

2026 - 2027

NEW JERSEY STATE MUSEUM

EARLY LEARNING FIELD TRIP GUIDE PRE-K TO 1ST GRADE

EXPLORE OUR FIELD TRIP GUIDE!

- A DAY AT THE MUSEUM
- GALLERY EXPLORATION
- TEACHER RESOURCES
- GUIDED LEARNING
- PLANETARIUM SHOWS
- RESERVATION & FIELD TRIP POLICIES



PLAN YOUR MUSEUM ADVENTURE TODAY!

**SCIENCE, HISTORY, ART -
IT'S ALL UNDER ONE ROOF!**

- Explore our galleries to discover the story of New Jersey through time, from dinosaurs and Ice Age mammals to modern inventions and art.
- Create lasting experiences with hands-on workshops designed for NJ curriculum standards.
- Journey through our solar system and beyond with our full-dome Planetarium shows.

A DAY AT THE MUSEUM

What Does a Day at the Museum Look Like?



The Museum is a perfect place to start fostering learning and creativity in young students! Most groups with young students find it best to spend a couple of hours at the Museum, split between a Planetarium show, guided learning with an educator, and exploring the galleries. Our reservationist is here to help you build your day based on your interests, time, and budget.



After reviewing the information in this guide, fill out our Reservation form to get started: <https://forms.office.com/g/8Qib3htifb>

GALLERY EXPLORATION

Your youngest students can successfully explore the galleries and have fun! Galleries identified in this guide are best suited for young learners.

Try these tips to engage your learners as you explore:

- Use our highlights maps for each permanent gallery to help jumpstart your students' learning!
- Look for Small Explorer cards in each gallery, normally located at gallery entrances.
- Find the interaction station in each gallery.
- Ask students to look at an object and tell you what they see (Color? Shape? People? Animals?).
- Encourage students to pose like a sculpture or do a scavenger hunt for blue objects on display.

LOWER LEVEL GALLERIES

A Much Moved People: Preserving Traditions of the Delaware Indians
and

Cultures in Competition: Indians & Europeans in Colonial New Jersey

Best for 1st grade

Key Concepts – archaeology; Indigenous tribes; Lenape; Delaware Indians.

Don't miss Delaware Indian games, block stamped baskets, and reproductions of clothing!



SECOND FLOOR GALLERIES

Written in the Rocks:

Fossil Tales of New Jersey

Perfect for young students!

Key Concepts – fossils; paleontology; geology; dinosaurs; Ice Age mammals; evolution; science.

Interactives - rock station; mammoth & mastodon fossils; fossil footprint.



Don't miss the PaleoLab, New Jersey's State Dinosaur *Hadrosaurus foulkii*, New Jersey's *Dryptosaurus*, *Mosasaurus*, Ice Age animals, and more!



American Perspectives:

The Fine Art Collection

Perfect for young learners!

Explore colors, shapes, people, and animals!

Key Concepts – art; art history; American artists; sculpture; mixed media.

Don't miss the following works - *Eliza White O'Donnell (1800-1865)* by Joshua Johnson, *The Music Lesson (Harlem Series #27)* by Jacob Lawrence, and *Reverie* (from "Eleven Pop Artists" Portfolio II) by Roy Lichtenstein!

THIRD FLOOR GALLERY



Pretty Big Things: Stories of New Jersey
Best for 1st grade

Key Concepts – history; historical artifacts; textiles; furniture; toys; industry; inventions.

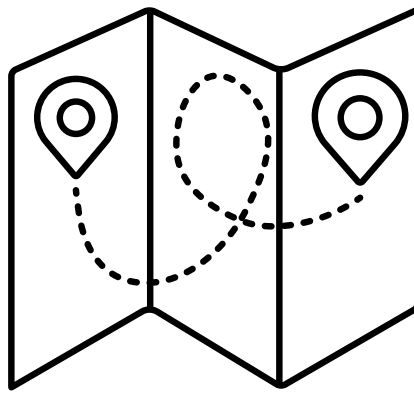
Interactives – Make Your Own Seal station; Build with Wooden Hinges; Make a Quilt Pattern.

Don't miss the *Great Seal of New Jersey*, the *Barnegat Sneakbox*, and NJ dolls & toys!

TEACHER RESOURCES

Get ready for the Museum with our online resources!

Gallery Highlights! New this year, our highlights maps identify where learning and exploration can start in each gallery with objects selected by our Education team. Highlights maps can be helpful as you plan your day at the Museum, especially if you have limited time here or if your students will be exploring the Museum on their own. Find the highlights map for each gallery online.



