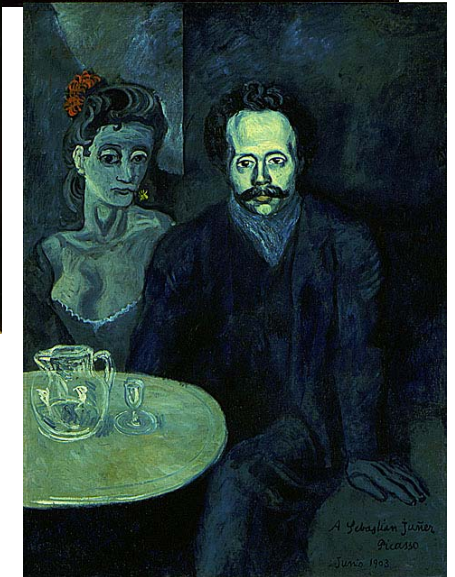


ART TELLS A TALE:

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



GOALS OF THIS RESOURCE GUIDE

One goal of this guide is to help teachers prepare students to visit the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where they will participate in a docent-guided tour entitled *Art Tells a Tale*.

A second goal of the guide is to help teachers relate aspects of the tour to their school's curriculum.

ABOUT THE TOUR

This tour is offered for students in grades 1–5. During the tour students will discover how artists depict stories in works of art. They will be introduced to art elements artists use to create their stories, including line, color, texture, and shape. Students will observe and discover clues about character, time, and setting in narrative art.

This tour meets state content standards for history/ social science for grades 2 and 3 and language arts for grades 2 -5.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

LACMA is the largest encyclopedic museum in the western United States with more than 100,000 works of art. Through its far-reaching collections, the museum is both a resource to and a reflection of the many cultural communities and heritages in Southern California. The collection includes artworks from various cultures from the prehistoric to the present.



SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

BEFORE THE MUSEUM VISIT

- For younger students: name the elements of art listed in the glossary and explain their meanings. For older students: distribute copies of glossary for review.
- Have students identify the elements of line, shape, and color in the reproductions. Explain that the museum tour will provide a similar opportunity to look for these and other elements. A docent at the museum will discuss how such elements can help the viewer explore the meanings of artworks.
- Introduce the concept that artists, like writers, tell stories with a beginning, middle and ending. Review a story familiar to the students and ask them to identify the parts of the story. Ask them to choose the single most important part. Explain that artists decide, when telling a story, whether to include one or more parts.
- For each image ask the students to describe the events depicted. Can they create their own titles for the works?
- Have students compare two of the paintings. Ask them to identify some of the similarities and some of the differences. Do both paintings tell a complete story? What might have happened before or after the events we see in the paintings?

GLOSSARY

CHARACTER

A person or animal in a story

COLOR

The visual sensation dependent on the reflection or absorption of light from a given surface. Color is made up of *hue*, *intensity*, and *value*.

HUE—refers to the name of the color (red, blue, yellow, orange)

INTENSITY—refers to the brightness or dullness of a color

VALUE— the lightness or darkness of a hue or neutral color

LINE

One of the elements of art. Lines vary in length and direction.

Lines can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. They can describe structure or gesture, the outline of a shape or create patterns.

MATERIAL

Artists use a variety of materials and tools to create art. Some materials are common and inexpensive (such as clay) while others are costly (gold and jewels). Artists select their materials to support the intention of the work.

GLOSSARY

MOOD

A state of mind or feeling

PATTERN

A repeated arrangement of line, shapes, and/or colors

PLOT

The plan or main story of a book or play

SETTING

The place and time of a story

SHAPE

Geometric shapes such as circles, triangles, and rectangles, or freeform shapes, appear in many different kinds of art. They may form the underlying structure of the composition, or define certain parts. Shapes that are repeated establish patterns.

