

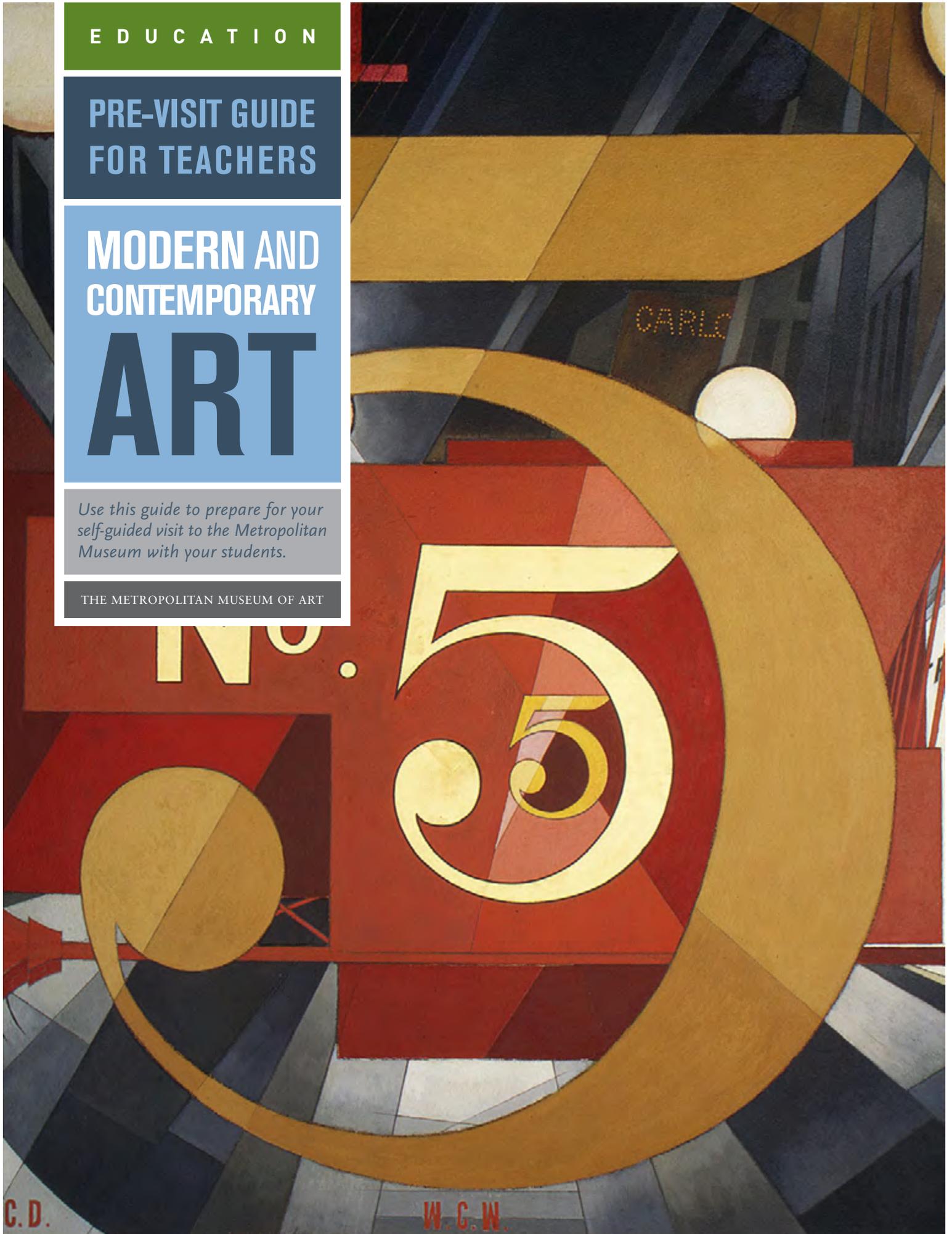
E D U C A T I O N

PRE-VISIT GUIDE
FOR TEACHERS

MODERN AND
CONTEMPORARY
ART

*Use this guide to prepare for your
self-guided visit to the Metropolitan
Museum with your students.*

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



This guide will help you prepare for your self-guided visit to the Metropolitan Museum with your students. Use the links to the Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, curatorial departments, and other areas on the Museum's website to access descriptions of works of art and relevant thematic essays and resources.

