

Welcome!

We look forward to welcoming you and your students to the Skirball Cultural Center! During your scheduled school program, students will learn about Jewish life and culture, explore commonalities across cultures, and spark creativity and imagination.

As preparation for your visit, please review the school tour materials below. Reference the table of contents to view information about your program. We encourage you to adapt the activities to the specific needs of your students.

Answers to most general questions can be found on our [FAQ page](#). If you can't find what you're looking for, please email us at education@skirball.org.

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Share your photos, videos, student writing and drawing, or other projects by emailing education@skirball.org. Your feedback on the impact of Skirball school programs will help shape our future programs and contribute to more engaging and immersive student experiences.

Noah's Ark at the Skirball

TK–Grade 3

Ignite your students' creativity and curiosity with a voyage aboard Noah's Ark and learn the values of community and collaboration through hands-on experiences and play.

Before and/or After Your Visit

Familiarize your students with Noah's Ark at the Skirball by [watching this introductory video](#).

Explore [FREE curriculum and lesson plans](#) featuring storytelling videos, art projects, service-learning, mindfulness, and imaginative play.

During your school program inside Noah's Ark at the Skirball, you and your students will bring to life one of the world's most well-known stories—one of people and animals experiencing a great flood, creating shelter and community, and finally seeing a rainbow, a symbolic second chance to take care of the world. By working together with kindness, your class will experience the values of weathering life's storms and the importance of community.

Program Goals

Students participating in the Noah's Ark school program will:

- Explore Noah's Ark galleries using different modalities, including collaborative activities, sensory play, gross motor engagement, and storytelling through music, movement, and puppetry.
- Experience community building both in small groups and as a whole class to embody teamwork, respect, and care for fellow classmates.
- Build empathy by taking care of the animals aboard the Ark. Help them find comfortable shelter, feed, and clean up after them.
- Encounter hundreds of animal sculptures created almost entirely out of recycled and repurposed materials. Look closely and touch some of them to see what they're made of!
- Make connections to their own experiences of challenge, hope, joy and new beginnings.
- Play instruments from different world cultures.

- Participate in a retelling of a culturally specific flood story drawn from stories told around the world.

The educational benefits of this program include:

- Reinforcing curriculum content standards for visual and performing arts, literacy, science, and social-emotional learning
- Strengthening classroom community
- Empathy building
- Environmental awareness
- Fostering inclusivity
- Practicing close looking and artful thinking

Program Themes

Collaboration, community, cooperation, creativity, diversity, empathy, environmental awareness, hope, new beginnings, recycling, responsibility, second chances, sharing, stewardship, storytelling

Values and Legacy: The Story of You

Grades 4–5

Students engage with Jewish history and immigration stories to the United States and define the values they want to bring to their families, friends, and communities.

Before and/or After Your Visit

Explore [FREE curriculum and lesson plans](#) for your students to learn about key moments in history, explore their family histories, create original works of art, and discover commonalities across cultures.

During your visit, embark on an exciting journey of discovery, learning, and hope! Students will explore the topics of immigration, identity, and values through hands-on activities and engaging discussions in our *Visions and Values* galleries. By examining the stories of Jewish people who immigrated to the United States, students will create meaningful connections to Jewish stories, people, history, and culture and build skills in empathy and collaboration. Students will also reflect on their own personal narratives and core values and create a journal to inspire positive change.

Program Goals

Through a variety of gallery-based and hands-on activities, students will:

- Build critical thinking, empathy, and collaboration skills by learning about historical events and making connections between the past and present
- Reflect on their own life experiences and core values by creating a personal reflection journal
- Explore history through primary and secondary sources—artifacts, storytelling, reading, etc.
- Discover the intersection of United States and Jewish history

The educational benefits of this program include:

- Object-based learning and learning from primary sources
- Reinforcing curriculum content standards of visual and performing art, social studies, and social-emotional learning
- Exploring Jewish culture, history, and immigration stories
- Practicing close-looking and critical thinking

Program Vocabulary

Antisemitism Hatred and discrimination towards Jewish people.

