

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Teacher's Guide for a Self-Guided Visit: Art in the Garden/Moore in America

Grades: 3-8

Time: 10:30 a.m. until closing

Teacher Guide

Welcome to The New York Botanical Garden! *Art in the Garden/Moore in America* is a self-guided exploration of art and nature that introduces students to the work of sculptor Henry Moore. Students will be challenged to find connections between the natural landscape and the sculptures and will explore ways to interpret art through inquiry-based discussion and activities. This tour addresses New York State Social Studies Standard 2, the Arts Standard 4, and Scientific Thinking Standard S5a.

There are 19 sculptures situated throughout the 250 acres of the Garden grounds. The pieces on this route were created by Moore between 1955 and 1985.

Please remind your students of the following guidelines:

Please stay on the paths until you reach the sculptures, follow your leader, stay with the rest of the group, and keep voices low. Groups are encouraged to walk up to the sculptures, walk around them, and touch them (please be aware some surfaces may be hot), but please no climbing, as that will cause damage.

About the Artist:

Henry Spencer Moore (1898–1986), born in the coal-mining town of Castleford, Yorkshire, in England, is one of the world's most well known and beloved 20th-century sculptors.

At the age of 10, Henry Moore knew that he wanted to be a sculptor. Moore attended the Leeds School of Art, where he founded the sculpture department because of his strong interest in this medium. At the time, he was the only student in the department! He also won scholarships to continue his studies. So remember to always think big and aspire to your dreams!

His first solo show was in London in 1928. The following year, Moore and his wife, Irina, moved to Hampstead, London, a center for artists and writers, where he made his living teaching sculpture and exhibiting. In 1940 the couple moved to the countryside. There, Moore lived and worked for the remainder of his life, drawing inspiration from the surrounding landscape and collecting objects that would provide ideas for his sculpture.

Moore's works are displayed around the world. His subject matter is often a reclining woman, a mother and child, or a relationship in nature. His sculptures make reference to the landscape and flowing hills of the countryside.

In 1977 he helped to establish the Henry Moore Foundation, donating his estate, lands, and works to the Foundation, which continues to support education and the arts.

About Moore's Work:

Henry Moore intended that his monumental works be presented in expansive landscapes where their mass and size could be seen from many angles, in a great variety of light, and in differing seasons. He wanted people to get up close and touch them.

To create these massive works, Moore used a process called "lost wax." First, he produced a small model, or maquette, which he used to study the form and grasp its shape from all around. Then he created a larger replica in clay, plaster, or another impermanent material. Moore made a rubber mold of the sculpture to replicate the wax form, and poured into molten bronze which melted away the wax, leaving the final, solid bronze sculpture.

General Questions for Discussion:

- *Do you see straight lines or corners in the sculptures?*
- *Why do you think Moore chose these materials and colors? Do you think that other materials might work better?*
- *How do you think the size of the sculpture fits into its setting?*
- *Why do you think Henry Moore turned to nature for inspiration? Look around—what natural objects would you use for inspiration? Do you think there are as many inspirations in the man-made world?*
- *How do you think this sculpture might look in different weather? On a cloudy/ sunny/ rainy/ snowy day? How about at sunrise or sunset? Do you think it might look different in moonlight? What if you looked at it in the dark with a flashlight? Would it look larger?*
- *Walk around the sculpture—does it look like the same sculpture at every angle?*
- *Touch the sculpture—how does it feel? Soft, smooth, rough, hot, or cold?*
- *How do these sculptures make you feel? For example strong, small, comforted? Happy, sad, confused?*

Suggested Route:

After the School Group Check-In booth, encourage your group to use the restrooms and water fountains before you begin your journey.

Walk down the hill along **Daffodil Hill Way** until you come to **Two Piece Reclining Figure: Points, 1969 (#11 on Moore Map)** on your right. *Estimated walking time is 4 minutes.*

This sculpture was intentionally placed by this large rock outcropping, which is hundreds of millions of years old. As a child, Moore used to roam the countryside of Yorkshire, which was dotted with rocks and boulders. This piece, created in 1969, displays Moore's modern work, in which he breaks down the figure into multiple pieces. This makes the piece resemble both the landscape and a human figure, depending if you look at it as one cohesive piece or in separate sections. Why do you think that this sculpture is in this particular part of the Garden? Does it blend/contrast with its surroundings?

Continue along **Daffodil Hill Way** and walk straight through the four-way intersection, following signs for the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers**. You will come to **Large Totem Head, 1968 (#10 on Moore Map)**.

*Although his source of inspiration for this piece is unknown, some think it resembles a seed pod or a cave. Relating to the sculpture's name, **Large Totem Head**, the two holes could represent eyes on the head of the totem. This sculpture was placed here to complement this 250-year-old black oak, one of the largest trees in the Garden. Encourage students to explore the dark interior of this piece. What does it remind you of? Does it look like anything in nature?*

Continue your journey along **Snuff Mill Road**, crossing the Bronx River. Turn right into the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers**, and stop at the entrance to explore the **Large Reclining Figure, 1984 (# 5 on Moore Map)**.