Introduction

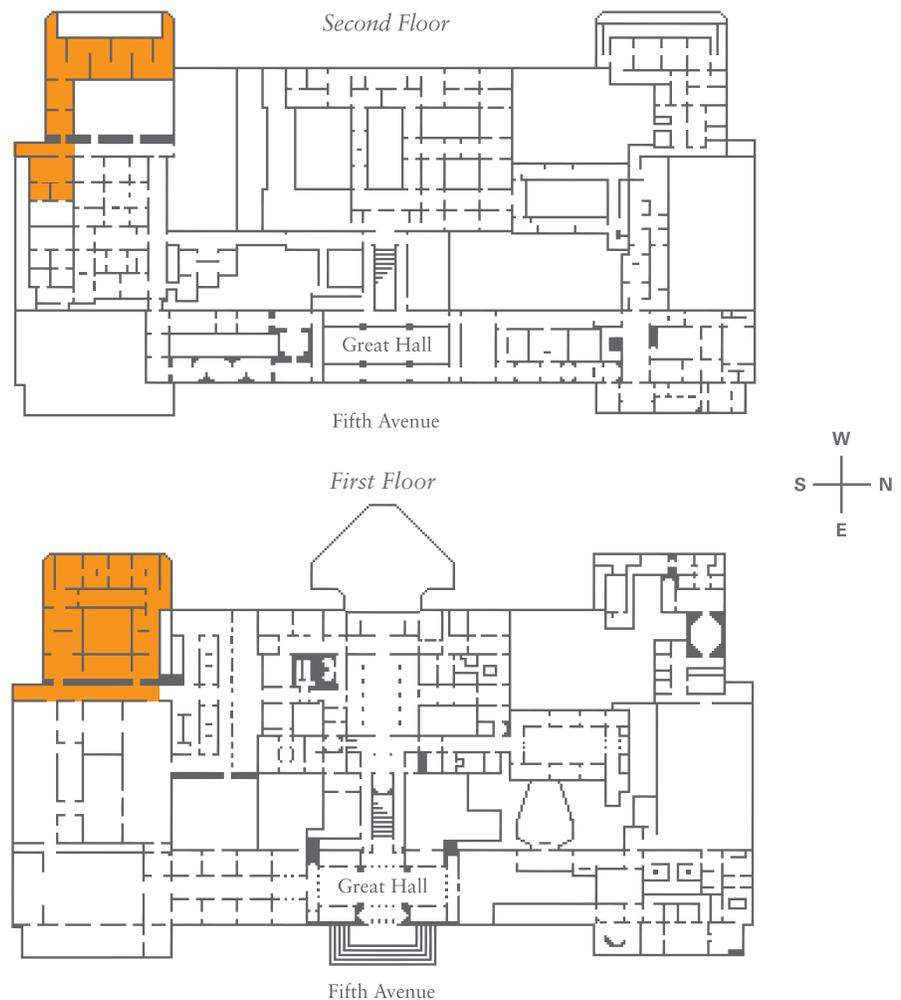
In 2004, The Metropolitan Museum of Art combined its nineteenth-century European painting, modern art, and contemporary art departments. This reorganization, in part, underscores the need to understand modern art as a continuum beginning in the nineteenth century. At the Metropolitan Museum, modern art includes works made as early as about 1900 through to 1970, and contemporary art, works made after 1970.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, artists and critics alike began to resist long-held tenets of Academic art such as the hierarchy of genres, which deemed history painting most important, followed by portraiture, genre painting, landscapes, and still life. The concurrent rise of an art market and art galleries meant that the protocol and requirements of elite patrons no longer exclusively determined the production of art. Conveniences and goods made available through industrialization and mechanization, and massive population shifts to urban centers, are also of great importance when thinking about modern art; photography and film, certain forms of printmaking, world's fairs, and New York City's Central Park are all examples of nineteenth-century forms that have contributed to a culture we now know as *modern*.