SYMBOL

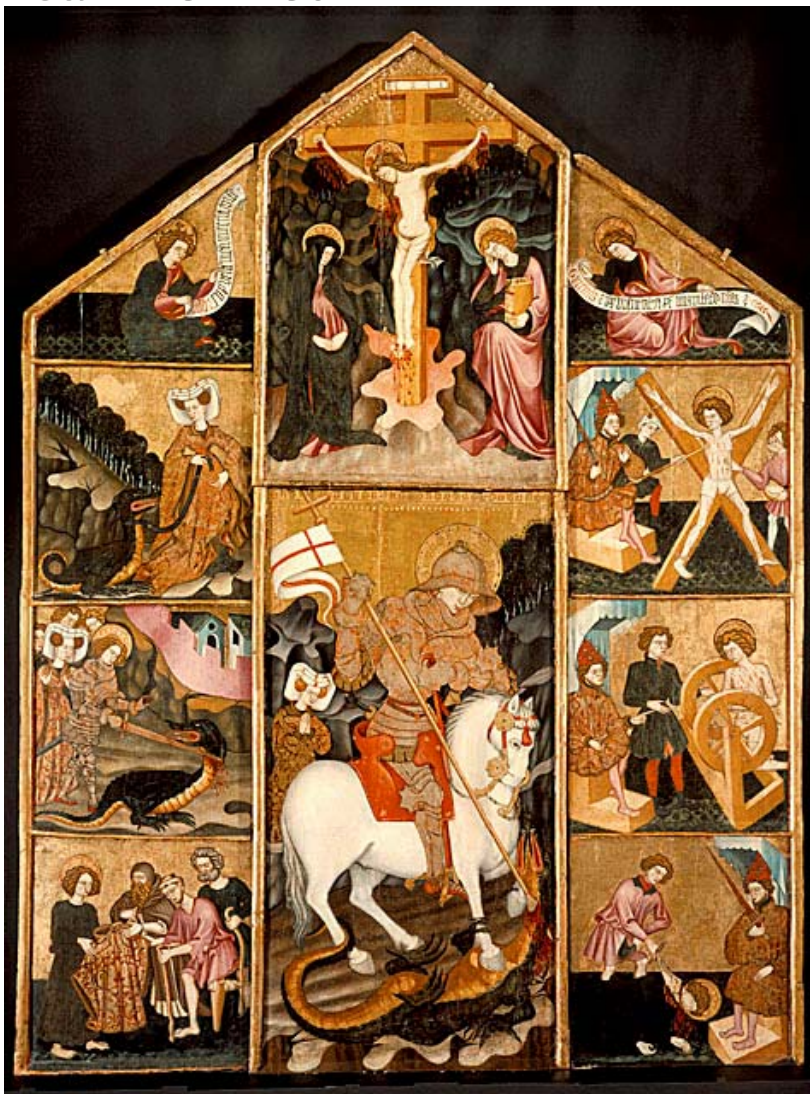
Something that stands for or represents something else.

TEXTURE

One of the elements of art. Texture is the way a surface feels or appears to feel. Texture can range from smooth and soft to rough and hard.

TRIPTYCH WITH SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF ST. GEORGE

Circa 1425–1450



ABOUT THE IMAGE:

The panel depicts important events from St. George's life story. St. George was a historic figure who converted people to Christianity (he is the knight in armor on the white horse in the center panel of the painting). Legend tells of a dragon that menaced the town of Sylene (in modern-day Libya), demanding a daily sacrifice. Each day the town sacrificed a young man or woman to the dragon. One day the king's daughter was sent to the dragon. Riding by on his horse, St. George found the princess and the dragon. He stabbed the dragon in the neck, wounding it and rescuing the princess. The princess threw her sash around the dragon's neck, and he immediately became tame, walking with her as if on a leash. They led the dragon back to the town, parading him in the streets and convincing the townspeople to convert to Christianity. Then St. George beheaded the dragon, and the king rewarded him with gifts. In turn he gave the gifts to the poor. Note that the most important event is in the large central panel: St. George wounds the dragon while the princess looks on. The panels on the right tell stories about his torture and execution by the Romans. This painting was probably the altarpiece in a small church or chapel in Spain that was dedicated to St. George. By telling his story through images, the artist makes the story more accessible for people who couldn't read.

ST MICHAEL CASTING SATAN INTO HELL

Circa 1725

Domenico Antonio Vaccaro



ABOUT THE IMAGE:

This sculpture illustrates the biblical story of the archangel Michael as he casts Lucifer from heaven for leading a band of rebellious of angels. Michael's upraised right arm holds a sword, symbol of his role as warrior-protector; his left arm points towards the stricken face of Lucifer, whose head is thrown back, mouth is open in terror and eyes are wide and staring as flames lick his body. The serpent curled on Lucifer's torso is yet another indication of his fall into darkness. His shoulder bears reptilian wings and he clutches a trident. Powerless at this moment, Lucifer is defeated.