Small Explorer gallery guides! Look for the Small Explorer gallery cards and guides in our long-term galleries to help your students explore the Museum. These guides are designed for children up to 5 years old and include objects to find in each gallery and related activities to do back in the classroom. We recommend chaperones make use of these Small Explorer guides to help them focus students during Museum exploration.



GUIDED LEARNING AT THE MUSEUM

Jumpstart learning with our guided learning programs, specifically designed for early learning development.

We now offer two options for young students that incorporate play and hands-on learning – story time and a craft, or a 30 minute workshop.



Program FAQs:

- **How long is a workshop or story time?** All guided learning for early learners is 30 minutes long.
- **How much does a workshop or story time cost?** All guided learning programs are \$5 per student.
- **Where do these programs take place?** Story time and craft programs takes place either in our Imagination Studio or in one of our galleries. Early learning workshops takes place in the STEAM Center.
- **How many students can fit in an early learning program?** Our story time and craft program can accommodate up to 20 students to ensure quality learning opportunities for all students. Our workshop can accommodate up to 25 students, allowing one homeroom class to learn together.
- **What should I do if I have a large group?** Large groups will be divided into multiple sessions. We encourage students to explore the galleries when not in a workshop.

STORY TIME & CRAFT

**Best for pre-kindergarten but great for all young students!
Enjoy an age-appropriate story time followed by a fun craft for your
students to take home.**

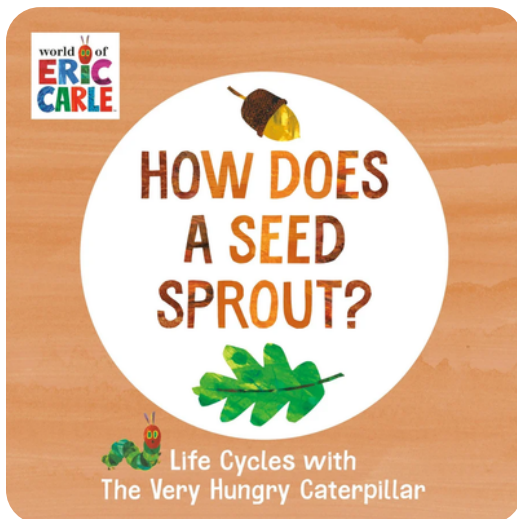
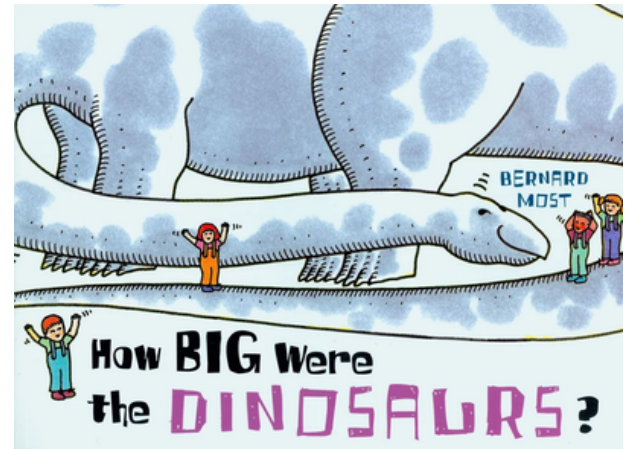


Overview: This program begins with a short introductory song to center students, followed by a read-aloud story time, a transitional play-based activity break to move their bodies, and a craft. We offer four story time & craft options.

STORY TIME & CRAFT

Dinosaurs:

- *How Big Were the Dinosaurs?* by Bernard Most. In this fact- and fancy-filled book about dinosaurs, Bernard Most shows just how the largest of these prehistoric creatures would measure up in today's child's world.
- After the book is read, students will transition to the craft, where they will make their own dinosaur to bring home, using different dinosaur body parts.



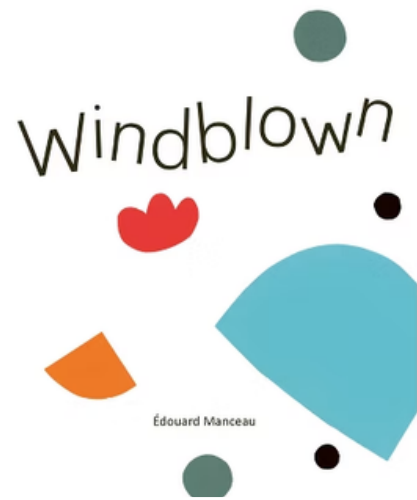
Nature:

- *How Does a Seed Sprout?* by Eric Carle. Explore the transformation of an acorn into an oak tree with help from the world's favorite caterpillar! Little ones will learn all about how squirrels bury acorns, how their seeds grow underground, and how a tiny green shoot becomes a mighty tree!
- After the book is read, students will transition to the craft, where they will make a plant life cycle to bring home.

