

THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

School Programs Reservation Form

Please complete this form and email to education@thomascole.org. For questions call 518.943.7465x5

Please check the box next to the type of tour you would like. All school tours last 45 minutes. If desired, students can engage in an additional 45 minutes of hands-on activities for an additional cost. If you would like to include hands-on activities for your students, check the box next to one corresponding activity for your chosen tour.

Choose one tour type and one hands-on activity workshop, if desired:

Thomas Cole: Artist, Writer, and Environmentalist:
How can we use many tools to express our ideas?

Best for: All Classes, K-12

Description:

This tour is highly student-centered, incorporating group discussion, inquiry, and optional hands-on activities with contextual information about Thomas Cole, the Industrial Revolution, and life in the early 1800s. In this tour, students learn about Thomas Cole's work as an artist, writer, and early environmentalist as they tour through the historic house. Students will visit the house that Thomas Cole lived in and the studio where he painted.

Thomas Cole and the Creative Process:
How do we create art from our experiences in nature?

Best for: Art & Art History Classes, K-12

Description:

This tour focuses on how Thomas Cole created art, from closely observing and sketching nature, deciding on what to leave in and take out, to mixing his own paints and creating his compositions. Students learn about the life of Thomas Cole, the Hudson River School of Art, and tour the historic house and painting studio.

Optional Hands-On Activity Workshops for Tours:

You can add a 45 minute workshop of hands-on activities following your tour, for an additional cost. Please choose only one.

Create an Exhibition (for Older Students)
Appropriate for: Grades 6-12

Description: Collections and exhibitions of artworks and artifacts play an important role in society in communicating ideas and telling stories. This activity involves students creating an exhibition of their own around the theme of "Human Impact on the Environment," a phenomenon that Cole was ruminating on in his writing and painting. This activity can be done in pairs or in a group. Students will pick from paintings, photographs, newspaper articles, advertisements, poetry, or create original work to put together their own exhibition.

Create an Exhibition (for Younger Students)
Appropriate for: Grades K-5

Description: Students will learn about what makes up an exhibition and create original writing and artwork for it. Their collaborative exhibition will address the question: How is the landscape changing? Students will be given worksheets and writing prompts to create poetry, mini-essays, artwork, and visions of future landscapes.

Hands-On Activity Workshop Options Continued

Writing Your “Essay on American Scenery”: What is the American Landscape?

Appropriate for: Grades 4-12

Description: In 1836, Thomas Cole wrote an essay called Essay on American Scenery that celebrated American landscapes and expressed his fear that they would be destroyed. In pairs, students will read different paragraphs from the essay (scaled appropriately for grade level) and report back to the group to discuss what they read and its meaning. Students will then break into groups and complete mini “Essays on American Scenery” by creating artwork and writing. Students can work anywhere on the grounds, creating poetry, prose, and artwork that responds to the questions: “What is the American landscape and why is it important?” “What makes up a landscape?” “Is there something you see, do, or experience today that you hope will be around for future generations?” Students will then gather as a group to share their interpretations of these questions.

Sketch, Remember & Create

Appropriate for: Grades 1-12

Description: A key part of Thomas Cole’s creative process involved forgetting the unimportant details in a landscape and remembering, and later, capturing the important, emotionally-charged details. Students will sit outdoors in a wide circle, facing away from the circle, and put clipboards with paper and pencils behind their backs inside the circle. The Thomas Cole Educator will give students two minutes to observe what they see, then will have them turn in to sketch what they saw for three minutes, without referencing the real-life view. Students will then rotate four places inside the circle so that they are looking at a different view and will repeat this sequence. They will do this four times, looking at different views each time. Students will then go inside and pick from their sketches a favorite view to turn into a painting, and spend the remaining time painting their chosen scene.

[Fall 2018 Only: Spectrum Show] Color & Close Observation

Appropriate for: Grades 1-12

Description: This activity asks students to think deeply about color in conjunction with our Fall 2018 Contemporary Art Exhibition, Spectrum. Many of us are quick to lump all colors into general categories: blues, greens, yellows, and so on. But for artists, specific pigments, hues, tones, and light sources play an important role in setting a mood, conveying meaning, and creating a response in the viewer. Students will pull a color from a bag of fabric and paint swatches containing myriad colors. They will then be tasked with matching their chosen color to something onsite—a painting, a blade of grass, a chair or couch, whatever they can find. Students will be asked to find an identical match, not just something that is a similar color. Students will do this with several colors and close with a discussion on the importance of color in art-making.