

Gallery Walk

Overview

In this activity, students work as researchers to investigate and evaluate a selection of short texts and images. Unlike a textbook, which distills and orders information into a processed package, the sources that researchers examine do not come in a tidy bundle. Researchers have to consider questions of chronology, relevance, authenticity and significance. Information in the Classroom Gallery Walk is intentionally shuffled, and it contains multiple narratives—requiring students to take an active role in making sense of it all and giving them the opportunity to find their own path based on their own interests and background knowledge. While the procedure below describes a gallery walk that you would set up physically around the walls of a classroom, this activity can also be successfully translated to a virtual format using a site such as Padlet.

Procedure

Step 1

Install the gallery walk. This works best when students are not in the classroom, so that you can properly introduce the activity before they start exploring the content. While this can be done by setting out the images and text on tables if wall space is limited, it tends to work better to have the various texts and images on the wall, and spread out around the classroom. Try to shuffle the information first. Students should be able to easily access each image or text, and get close to it to study the details.

Step 2

Introduce the gallery walk. Tell students that they will be acting as researchers to gather more information about health issues in Hawai'i. Like a gallery in a museum, it is a time to quietly study the information. Also like a museum gallery, there is no right place to start, and no correct sequence to follow in exploring the material. Each student can choose which information they are interested in, and move at their own pace, going from one item to the next. If there is a crowd of students at one text, they can just go to another item on the wall and return to the first image when it isn't so crowded.

Step 3

Explain how students will gather information. Students can gather information by taking notes and recording observations—[visual note taking](#). Students might want to write down a quote that they think is significant, or sketch a detail from an image that they feel might be important. As they go, they should think about what they are finding out. What stories do these images and texts tell? What connections are you finding between items on the wall? It is helpful if the teacher models this note-taking approach, using a couple of items from the wall, so students get a feel for the process.

Step 4

Students explore the gallery walk. As students choose their own path through the material, taking notes as they go, the teacher can ask questions to help advance their inquiry. What have you found out so far? What else could you record?

Step 5

Midway progress update. Ask students to find a partner and to pair-share about what they've discovered so far. Once students have had a chance to share with a partner, you can ask for a couple of volunteers to share out with the whole group. Let students know that they will have a few more minutes to explore the gallery walk. What more can they find out?

Step 6

Organizing and sequencing the gallery walk (optional). To extend the inquiry, you can ask the students to help organize and sequence items from the gallery walk. What is the earliest piece of information? Are their other pieces of information related to this one? Students can physically move items from the gallery walk to try to arrange information chronologically, or to group it around particular themes.