-maaan). How do they respond? When they make a sound in response, copy it.

Ages 1-2

### Brainy Background

Your child is practicing the skill of being able to hear differences in sounds. This is a skill that will help them learn new words and, over time, be able to distinguish sounds.

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Ages 2-3

Find: Any TWO Artworks

## Side by Side

Compare two pieces of art. Which one is the biggest? Which one is the most colorful? How are they alike? How are they different?

Ages 2-3

### Brainy Background

Grouping objects into categories (figuring out what's the same and what's different) and having a back-and-forth conversation about them helps your child make sense of the world around them.

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Ages 2-3

Find: An ABSTRACT Painting

## What's Your Size?

Find a painting with lots of shapes in it. Take turns pointing to different shapes. Which shape is the biggest? Which one is the smallest?

Ages 2-3

### Brainy Background

Playing this game helps your child focus on details. They're learning about size and practicing to notice differences between objects that are similar, a skill needed in school and life.

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Ages 2-3

Find: A Gallery with ANIMALS

## Animal Game

Choose an animal in the gallery, and say, "I'm thinking of an animal." Provide clues to help your child guess what animal you're thinking of. Keep giving clues until your child finds the animal/artwork.

Ages 2-3

Brainy Background

Playing this game helps develop your child's working memory, including their ability to recall names and details. It also turns waiting time into a fun learning activity.

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Ages 2-3

Find: Any Gallery

## Finger Telescope

Make a telescope with your hands. Look at your child and say, "I see you!" Show them how to make their own finger telescope. Take turns looking around the gallery with your telescopes and sharing what you see.

Ages 2-3

Brainy Background

This simple game not only is fun, but also gives your child the chance to pay attention to their surroundings and think flexibly as they see familiar people and things in a new way. Being flexible is a big part of problem-solving.

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Ages 2-3

Find: A Gallery with ANIMALS

## No Words

Ask your child to look for the animals in the artworks. Are they sitting or standing? Look at their faces. If the animals could talk, what would they say? What sounds would they make to get your attention?

Ages 2-3

Brainy Background

You can help your child learn to communicate with words and in other ways by noticing how animals communicate when they have no words. Use what your child notices to ask questions and help your child think like a scientist, applying what they observe to their own life.

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Ages 2-3

Find: A Painting of a PERSON

## Acting Out

From a safe distance, strike the same pose as the figure. Ask your child to copy you. Take turns choosing different artworks and copying the poses.

Ages 2-3

Brainy Background

When you and your child copy each other, your child is learning to focus and make connections between what they see and what their body is doing. Being able to follow movements and focus are important skills for learning new things.

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Ages 3-4

Find: Any Gallery

## Art Detective

Encourage your child to be an art detective. Look at a work of art and talk about what you see. Talk about the picture together. Can you find certain objects? Ask questions like, "Look at that boy's face. How do you think he feels?"

Ages 3-4

Brainy Background

Pictures help your child make connections and understand that words have meaning. Having them look closely builds focus and self-control. The example here also helps them learn to recognize other people's feelings.

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Ages 3-4

Find: Any Gallery

## Silly Speech

Start by asking your child to choose a word. Then say it together in different ways. Use a high voice, a low voice, a loud voice, and a soft voice. Speak it slowly, and then fast. Have fun, and keep it going back and forth. Take it to the next level by having a conversation or telling a story together while you play.

Ages 3-4

Brainy Background

Playing with word sounds is fun, but those sounds are also the building blocks of your child's language and reading skills. Your child is paying attention and thinking flexibly. These skills also help them to come up with new, creative ideas.

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Ages 3-4

Find: An Artwork with WORDS

## Letter Shapes

Encourage your child to point out letters in the artwork. Chat about the shapes of the letters. Is the letter A pointy like a triangle? What about the letter O? How many letters of the alphabet can you find? Enjoy describing their letter shapes.

Ages 3-4

Brainy Background

Having fun with language and shapes helps your child enjoy learning. It's not just fun though. This game builds focus, self-control, and memory. Your child stretches what they know about letters and shapes to make new connections at the same time!