SOAP BUBBLES

After 1739

Jean-Baptiste-Simon Chardin



ABOUT THE IMAGE:

The painting shows a boy leaning on a window ledge and blowing a bubble from a reed with absorbed concentration. As he carefully eyes the expanding bubble, a young child strains to watch over the ledge. It could well be a scene the artist observed in his native Paris, but the subject also belongs to a long tradition of European iconography, the bubble as a symbol of the fragility and vanity of human life.

MRS. SCHUYLER BURNING HER WHEAT FIELDS ON THE APPROACH OF THE BRITISH

1852

Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze



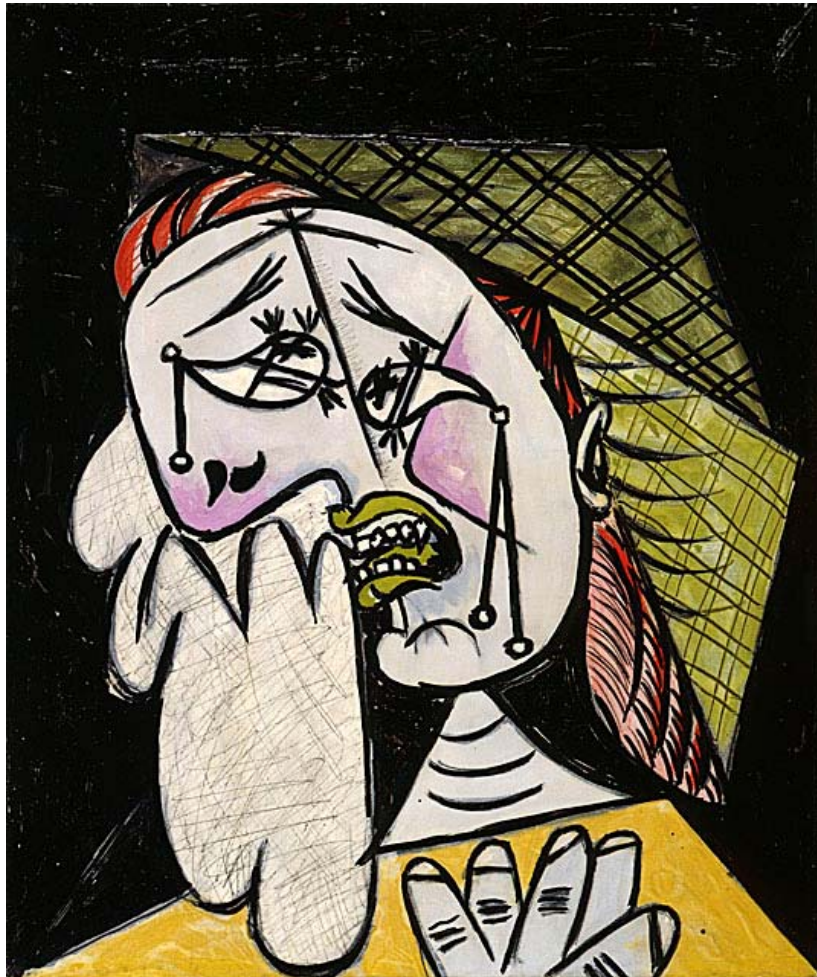
ABOUT THE IMAGE:

The painting depicts a dramatic scene of Mrs. Schuyler setting fire to her fields as the arrival of the enemy is announced by the pointing messenger. The painting is composed theatrically, with Mrs. Schuyler at the center and the other figures grouped around her, each having a part in the event. A horse and carriage stands waiting in the road. Catherine Schuyler was a legendary hero of the Revolutionary War whose accomplishments had become folklore by the middle of the 1800s. She was the wife of General Philip Schuyler. According to family tradition (later proved false), when the British troops advanced on the Schuyler's summer estate in New York, she decided to burn her fields rather than allow the enemy to take and use the wheat. Emanuel Leutze was the foremost American history painter of the mid-nineteenth century. He may be best known for his painting *Washington Crossing the Delaware* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). He made that work in 1851, and while exhibiting the painting in the United States, decided to begin a series of works based on the events of the American Revolution.

