



Visiting Vizcaya: What to Expect



© Vizcaya Museum and Gardens

For Teacher:

The field study visit to Vizcaya and this orientation are organized around inquiry-based facilitated discussion.

Vizcaya Museum and Gardens school programs use facilitated discussion to encourage students to participate in the formation of ideas and concepts as related to Vizcaya's estate and collection, within the various contexts of the arts, history and the environment. Inquiry-based facilitated discussion ensures that learning is centered on our visitors, your students.

For Students:

This is an orientation, or introduction, to prepare us for an upcoming field study visit to Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. The orientation includes pictures, information and opportunities for us to discuss and share ideas.

Images: © Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.



Field Study

What is a field study?

Why are we preparing for field study?



For Teacher:

To better describe an out-of-school learning experience, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens refers to a field trip as a field study. By substituting “study” for “trip,” we can demonstrate that the experience is a lesson specific to units and curricula that support student learning and educational goals. Field study experiences are designed to support students in both their content knowledge base as well as the acquisition of new skills.

For Students:

1. What do you think we mean by the term “field study”? Why not call it a “field trip”? What is the difference?
2. Why are we preparing for the field study? What is the benefit of learning a little bit about Vizcaya before we visit?

Image (Left): © Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

Image (Right): Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, 2007.



Museums & Learning

What is a Museum?

A museum collects, preserves and interprets objects, and is open to the public for purposes of education and enjoyment.



For Teachers:

Collection: an accumulation of objects gathered for study, comparison, enjoyment or exhibition.

Preserve: to prolong the existence of cultural objects and property, by preventing physical damage and deterioration.

Interpret: to communicate the messages within collections of cultural institutions in a variety of ways (verbal, written, visual) to enrich the visitor experience by making meaningful connections between the collections and the visitors.

For Students:

1. What other museums have you been to in Miami?
2. What kind of objects did you see during your visit?
3. How do your activities in museums typically differ from those in other public places, like parks or shopping malls?

Image: © Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.



Vizcaya: Past & Present

Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
3251 South Miami Avenue, Miami, FL 33129



East Gate Lodge, c. 1917.



East Gate Lodge, Today.

For Teacher:

Research shows that students who understand the logistics of a field study are more relaxed in their new environment. Since students are not wondering about lunch, and when the bus departs and what happens next, research found that students were better able to concentrate on the field study experience. With better concentration, comes motivation and ultimately successful learning. For this reason, Vizcaya suggests that you begin this orientation lesson by sharing the schedule with the students.

There is a blank master that you can post in your classroom, or copy and share with students. These photographs show the same East Gate Lodge in the past and present. The East Gate Lodge is at the entrance to Vizcaya.

For Students:

Share the day and date of the scheduled field study to Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Vizcaya is located at the southern end of South Miami Avenue.

1. How has South Miami Avenue changed over time?
2. What differences do you notice in these two photographs?

Image (Left): *Mattie Edwards Hewitt, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.*

Image (Right): *© Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.*



National Historic Landmark

What is Vizcaya?

Vizcaya Museum and Gardens is a National Historic Landmark that preserves the estate of James Deering.



Landmark:

- A place where significant historical events occurred
- A place where prominent Americans worked or lived
- A place that represents ideas that provide information about our past
- A place that is an outstanding example of design or construction

For Teachers:

National Historic Landmarks must meet specific criteria to be so designated by the United States federal government. Bearing the title “National Historic Landmark” is an honor and granted to only 3% of registered historic properties nationally. Other National Historic Landmarks in Miami-Dade County are the Biltmore Hotel (in Coral Gables), The Freedom Tower, Miami Circle (both in the downtown Miami area) and Ferdinand Magellan railway car. For more information about the National Historic Landmarks Program visit: www.nps.gov/history/nhl/whatis.htm

For Students:

1. What other historic destinations can you think of, or have you visited in Miami?
2. What other historic destinations can you think of, or have you visited, that are located outside of Miami?
3. Why do you think it's important to preserve National Historic Landmarks?

Image: Alice Wood, c. 1917, Arva Moore Parks Collection, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.



James Deering (1859-1925)

James Deering was a businessman who built Vizcaya as a winter home when he was in his fifties. This formal photograph shows him at around age 58 at Vizcaya.



James Deering, c. 1917.

For Teachers:

Though Vizcaya is publicly owned and operated as a museum today, a goal of the field study is to emphasize that in the past, Vizcaya was a private home, owned by one person.

Allow students to read the text on the slide before sharing information and posing the question.

For Students:

James Deering lived most of the time in Chicago and spent winter seasons at Vizcaya from 1916 until 1925, when he died. The photograph is about 90 years old.