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Ages 3-4

Find: A Museum MAP

## Mapping the Museum

Give your child a Museum map, and talk back and forth about what they're looking at. Point to a word or picture on the map and say, "Look, they have a photography gallery. Let's go find it together!"

Ages 3-4

Brainy Background

You're helping your child learn to develop self-control when you give them the opportunity to use words and pictures as a way to focus. When you involve them in tasks like using a map, you give them a sense of responsibility, something they will need in school and life.

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Ages 3-4

Find: Any Gallery

## Listening Game

There are sounds all around you, even in a seemingly quiet museum. Tell your child what you hear and describe where you think it is. "I hear footsteps. I think a person is coming from behind us." Ask what they hear, and where they think the sound is coming from. Take turns being the leader.

Ages 3-4

Brainy Background

When your child listens and identifies what they're hearing, they're paying attention and learning to connect words with sounds. This promotes language skills. By going back and forth together, you're reinforcing their learning.

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Ages 3-4

Find: An Artwork with WHEELS

## Wheel Watch

Encourage your child to identify the different kinds of wheels they see. Talk with them about what you both notice. Do they see big wheels on a truck or two small wheels on a bike? What else can they think of that has wheels?

Ages 3-4

Brainy Background

By listening and responding to your child, you're helping build their vocabulary and ability to focus. Grouping things, like finding what is the same and what is different, also helps them become better at making connections. This one is a great one to try on your way home, too!

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Ages 4-5

Find: A PORTRAIT

## Faces and Feelings

Find a painting with a person in it. Look carefully at the person's face. Try copying their facial expression. What do you think this person is feeling? Take turns making faces and copying different expressions.

Ages 4-5

Brainy Background

When you talk about your own and others' feelings, you're helping your child learn to take a new perspective, which is helpful in getting along with others.

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Ages 4-5

Find: Any Gallery

## Color Collector

Pick a color with your child, and go on a color scavenger hunt. Choose a gallery, and find artworks with that color in them. Count out loud as you find each artwork.

Ages 4-5

Brainy Background

"I spy" games like this one are great brain builders. They make your child aware of their environment and teach them to make connections between similar things. You can try this game with colors, shapes, subject matter—anything!

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Ages 4-5

Find: A STILL LIFE

## Seeing with Your Ears

Invite your child to close their eyes and listen to you describe an object in a painting. With an apple, you can say: "It's a piece of fruit that's red and crunchy. What am I seeing?" Give them a turn—close your eyes and let them describe something they see.

Ages 4-5

Brainy Background

Your child is using focus by closing their eyes and listening to your description. In order to come up with an educated guess, they must use what they already know about objects and connect words to those ideas. Encouraging them to ask questions builds their critical-thinking skills.

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Ages 4-5

Find: A LANDSCAPE

## Where in the World?

Find a landscape painting, and pretend you are standing inside it. Ask your child questions about where you are, and what you might see and hear. "Are we in a forest? The mountains? A city?" "What kinds of animals might we see?" "Do you think it is loud or quiet here?"

Ages 4-5

Brainy Background

Pretending is important to learning—it helps your child imagine, be creative, and take the perspective of others. And it's fun!

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Ages 4-5

Find: A Gallery with LANDSCAPES

## One-Minute Vacation

Look together at a landscape you both find appealing. Invite your child to close their eyes with you and imagine they're in the scene. Encourage them to take the time to imagine what it would look like, sound like, feel like, and smell like. After, share with each other how it felt to go on vacation.

Ages 4-5

Brainy Background

By going on a one-minute vacation, your child is practicing listening and thinking creatively. This is a good technique to use if your child is upset, too. You can encourage them to think about a happy or peaceful place before figuring out how to deal with the challenge they're facing.

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Ages 4-5

Find: Any Gallery

## Word of the Day

Come up with a word of the day, like "play." As you and your child go through the Museum, look for artworks that remind you of that word. You might say, "Look, those dogs are playing!" Encourage them to find their own examples of the word of the day.

Ages 4-5

Brainy Background

Your child must use their memory to remember the special word all day, and use focus and self-control to play the game. They're also exposed to many words and learn about the different ways that words can be used, important parts of learning to read and write.

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