WEEPING WOMAN WITH HANDKERCHIEF

1937

Pablo Picasso



ABOUT THE IMAGE:

The weeping woman's face is gnarled and discolored and appears folded and crushed against a dark background. She holds a handkerchief to her face while the other hand rests on her chest. Her eyes and nostrils are stylized, and her tears leave heavy tracks. Her furrowed brow splits her face in two, and her gaping, green mouth reveals agony. Her head teeters atop a pointed neck. The image resembles the mater dolorosa (grieving mother of Christ) a theme that was common in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish painting, and the sobbing woman with her characteristically Spanish mantilla or head covering is regarded as illustrating the country's devastation from war. Pablo Picasso was one of the most prominent modern artists of the twentieth century. He pioneered cubism, an early modern art movement in which realistic representation is rejected, and several sides of an object are seen simultaneously. Picasso also worked in expressionism, utilizing emotion to distort images, and in surrealism, merging depictions of reality and dream-like imagery. These three styles are seen in the artist's 1937 weeping women series alongside his use of ideograms, conventionalized pictures that stand for a compositional part, such as the drop-like eyes and pendulous tears.

PORTRAIT OF SEBASTIAN JUNER VIDAL

1903

Pablo Picasso



ABOUT THE IMAGE:

Pablo Picasso painted this portrait of fellow artist Sebastian Juner Vidal in 1903, during his Blue Period (the period between 1901 and 1904, when he painted primarily in monochromatic shades of blue and blue-green.)

Vidal's face appears powerful and dramatic, while the woman is painted with a noticeably different technique – the tones are more transparent, the brushwork looser and more quickly applied. Notice how Vidal's eyes stare confidently at the viewer, while the woman at his side provides the only splashes of bright color in the painting. Picasso paints the woman in a more caricatured way. She is painted with less detail than Vidal, whose persona she helps to define.

FOLLOW-UP LESSONS

After the museum visit

- Select a scene from a story or an event from history. Make a drawing or painting that illustrates one moment. Who are all the characters or participants? What are they doing? Think about the setting as well as important details.

OR

- Research the story of the life of a famous person and select five or more important episodes or events. Figure out how to depict those episodes and make an illustrated timeline of the person's life.

**ADDITIONAL IMAGES AND INFORMATION ABOUT OBJECTS
ON YOUR TOUR CAN BE FOUND BY VISITING COLLECTIONS
ONLINE AT WWW.LACMA.ORG**

- **STAIR AND FOUNTAIN IN THE PARK OF A ROMAN VILLA**
Hubert Robert
- **STANDING WARRIOR**
Mexico, Jalisco
- **THE HOPE ATHENA**
Italy, Ostia or Rome, Roman
- **TEA**
Henri Matisse
- **THE LIBERATOR**
Rene Magritte
- **BURN, BABY, BURN**
Matta
- **FLOWER DAY**
Diego Rivera
- **MULHOLLAND DRIVE**
David Hockney

LACMA GENERAL INFORMATION

Please review these regulations with students before arriving at the museum.

MUSEUM RULES

- No touching works of art including outdoor sculpture. Viewers must not come closer than 24 inches to any work of art.
- No touching walls or any parts of installations. No sitting on platforms in the galleries or gardens.
- No eating, drinking, smoking, gum-chewing, excess noise, or running in the galleries.
- All groups must comply with instructions or requests from docents, gallery attendants or security staff.
- Teachers and chaperones must stay with the students at all times and are responsible for student behavior.
- Student assignments that require note taking are not permitted during a docent tour.

ARRIVING AT THE MUSEUM

- Plan to arrive at the museum at least 15 minutes before the tour is scheduled to begin.
- The museum is located at 5905 Wilshire Boulevard where buses should arrive for students to disembark.
- Enter the museum at the BP Grand Entrance on Wilshire Boulevard in front of *Urban Light*. A docent will meet your bus when it arrives.
- Buses should park on 6th Street, which is one block north of Wilshire Boulevard.
- Cars may park on surrounding streets or in the pay parking lot at 6th Street.

LUNCH

- Picnicking is permitted at the tables outside the Ahmanson Building, the BP Grand Entrance or in the park, and students are welcome to bring sack lunches. Seating is not permitted in the Café or the surrounding patio. Box lunches may be purchased from the Café. Orders must be placed one week before your arrival. Please contact the Plaza Café (323) 857-6197.

MUSEUM REENTRY

- If you are planning to visit the galleries after your guided tour please present a copy of your confirmation letter at the Welcome Center on the BP Grand Entrance, or the Los Angeles Times Central Court, to receive free admission tickets. Your group may not enter the galleries until 12 noon when the museum opens to the public.

