

Teachable Moments: A Guide for Your Fieldtrip

Gem and Mineral Hall, Grade 5

Gallery Description: More than 2,000 gem and mineral specimens are on view in the Gem and Mineral Hall. The hall features one of the largest gold exhibits in the world that includes over 300 pounds of natural gold, along with gold mining artifacts and other memorabilia. The walk-through Hixon Gem Vault houses such spectacular treasures as exquisite star rubies, emeralds, and sapphires.

Science Activities

- Ask students to find the one rock in the Gem and Mineral Hall that is not from this planet.

Gather students in front of the meteorite display.

Discuss the origin of this rock.

Ask students to create a simple movement showing how the meteorite got to Earth.

Math Activities

- Gather students in front of any display in the hall.

Pick a gem or mineral and identify any angles, perpendicular and parallel lines, rectangles, and triangles present in the object.

Ask students which tools would be used to draw the gem or mineral to size (e.g. straight edge, ruler, compass, protractor, drawing software).

Language Arts Activities

- Gather students in the back room of the hall.

Pick a gem or mineral and describe it using a simile and a metaphor.

Simile example, "The gem is as blue as the sky."

Metaphor example, "The gem's sides are intersecting highways."

In pairs, have students walk around and take turns picking a gem or mineral and describing it using a simile or metaphor.

These activities support the following 5th Grade California State Standards:

Science

Earth Science 5b: Students know the solar system includes the planet Earth, the Moon, the Sun, eight other planets and their satellites, and smaller objects, such as asteroids and comets.

Math

Measurement and Geometry 2.0: Students identify, describe, and classify the properties of, and the relationships between, plane and solid geometric figures.

Measurement and Geometry 2.3: Visualize and draw two-dimensional views of three-dimensional objects made from rectangular solids.

Language Arts

Word Analysis 1.5: Understand and explain the figurative and metaphorical use of words in context.