

TEACHER GUIDE

Getting Started with Contemporary Art

Artists working today often push the boundaries of traditional media like painting and sculpture. This guide is part of a series designed for high school teachers to use in conjunction with a visit to the Hammer Museum, where students might encounter a range of contemporary art forms. Use the information and discussion prompts below while engaging with **installation art** during your visit or in preparation for your visit using images available on the Hammer website. The post-visit activity is designed to extend student learning in the classroom after your visit.

INSTALLATION ART

Installation art is large-scale work of art that is often designed for a specific space.

Key Concepts

- **Site-specific:** Installations take into consideration the characteristics of a specific space
- **Immersive:** May be designed for the viewer to walk under, over, through, or around
- **Scale:** Many installations are large-scale and as such invite viewer participation
- **Mixed media:** Different components (and even individual works of art) are combined into a unified whole

Discussion Prompts

1. Installations are sometimes called “environments.” Why do you think this is so?
2. Do you think there is a difference between physically interacting with a work of art and simply looking at it? If so, what is the difference?
3. How can mixed media, rather than one medium, be useful for communicating an idea in a work of art?

Post-Visit Activity

Have students design their own **installation**, considering the following:

1. Select a space in school for an installation. Think about who has access to the space, who knows or doesn't know it exists, and how it is used.
2. What will the concept of the installation be (e.g., peer pressure, nutrition and health, public safety)?
3. What materials will make up the installation?
4. Will the installation be immersive? If so, how?

Once they have developed their ideas, they should write a proposal for the installation—including a title for the artwork.

For more guides in this series visit hammer.ucla.edu/teachers.