In the twentieth century, abstraction—generally understood to mean *nonrepresentational art*—was a major development in modern art, though certainly not the only one. A common thread in the history of modern art is the conscious desire on the part of artists to give visual expression to subjective experience or knowledge. With contemporary art, a number of artists move away from abstract modes of expression and the notion that a given work of art can be understood through purely formal issues and analysis. Contemporary art is a wide field that encompasses new media and technologies, such as video and computer-generated art, as well as performance art, architecture, and site-specific work.

The Galleries

The Metropolitan's collection of modern and contemporary art is located in the southwest corner of the building. Much of the modern collection is on the first and second floors of the Lila Acheson Wallace Wing, with contemporary art displayed in the mezzanine galleries. The art on view (including works in special exhibitions) includes a wide variety of media: paintings and sculpture, decorative arts, mixed-media works, textiles, collage, installation art, and sometimes video or film shorts. Rotations of contemporary art are often exhibited in the first-floor gallery located between the Michael C. Rockefeller Wing and the Lila Acheson Wallace Wing, and photography exhibitions are presented in the Joyce and Robert Menschel Hall for Modern Photography on the second floor. From May to October (weather permitting), an exhibition of contemporary sculpture is installed in the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Roof Garden, accessible by an elevator from the first floor. Selected works from the Nineteenth-Century European Paintings and Sculpture galleries (see also the [pre-visit guide to Nineteenth-Century European Paintings](#)), as well as the Galleries for Drawings, Prints, and Photographs, can complement a visit to the modern and contemporary art collections.



Planning a Tour

When visiting the Metropolitan Museum with your students, prepare your tour with the following in mind:

- Less is more. Select five or six works of art to discuss over the course of an hour in the galleries.
- Choose works that are located away from doorways and areas that are heavily traversed by visitors.
- Include works that are visible to all students in your group for purposes of discussion and viewing.
- Make sure that there are enough chaperones in your group to divide the students into smaller groups for gallery discussions.
- While touring the galleries, please give priority to lecturers wearing Museum IDs who are guiding groups. If they are discussing a work that you would like your students to see, please select another work to view and discuss in the interim.

Please Note: *Although most of the suggested works in this guide will be on view when you visit the Museum, some gallery installations may be subject to change. We recommend that you use [Search the Collections](#) online or come to the Museum to verify that the objects you want to discuss are on display prior to bringing your group.*

Questions for Discussion in the Galleries

- Look closely at the work of art. What materials has the artist selected, and how has he or she used them?
- Describe any imagery that you see. Is the work naturalistic, abstract, or a combination of both?
- How has the artist used color?
- Describe the size and scale of the work of art. How does the work's size relate to the imagery presented?
- What are some words that come to mind as you look at the work of art? What do you notice in the work that causes you to choose those words?

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's school tour program is made possible by the generosity of Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman.

Suggested Works of Art to Explore

Please note that titles, dates, and other object information on the website and on gallery signage may vary as the result of ongoing research. The images below are details. Use the links to view the works in full.

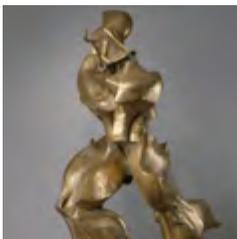


[The Seine at Chatou](#), 1906

Maurice de Vlaminck (French, 1876–1958)

Oil on canvas; 32 1/2 x 40 1/8 in. (82.6 x 101.9 cm)

Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection, 1998 (1999.363.84)



[Unique Forms of Continuity in Space](#), 1913

Umberto Boccioni (Italian, 1882–1916)

Bronze; 48 x 15 1/2 x 36 in. (121.9 x 39.4 x 91.4 cm)

Bequest of Lydia Winston Malbin, 1989 (1990.38.3)



[Portrait of a German Officer](#), 1914

Marsden Hartley (American, 1877–1943)