This sculpture was originally created in 1938 as a 13-inch model. Almost 50 years later, in 1984, Moore created this monumental piece in fiberglass. Here at the entrance to the Benenson Ornamental Conifers its milky-white color, designed to look like bone, contrasts sharply with the varying shades of green. This work was assembled from four pieces, with one person climbing inside of the sculpture to bolt it all together. There is actually a trap door for the person to exit around the back. Do you see holes in the sculpture? These holes, or negative spaces, create frames you can look through. How many different frames you can find? Choose one to look through. How does the landscape look different through the frame? Lay down on the grass and look up at the sculpture. How does it look against the sky? Does it look larger? Are you laying in its shadow?

Continue along this path into the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers** until you arrive at the three sculptures called **Upright Motives, 1955–1956 (#s 6, 7, & 8 on Moore Map)**. *Estimated walking time is 6 minutes.*

*Moore wanted to make his works to be accessible to the public and harmonize with urban landscapes. These sculptures incorporate industrial objects, such as metal files and screws, as well as found natural objects. These **Upright Motives** are thought to resemble Native American totem poles. Do you see any natural or man-made objects within each sculpture? Look at the landscape around you; does it remind you of a specific time period or geographic location?*

Continue along the path and stay to the right on the main path. You will arrive at **Three Piece Reclining Figure: Draped, 1975 (#9 on Moore Map)**.

This sculpture represents a strong, tough form. It can look very different depending on which angle you approach it from. It can be viewed as one uniform piece or as three separate pieces. Encourage the students to walk around and explore it from different angles. Look at it as one whole sculpture, and then two/three different sculptures. Can you find a rabbit's face hidden in the sculpture?

Finish the loop through the **Benenson Ornamental Conifers**. Walk to the end of the path back to **Snuff Mill Road**.

To complete your tour, turn left and retrace your steps back to the **Everett Garden Gate**, the **Clay Family Picnic Pavilions**, and the restrooms. Alternatively, to explore more sculptures, turn right onto **Snuff Mill Road** and continue to the **Rockefeller Rose Garden**, the **Lilac**

Collection, the **Cherry Collection**, and the **Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden** (open to the public at 1:30 p.m.).

Below is an alternate route for school groups entering the Garden from the Mosholu Gate:

Pass through the Visitor Booths and walk along **Garden Way**. On your left you will see **Hill Arches, 1973 (#2 on Moore Map)**.

This sculpture is different from others at the Garden as it has an equal amount of negative, or open, space as sculptural components. One interpretation of this piece is that it is an abstract form of a mother and child, a theme Moore often utilized. The ball in the center represents the child and the two larger components are the parents leaning over to protect their child. How do you interpret this sculpture? Can you walk through it? How does it look if you are standing inside of the sculpture rather than outside of it?

Continue to walk along **Garden Way** and on your left you will see a sculpture called **Knife Edge Two Piece, 1962–65 (#18 on Moore Map)**. *Estimated walking time is 3 minutes.*

This sculpture looks quite abstract but was actually inspired by animal bones. Moore collected bird bones and whale bones with sharp and jagged edges much like this sculpture. This sculpture was placed among the Japanese katsura trees, which have delicate heart-shaped leaves and smell like caramel in the fall. Encourage the students to walk around this sculpture and explore it from different angles. Can you walk through this sculpture? What type of natural objects do you think were the inspiration?

Continue along **Garden Way** to the next piece entitled **Oval with Points, 1968–70 (#19 on Moore Map)**. *Estimated walking time is 4 minutes.*

This sculpture was inspired from a gift to Henry Moore—an elephant’s skull—from a friend who worked in the London Zoo. There is tension in this piece seen in how closely the two center points are to one another without actually touching. This sculpture is framed by large old deciduous trees and historic pines. This sculpture, as many of Moore’s pieces, is like a journey with a completely different view depending on what angle you are looking at it.

Continue along **Garden Way**, turn left before the Reflecting Pool, and follow the signs for the Rock Garden. On your left before entering the garden is **Locking Piece, 1963-64 (#17 on Moore Map)**. *Estimated walking time is 4 minutes.*

Moore states that he was playing with pebbles and got them locked together. It was like a puzzle that he could not figure out—how did these two pebbles become so intricately linked and why couldn’t he unlink them? He likened the position of the locked pebbles to a clenched fist, which is what inspired this particular sculpture. What else do you think might have been the inspiration for this particular sculpture? How many different pieces are in this one sculpture?

Turn right and enter the Rock Garden. On your right you will see **Draped Reclining Mother and Baby, 1983 (#16 on Moore Map)**. *Estimated walking time 4 minutes.*

This sculpture, cast toward the end of Moore’s life, combines several themes found throughout his work. There is a combination of the reclining figure, the mother and child, and the internal/external. Explore this piece to see if

you can find those three different elements. Why do you think that this sculpture was placed here? Does it blend/contrast with its surroundings?

Inside the Rock Garden, turn left and follow the path. On your right you will see **Seated Woman, 1958–59 (#17 on Moore Map)**. *Estimated walking time is 4 minutes.*

*The **Seated Woman** is positioned in the Rock Garden in an enclosed and contemplative space. This sculpture is quiet in feeling, with an internal stillness. The women in Moore's sculptures are typically strong and solid in form. This sculpture has a coarse texture that Moore created with a knife on the wet plaster. What do you think was the inspiration for this sculpture? Have you seen any other sculptures in the Garden that are similar? Is this subject matter a theme in Henry Moore's work?*

Congratulations! You have completed the Henry Moore Self-Guided Tour. Thank you for visiting the Garden!

Moore in America: Monumental Sculpture at The New York Botanical Garden
is presented by Metlife Foundation and co-curated with The Henry Moore Foundation.