1. Why might James Deering have decided to build a house in Miami?
2. Does he look similar to or different from someone you might encounter today?

Image: Mattie Edwards Hewitt, c. 1917, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.



James Deering (1859-1925)

Originally, Vizcaya was James Deering's private home. But after his death, his family wanted others to be able to enjoy Vizcaya, so most of the estate was given to Miami-Dade County, the local county government, to care for and operate as a public museum.



James Deering, c. 1917.

For Teachers:

Allow students to read the text on the slide before sharing information and posing the question.

For Students:

1. Why might a family choose to make their home a public place?

Image: Mattie Edwards Hewitt, c. 1917, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.



Vizcaya Is A Large Estate

An estate:

- Includes all of someone's property and belongings
- Usually includes a large residence
- Usually includes a lot of land



Pantaloen Bedroom, 2nd Floor.



View of Main House from Casino Mound.

For Teachers:

Because Vizcaya includes an extensive home, collection and garden, a goal of the tour is to consider the difference between a house (such as those students live in) and an estate.

For Students:

Vizcaya Museum and Gardens is an estate. The main house of Vizcaya has about 54 rooms (not including the basement area), of which only about 34 are open to the public. We will not be able to see all of the rooms in one visit. Our visit is designed to introduce us to (state the theme of your selected tour here).

The Gardens are about 11 acres in size, which is equal to about 8 football fields. We will be able to walk through and visit all areas of the Garden.

1. What kind of people, activities or things come to mind when you hear the word estate?

Images: © Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.



History of Vizcaya

- At the time it was built, Vizcaya was designed to look like it was several hundred years old, as if many generations of the same family had lived at Vizcaya for hundreds of years.
- Construction began on the main house in 1914 and Mr. Deering moved in on December 25, 1916.
- The gardens took longer to create and were not fully completed until 1922.



For Teachers:

Vizcaya was built between 1914 and 1916.

For Students:

Construction of Vizcaya began almost 100 years ago.

1. What else was happening about 100 years ago in the United States?
2. What else was happening about 100 years ago in Miami?

Image: Mattie Edwards Hewitt, July 1916, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.



History of Vizcaya

Vizcaya is a combination of European and American ideas and design.

Vizcaya was inspired by the style of an Italian country home, but it is not a replica or reproduction. Mr. Deering decided to build Vizcaya right along Biscayne Bay, and used many local materials in the construction, both of which make Vizcaya American.



For Teachers:

Mr. Deering traveled throughout Europe looking for ideas and inspiration for his Miami home.

For Students:

1. Are there buildings in your neighborhood, or elsewhere in Miami, that are inspired by styles or materials from other places?

Image: © Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.



Field Study: Itinerary

What will we do during the field study?

- Tour the inside of the main house with museum staff as Guides
- Have a picnic lunch
- Tour the outdoor gardens as a class, on our own



For Teachers:

The field study could consist of three major components, lasting approximately one hour each. Larger groups will be divided so that volunteer-guided tours of the main house and outdoor teacher-guided tours of the gardens occur simultaneously. If this is the case, let students know, to avoid confusion upon arrival.

Inside the main house, the group will be divided into two groups that will tour the main house at the same time.

For Students:

We will be at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens for approximately (insert number of hours your group will spend) hours. There will be an indoor, guided tour of the main house, and an outdoor, tour of the gardens that I will lead. A Volunteer Guide will lead us through the main house, much like a teacher leads a lesson in a classroom. I will lead you through the gardens.

Image: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, 2007.



Preservation

When visiting the museum how can you help us preserve, take care of, the house and objects?

What expectations do you think the museum has for your behavior?



For Teachers:

There are specific guidelines for visitors while in the main house and gardens. These are available online (www.vizcayamuseum.org/plan-schools.asp), at the Ticket Booth and/or Front Door upon arrival. Please share these with the chaperones as well.

It is the responsibility of teachers and chaperones to ensure that all students understand Vizcaya is a fragile place, and that it is the group's collective responsibility to protect it. We encourage creative ideas to help chaperones learn from and actively participate in this aspect of the visit.

For Students:

Vizcaya relies on all of its visitors to help preserve the estate and collections. We can help during our visit by following certain guidelines which ensure safety for all of us and the estate.

1. When visiting the museum how can you help us preserve, take care of, the house and objects?
2. What expectations do you think the museum has for your behavior, and why?

Image: © Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.