STORY TIME & CRAFT

Art:

- *Windblown* by Edouard Manceau. A gust of wind blows scraps of paper onto a blank page and animal shapes emerge. Who do the scraps belong to? And what form will they take?
- After the book is read, students will transition to the craft, where they will use their creativity and imagination to make their own collage artwork out of pieces of colorful paper.



Space:

- *Tell Me About Space* by Lisa Varchol Perron. Perfect for curious little minds, this nonfiction board book teaches young readers all about outer space through question-and-answer text!
- After the book is read, students will transition to the craft, where they will use their imagination to make a planet of their very own to take home.



ART & INSPIRATION

Best for Kindergarten - 1st grade.

**Key Concepts – art; colors; emotions; storytelling;
art making; painting.**

Overview: Students start this workshop in our fine art gallery with a guided exploration, where Museum educators encourage students to see, think and wonder. Students work together to make a story from a piece of art using play-based learning techniques. In the classroom, students can develop or practice their artistic skills to make their own story through painting.



Learning Outcomes:

- Gain familiarity with fine art.
- Learn to describe what they observe or feel.
- Express emotions and stories through art making.
- Practice creativity and develop art making skills.

Related Galleries: Return to the *American Perspectives: The Fine Art Collection* gallery to keep exploring more artwork! Pay attention to the different types of art in the gallery – painting, sculpture, collage. Encourage chaperones to prompt similar interpretations or play-based learning as done in the workshop with new pieces. Students can find art throughout the Museum, not just in the fine art gallery! Prompt your students to point out art as they explore the other galleries.

PLANETARIUM SHOWS

Learn about the sky we share or the Earth we live on with old friends like Elmo or new friends like Little Eve!

Our planetarium shows keep your kids engaged and excited as they learn!



Planetarium FAQs:

- **How long is a Planetarium show?** Show times range from 20 to 30 minutes. Shows can include an introductory sky talk about the New Jersey night sky upon request – this will bring the total showtime to about 45 minutes.
- **How much does a Planetarium show cost?** Planetarium shows are \$5 per person – students, teachers, and chaperones all included.
- **What happens if we are late?** Planetarium shows begin promptly at the scheduled time. We are unable to start the show late or issue refunds for late arrivals.
- **How many students can fit in one Planetarium show?** The Planetarium can accommodate a total of 140 people. Larger groups will be split into two or more shows when necessary.
- **Are teachers and chaperones included in the total count?** Yes! All students, teachers, and chaperones must be included in the total count when reserving a Planetarium show.

For a full description of our shows, visit our Planetarium webpage here:

<https://nj.gov/state/museum/education-planetarium.shtml>

One World, One Sky

Best for Pre-K to 1st grade. Show length 26 minutes.

Available in Spanish upon request.

Watch the trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvQo4c-fyj0&feature=youtu.be>

Overview - Join Big Bird, Elmo, and Hu Hu Zhu (a friend from China) as they talk and sing about stargazing and the constellations. They even journey to the Moon, where they see Earth from a distance – and realize we all share one sky!



Key Concepts –

night sky; stargazing; moon; Sesame Street; constellations.

Learning Outcomes –

- Recognize and communicate patterns in the sky.
- The lunar environment and how it differs from Earth.
- Greetings and words in Chinese, and to embrace global connections.

Little Eve: Stories of Planet Earth

Best for Pre-K to 1st grade. Show length 30 minutes.

Watch the trailer:

https://youtu.be/_RZUXr0GPWA?si=8HmywyNzWR4cwFSu

Overview - Join Eve as her mother tells her three stories about the perseverance of life on Earth. Witness a cell determined to grow, a fish learn to walk, and a prehistoric squirrel survive the dinosaurs – and discover how strong small creatures can be!

Key Concepts –

history of life; traits; adaptations.

Learning Outcomes –

- The evolution of life, from cells to complex organisms to mammals.
- How adaptation, traits, and ingenuity enable a creature's survival.
- Why creativity, perseverance, and teamwork matter in nature and in daily life.



Rusty Rocket's Last Blast

Best for K to 1st grade. Show length 35 minutes.

Watch the trailer:

https://youtu.be/yb0U_4Ozwul?si=i4k9yW0mDIBfV9qg.

