

# MUSEUM web quest VIRTUAL visit + more



## FRIDA KAHLO DIEGO RIVERA & MEXICAN MODERNISM

THE JACQUES AND NATASHA GELMAN COLLECTION

DENVER  
**art**  
MUSEUM

MIDDLE  
SCHOOL

FACILITATOR  
GUIDE

## ARTIST ON THE WALL



Anonymous, *Frida and Diego during an Antifascist Demonstration in Mexico City*, 1936. Gelatin silver print; 10 x 8 in. The Vergel Foundation and MondoMostre in collaboration with the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura (INBAL).  
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### INSPIRED BY:

Artworks and life of Frida Kahlo.

### TOPIC:

Understand the circles of influence within the Mexican Modernism movement and make relevant connections to kids' lives.

### RATIONALE:

Understanding influence and context is an important interdisciplinary skill that is exercised by critical thinkers.

### RESOURCES INCLUDE:

#### FOR FACILITATORS:

- A How-to facilitate guide including information about the artists, activities, as well as directions and sample prompting conversation questions. Guide includes complementary links for background research, and two example videos illustrating the activity structures.
- High resolution image of the artwork
- Silhouette template example
- One page Frida Kahlo Biography

#### FOR KIDS:

- One page Frida Kahlo Biography

### HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGE

After the Mexican Revolution ended in 1920, Mexico City became a vibrant cultural center that attracted international artists, intellectuals, political activists, and arts patrons. Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera were at the hub of these circles of activity. They were deeply engaged politically, joining the Communist Party in the 1920s to champion workers' rights and support the establishment of a unified, independent Mexico. Use this Artist on the Wall teaching strategy to explore how these events and people influenced Frida Kahlo and the other artists of the Mexican modernism movement.

Artist on the Wall is a teaching strategy that invites kids to investigate a holistic narrative about a person, in this case an artist, and to visually map the relationship between characteristics (emotions) and actions (behaviors) onto a simple outline of a human figure. By inviting kids to analyze context clues, the group collectively explores and constructs a more complex understanding of the person's motivations and essence.

### VIDEO LINK

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## ARTIST ON THE WALL

### 🎯🎯🎯🎯 YOUR TURN!

1. Draw a large outline of a head/shoulders or figure on paper or print this outline; leave plenty of space to write inside and outside the figure.

#### FRIDA SILHOUETTE

2. Identify the artist you will be investigating and provide any necessary supplementary texts or resources. Using a **jigsaw teaching approach** helps break the text or resources into digestible segments and creates a collaborative approach where kids are dependent on each other to complete the activity as whole.
3. Invite everyone to name words, phrases, or messages that might describe this specific person. Write kids' responses based on if they are

internal (emotions - write on inside of the figure) or external (events, people, places – write outside the figure.)

4. When a response is offered, invite kids to think about where it comes from. Connect responses visually on the paper through color or a line and encourage kids to find multiple answers.
5. Next, ask students how the person might feel inside, based on an outside response, and write those feelings on the inside of the figure with another color.
6. Finally, ask kids to connect specific "external" responses to the inner feelings, and draw lines between those connections on the figure. Which outside influences match up with the inner feelings?

### SUGGESTIONS:

- Invite students to use references to support their answers.
- Have kids work in small groups or individually on their own silhouette map using a different artist or themselves.

### DIG DEEPER *(helpful links)*



... into the history of the Mexican Revolution.



... into politics, culture, and identity in regards to Frida Kahlo.



...into the geography of the United Mexican States, the official name of Mexico.

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### Using Frida Kahlo as an example:

Frida Kahlo once said:

**"I am my own muse.  
I am the subject I know  
best. The subject I want  
to know better."**

Many artists use their own life and feelings to create their art. This was especially true of Frida Kahlo. Do some research on this artist or use this printable biography and then using the strategy Artist on the Wall, try to uncover what internal (emotions) and external (people, places, and/or events) influenced Kahlo's work.

**FRIDA BIOGRAPHY**

### CONVERSATION QUESTIONS:

Kahlo's art was impacted by key events that happened to her in her life—what are some of those key events?

How do you think these events made her feel?

Kahlo was a very passionate person who had many deep and meaningful relationships with people who influenced her art. Who are some of those people?

How do you think she felt about these people? How do you think these people influenced her?

As an artist, Kahlo put her emotions into her art. What emotions do you think she experienced?

What connections do you see between her internal and external influences and her art?

### ACTIVITY EXTENSION:

Help students make the connection that people and artists of all times are influenced by events, relationships, and emotions. After analyzing the spheres of influence in Frida Kahlo's life, students can use the Artist on the Wall framework to explore other artists of interest and themselves!



Carlos  
Fresquez



Ana Theresa  
Fernandez



Carlos  
Merida