Culture The beliefs, customs, arts, etc. of a particular society, group, place, or home. The ways of living of a people or a nation.

Forcibly displaced people Encompasses refugees, asylum seekers, other people in need of international protection and internally displaced people.

Immigrant A person who leaves his or her own country to live permanently in another.

Judaism A religion, a culture, and an ethnicity (ethnoreligion) that follows rules and traditions based on the Hebrew Bible. In the same way that other cultures have specific foods, traditions, languages, and values, Jewish people have these unique cultural aspects too.

Legacy The story of a person's life and the lasting impact that they have on other people and their community.

Shabbat The Hebrew term for "Sabbath"; a day of rest and reflection. In the Jewish tradition, Shabbat begins every Friday night at sundown and continues until Saturday evening at sundown.

Value Basic beliefs that guide our actions in everyday life. For example, if you value honesty, kindness, or teamwork, that helps you determine how to behave and treat others.

Program Themes

Collaboration, community, culture, diversity, empathy, legacy

Archaeology of the Near East

Grade 6

We are thrilled that you and your class will participate in the Archaeology of the Near East school program. In an immersive archaeological dig site modeled after ancient cities discovered in the Near East, students will use archaeological tools to excavate, collect, and analyze data. They will look closely and think critically about the way people lived and communicated three thousand years ago and how what they find relates to their lives today. The following information will make your visit to the Skirball a more rewarding and enriching experience.

Note: Dig activities may be moved indoors due to weather.

Program Goals

- Students will gain a deeper appreciation for learning from the past and preserving memory; a greater sense of personal connectedness to history; and an understanding that people from all different eras have many things in common.
- Students will understand archaeology as a scientific process and a field that reconstructs and answers vital questions about ancient life.
- Students will work together to identify, classify, and interpret ancient artifacts using archaeological techniques and terminology.
- Students will see themselves as stewards of the past and collective caretakers of what will be the artifacts of the future.

The educational benefits of this program include:

- Object-based learning and learning from primary sources
- Creating hypotheses and practicing the scientific method
- Reinforcing social studies curriculum content standards
- Practicing close looking and critical thinking

Program Vocabulary

Archaeology The study of how people lived in the past through analysis of material remains uncovered by scientific excavations or digs; the process of discovery, observation, and preservation that uses the scientific method to draw conclusions about ancient civilizations.

Archaeologist Someone who uses scientific methods to study the material remains of past human life and activities.

Artifact Anything made and/or used by humans, including tools, containers, and food remains; generally applied to portable objects.

Culture The beliefs, customs, arts, etc. of a particular society group, place or home. The ways of living of a people or a nation.

Dig/dig site The location where archaeologists excavate artifacts.

Excavation The process of digging up and removing artifacts and features from an archaeological site in order to analyze and predict past human behavior.

Stratigraphy The study of different layers of occupation and time that accumulate in the earth; used as a relative dating technique to assess the sequence of artifact position.

Tel/tell A type of archaeological site created by many generations of people living and rebuilding on the same spot. Over time, the ground level rises, forming a mound. Tel is the Hebrew word for “hill.”

Program Themes

History, culture, technology, collaboration, hands-on learning

Bloom Garden

Grades 1–4

Connect with nature and Jewish values through hands-on learning and play. Students will explore how gardens can make the world a better place through community, collaboration, interconnectedness, and shared responsibility.

Note: Garden activities may be moved indoors due to weather.

Program Goals

Students participating in the Bloom Garden school tour will:

- Consider their impact on the natural world and understand that individual actions build to collective action.
- Explore the interconnectedness between plants, humans, and one another.
- Practice community care through planting and harvesting.
- Participate in the retelling of a Jewish environmental cultural story and engage in story-based play.