**STUDENT DROP OFF
MEET DOCENT**

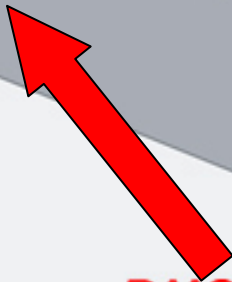


WILSHIRE BOULEVARD

LUNCH PICNIC AREA

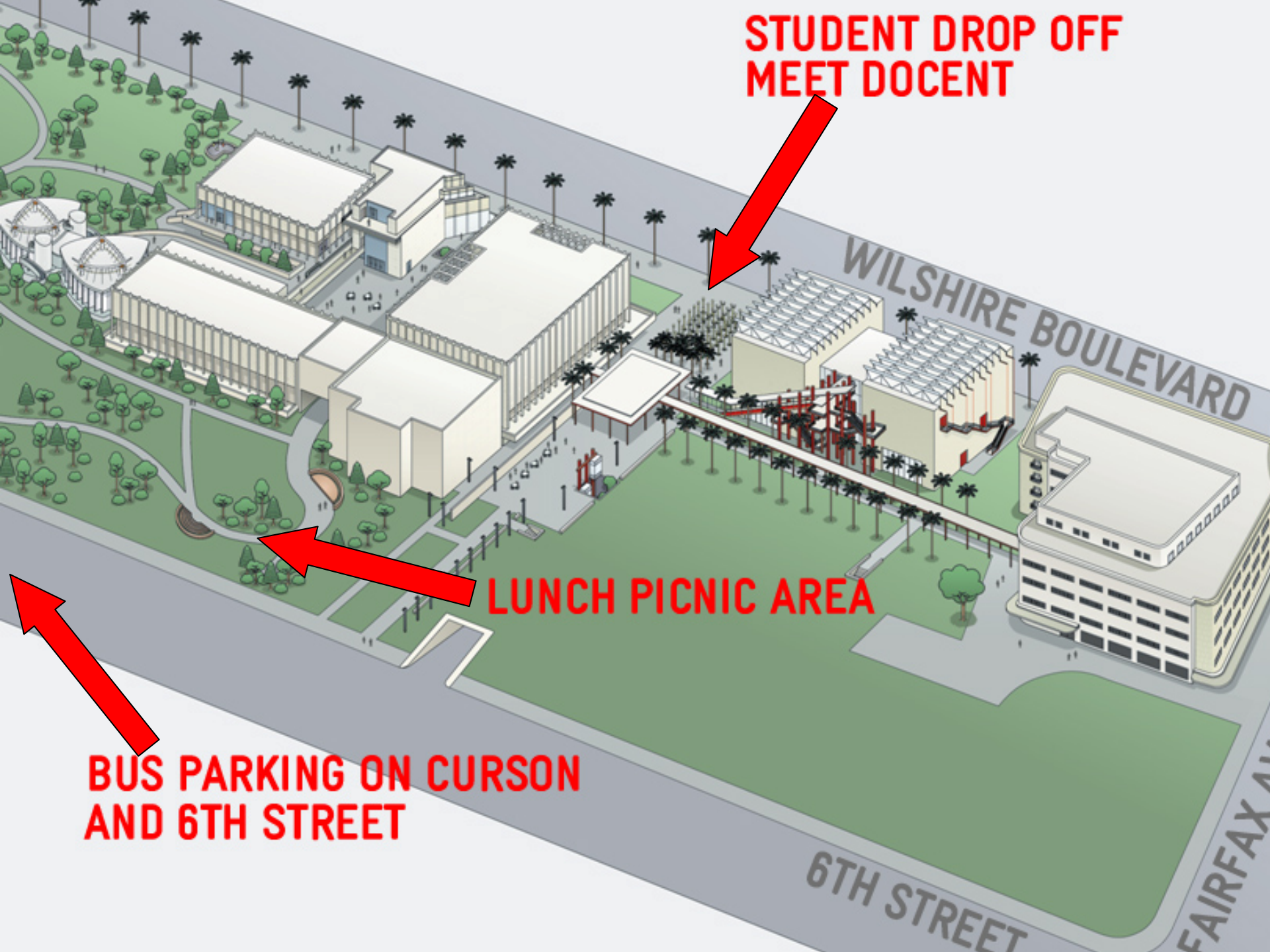


**BUS PARKING ON CURSON
AND 6TH STREET**



6TH STREET

FAIRFAX AVENUE



ENJOY YOUR VISIT