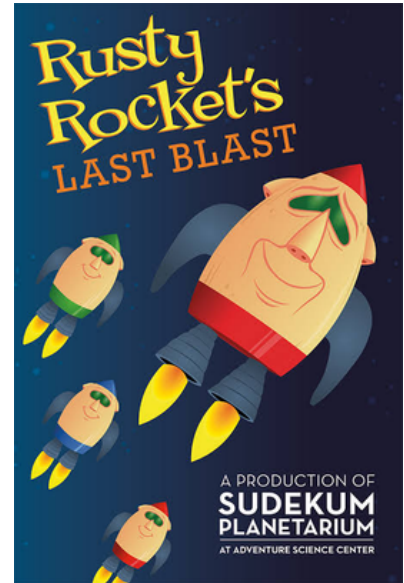
Overview - Join Rusty Rocket as he takes a new class of rocket rookies on a tour of the Solar System! In this classic, musical show, learn all about the planets and the spacecraft that explore them.

Key Concepts –

solar system; planets; spacecraft; rockets; space travel.

Learning Outcomes –

- How a spacecraft stays in orbit and travels through space.
- How long it would take to fly to the Moon, Sun, and planets.
- The characteristics and environment of each planet, and which spacecraft first explored them.



Earth, Moon, & Sun

Best for 1st grade. Show length 25 minutes.

Watch the trailer:

https://youtu.be/wD4ai03BsZ4?si=GDUYyLOFNmSh6_Ur

Overview - Uh oh... Coyote's head is filled with misconceptions about space! Help him learn about how the Earth, Moon, and Sun work together as a system, discovering the science behind eclipses, seasons, and lunar phases.



Key Concepts –

moon phases; eclipses; sun; stars; day and night; seasons.

Learning Outcomes –

- The Sun's energy production, its size, and how the Earth moves around it.
- The Moon's origin, features, phases, eclipses, and the first lunar missions.
- Misconceptions about space, mythology, and how to think scientifically.

Magic Tree House: Space Mission

Best for 1st grade. Show length 29 minutes.

Watch the trailer:

https://youtu.be/0iavUjtoa-c?si=HVGIqXT_ZooJhKE9

Overview - Help Jack and Annie uncover a cosmic mystery! Audiences will meet an astronomer and an astronaut, learn about the planets and life in space, and journey deep into the cosmos. Based on the beloved books by Mary Pope Osborne.



Key Concepts – solar system; stars; space travel; astronauts; black holes.

Learning Outcomes –

- Light pollution, stars, the Sun, the planets, and space missions.
- How astronauts live and work in space.
- Ways of learning about science, including the internet, books, and experts.



RESERVATION & FIELD TRIP POLICIES

Cost & Discounts: The New Jersey State Museum has free admission. Planetarium shows are \$5 per person, including chaperones. Guided learning programs are \$5 per student. A minimum of 15 students is required to reserve any program. We offer a 20% discount for Trenton Public School District schools and Title 1 schools. It is the responsibility of the group making the reservation to notify the reservationist if eligible for one of the discounts.

Online Reservation Form: Please use our [online reservation form](#) to submit your reservation request. Use this guide to explore options at the Museum before submitting the reservation request. After submitting your request, our reservationist will review it. If no other information is needed, they will build your itinerary and send a confirmation email. To help you plan your visit, we have created an orientation video. You can watch it [here](#).

Bulk Orders: If you are interested in making five or more reservations in a school year and will be paying for all with one PO, contact our reservationist directly at reservations.NJSM@sos.nj.gov. You will get a personal account representative who will work with you to schedule all of the trips.

Payments: All payment is due before arrival, and payment is required for the entire group in one payment, we do not accept deposits or partial payments. Reservations must be pre-paid in full, two weeks prior to your field trip date.

Arrival & Late Policy: Please have an arrival time in mind when making your reservation. We suggest arriving at least 15 minutes before the start of your first program. If your group is over 100 students, we suggest arriving at least 30 minutes before your first program. We are unable to hold Planetarium shows for late arrivals. If you are late, we can try and accommodate your original reservation, but cannot guarantee that. If you are more than 30 minutes late, your first program may be cancelled without a refund.

RESERVATION & FIELD TRIP POLICIES

Chaperones & Code of Conduct:

- We require 1 chaperone per 5 students for our youngest visitors ages 6 and younger.
- Chaperones must stay with students at all times and refrain from talking on the phone in the galleries.
- Chaperones must be included in the total number of seats for the Planetarium.
- You can find the full Code of Conduct [here](#).

Available Lunch Spaces :

- Limited seating (up to 60) is available indoors on the Museum's first floor on a first come basis.
- Please keep your students together so that there is seating available for other groups.
- Groups must limit their lunch to 30 minutes.
- Outdoor seating for up to 150 people is available at picnic tables around the Museum.
- Groups may also picnic on the front lawn.
- There is no alternate space in the case of inclement weather.
- Lunches should be stored in bins inside the Museum's main entrance; students are not permitted to carry food or drink through the Museum.

We can't wait to see you and your students!