The educational benefits of this program include:

- Strengthening classroom community through teamwork
- Empathy building
- Environmental stewardship
- Fostering inclusivity and belonging
- Practicing close-looking, engaging the senses, imaginative and creative thinking, and inquiry-based learning
- Reinforcing curriculum content standards for science, visual and performing arts, literacy, and social-emotional learning

Program Themes

Community, kindness, cooperation, biodiversity, responsibility, sustainability, respect, empathy, hope

How to Prepare

Please share the following with families:

This is an outdoor, hands-on experience where students will be encouraged to explore, play, and get a little messy. Students may get wet during the tour. Please prepare by having students come dressed in comfortable weather-appropriate clothing that they don't mind getting dirty or wet. We also recommend sunscreen and closed-toe shoes.

Inventing America: The Comic Book Revolution

Grades 6–12

This immersive program explores the evolution of the American comic book as a revolutionary medium for shaping national identity. Students will examine how immigrant and historically marginalized creators, including Jewish Americans, used storytelling to navigate historical upheavals and advocate for justice. This experience bridges history, literacy, and art, empowering young people to use their voices to reflect on the American experience.

Program Goals

Through a variety of gallery-based and hands-on art activities, students will:

- Use primary sources, specifically original comic artwork and corresponding artifacts, to interpret defining national experiences in United States history.
- Learn how immigrant and historically marginalized creators used the comic book medium to construct a vision of America defined by struggle, aspiration, and reinvention.
- Identify and reflect on relevant topics such as movements for justice and equality, and how iconic comic book figures captured the ideals and anxieties of their era.

The educational benefits of this program include:

- Object-based learning and learning from primary sources
- Reinforcing curriculum content standards of visual art, social studies, and social-emotional learning
- Artmaking inspired by comic book artists' wide range of style and influence

Program Themes

Social justice, activism, diversity, creativity, legacy, critical thinking, and analysis of primary sources

Program Vocabulary and Historical Context

Activism Direct action to bring about social, political, economic, or environmental change.

Comic Strip A short comic usually consisting of three to four panels.

Comic Book A longer, self-contained book, typically ranging between twenty to forty pages.

Graphic Novel A book-length work of literature that tells a complete, self-contained story using art.

Satire The use of wit, irony, or sarcasm to expose and discredit flaws within a person, government, or society.

Symbol A picture or object that represents an idea or a concept.

Historical events referenced during the tour: The Great Depression, WWII, the Holocaust

Content Warning: This exhibition includes adult language and depictions of violence and racial and ethnic stereotypes. Viewer discretion is advised. If you have any questions, please reach out to education@skirball.org.

Educator Perks

Free Museum admission

TK through Grade 12 teachers are eligible for complimentary admission to the Skirball (each with one guest). FREE tickets must be redeemed by advance reservation; walk-ups will not be accommodated. Enter the promo code 99957 when reserving online. Eligibility will be verified upon check-in, so be prepared to show valid ID.

Store discount

Teachers receive a 10% discount when shopping onsite at Audrey's Museum Store—all year round—off books, art supplies, music, and more. Please show your teacher ID to receive these benefits.

Membership discount

TK through Grade 12 teachers who sign up to become Skirball Members receive a 25% discount off all membership categories. To learn more about membership categories and benefits, visit our membership page. Then, to obtain your teacher discount, email membership@skirball.org or call (310) 440-4526.

Free Resources

Noah's Ark at the Skirball: The Art of Imagination, TK–Grade 5

Winner of the California Association of Museums' Superintendent's Award for Excellence in Museum Education! Inspired by timeless flood stories, the Art of Imagination curriculum focuses on the ways that each of us, including the youngest members of our community, can make a difference.

[Noah's Ark at the Skirball: The Art of Imagination | Skirball Cultural Center](#)

Visions and Values Curriculum, Grades 4–12

Explore the stories and artifacts featured in the Skirball's permanent exhibition, [Visions and Values: Jewish Life from Antiquity to America](#). Amid rising antisemitism in our schools and communities, these FREE resources teach students about Jewish life and create connections to Jewish stories, people, history, and culture. Young people of all cultural backgrounds will learn about key moments in history, explore their family histories, create original works of art, and discover commonalities across cultures.

[Visions and Values Curriculum | Skirball Cultural Center](#)