Preservation

You can help preserve Vizcaya and its collections, by following these guidelines:

- Visitors may not touch objects inside our outside.
- Backpacks are not allowed in the main house.
- Food and drinks (including gum) are not allowed in the main house.
- Stay with your group.
- Photography and video are not allowed in the main house.
- Listen to and respect others.

For Teachers:

There are specific guidelines for visitors while in the main house and gardens. These are available online (www.vizcayamuseum.org/plan-schools.asp), at the Ticket Booth and/or Front Door upon arrival. Please share these with the chaperones as well.

Please be aware that invisible dirt and oils on our hands can seriously damage objects over time, and that food or drink can have the same affect while also attracting insects that eat artworks. The challenge of a museum is to preserve objects for a very long time.

For Students:

By following these guidelines we can have a meaningful visit and help to preserve Vizcaya's estate and collections.

1. Why do museums request visitors not to touch the objects?
2. Why don't museums permit food and drink inside?

Note for Teacher: Review any guidelines students did not share or which need clarification.



Vizcaya: Past & Present

What can we learn from exploring how objects, people or places have changed over time?



The Barge, 1934.



The Barge, 2005.

For Teachers:

The question posed on this slide does not necessarily need to be answered comprehensively. Rather it is designed as an overarching question, intended for students to reflect upon in the classroom and at Vizcaya.

For Students:

1. Could these photographs be of the same object?
What do you see that makes you say that?
2. How are these two photographs the same or different?
What do you see that makes you say that?
3. If it is the same object, what could explain its change over time?

Image (Left): Detail, Frank Bell, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

Image (Right): © Bill Sumner 2005 for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.



The Staff and Volunteer Guides at
Vizcaya look forward to meeting you
soon!

For Teachers:

Should any questions arise as a result of the pre-field-study lesson, please contact the School, Youth and Family Programs Manager:

Wendy Wolf
305-860-8435
wendy.wolf@vizcayamuseum.org

For questions related to your group tour reservation, please contact the Visitor Services Coordinator:

Jessica Aguilar
305-860-8421
jessica.aguilar@vizcayamuseum.org



Before You Visit: Activity

1. Log onto the web page of Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
www.vizcayamuseum.org
2. On the horizontal navigation bar at the top of the page
hover over: **Learn More**
3. Click on: **Vizcaya History**
4. In the green column on the right, click on: **History Gallery**
5. In the green column on the right, click on: **Vizcaya Entry**

For Teachers:

This master is designed to encourage students to participate in the preparation for the field study. This activity may be completed during class time or as homework.

- If students do not have access to a computer at home, suggest they complete the activity in the school's media center.
- If most of your students do not have computer access at home, consider a partnership with the media specialist in your school to include this as part of a media center lesson.
- If you do not have computers in your classroom, consider printing the image from the website, or showing the image via powerpoint so students can participate in this activity as part of the pre-field-study lesson.

After students have completed this activity, take a few minutes to informally discuss their reactions to the photograph and site. If the students ask questions that you cannot answer, make a note of the questions and share them with the museum staff or volunteers during your field-study experience.



Vizcaya: Past & Present

This is a photograph of Vizcaya taken in 1922. This is the same entry that museum visitors use today. As a National Historic Landmark, Vizcaya provides information about our past and is an outstanding example of design or construction.

What can we learn about the past, and Vizcaya's design and construction from looking at this photograph? What do you see that makes you say that?

(Use the back if needed.)

For Teachers:

After students have completed this activity, take a few minutes to informally discuss their reactions to the photograph and site. If the students ask questions that you cannot answer, make a note of the questions and share them with the museum staff or volunteers during your field study experience.



Activity Reference Slide



Vizcaya Entry, 1922.

For Teachers:

This is the image students are asked to view on the website. The slide is provided here so that you can assist students to select the correct image should they need help.

Students are asked to observe the photograph, which will hopefully start consideration of Vizcaya as it relates to the past, and/or Vizcaya's design or construction.

Students will enter into this same area when they visit Vizcaya.

Image: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.



Field Study

Date: _____

Destination: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
3251 South Miami Avenue, Miami, FL 33129

Bus departs school: _____ Bus departs museum: _____

Lunch time: _____
Vizcaya Museum and Gardens outdoor picnic area

Volunteer-Guided tour of main house: _____
Indoor tour with museum Guides

Teacher-Guided tour of garden: _____
Outdoor tour with teacher

Other field study details: _____

Attire: Field study will take place indoors and outdoors, rain or shine. Comfortable shoes and casual clothes are suggested.

For Teachers:

This master is designed to help acquaint students with the logistics and itinerary of the field study. This may be completed by the teacher and posted in the classroom or distributed to each student prior to the field study experience.