Oil on canvas; 68 1/4 x 41 3/8 in. (173.4 x 105.1 cm)

Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949 (49.70.42)



[The Marketplace, Vitebsk](#), 1917

Marc Chagall (French, born in Russia, 1887–1985)

Oil on canvas; 26 1/8 x 38 1/4 in. (66.4 x 97.2 cm)

Bequest of Scofield Thayer, 1982 (1984.433.6)



Bird in Space, 1923

Constantin Brancusi (French, born in Romania, 1876–1957)

Marble; H. (with base) 56 3/4 in. (144.1 cm), Diam. 6 1/2 in. (16.5 cm)

Bequest of Florene M. Schoenborn, 1995 (1996.403.7ab)



The Figure 5 in Gold, 1928

Charles Demuth (American, 1883–1935)

Oil on cardboard; 35 1/2 x 30 in. (90.2 x 76.2 cm)

Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949 (49.59.1)



Cow's Skull: Red, White, and Blue, 1931

Georgia O'Keeffe (American, 1887–1986)

Oil on canvas; 39 7/8 x 35 7/8 in. (101.3 x 91.1 cm)

Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1952 (52.203)

Learn more about [Georgia O'Keeffe \(1887–1986\)](#).



The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere, 1931

Grant Wood (American, 1892–1942)

Oil on Masonite; 30 x 40 in. (76.2 x 101.6 cm)

Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1950 (50.117)

© Estate of Grant Wood/Licensed VAGA, New York, NY



[Reading at a Table](#), 1934

Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881–1973)

Oil on canvas; 63 7/8 x 51 3/8 in. (162.2 x 130.5 cm)

Bequest of Florene M. Schoenborn, in honor of William S. Lieberman, 1995 (1996.403.1)

© 1999 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Learn more about [Pablo Picasso \(1881–1973\)](#).



[Report from Rockport](#), 1940

Stuart Davis (American, 1892–1964)

Oil on canvas; 24 x 30 in. (61 x 76.2 cm)

Edith and Milton Lowenthal Collection, Bequest of Edith Abrahamson Lowenthal, 1991 (1992.24.1)

© Estate of Stuart Davis/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY



[Kouros](#), 1944–45

Isamu Noguchi (American, 1904–1988)

Marble; H. 117 in. (297.2 cm); base: W. 42 in. (106.7 cm),

D. 34 1/8 in. (86.7 cm),

Fletcher Fund, 1953 (53.87a-i)

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[Three Men Walking II](#), 1949

Alberto Giacometti (Swiss, 1901–1966)

Bronze; 30 1/8 x 13 x 12 3/4 in. (76.5 x 33 x 32.4 cm)

Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection, 1998 (1999.363.22)



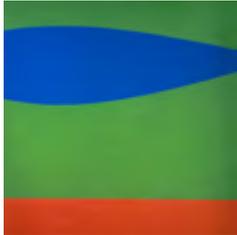
Autumn Rhythm (Number 30), 1950

Jackson Pollock (American, 1912–1956)

Enamel on canvas; 105 x 207 in. (266.7 x 525.8 cm)

George A. Hearn Fund, 1957 (57.92)

© 1999 Pollock-Krasner Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Blue Green Red, 1962–63

Ellsworth Kelly (American, born 1923)

Oil on canvas; 91 x 82 in. (231.1 x 208.3 cm)

Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1963 (63.73)

© Ellsworth Kelly



Becca, 1965

David Smith (American, 1906–1965)

Stainless steel; 113 1/4 x 123 x 30 1/2 in. (287.7 x 312.4 x 77.5 cm)

Purchase, Bequest of Miss Adelaide Milton de Groot (1876–1967), by exchange, 1972 (1972.127)

© Estate of David Smith/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY



Bohemia Lies by the Sea, 1996

Anselm Kiefer (German, born 1945)

Oil, emulsion, shellac, charcoal, and powdered paint on burlap;

Overall: 75 1/4 x 221 in. (191.1 x 561.3 cm); 2 panels,

each: 75 1/4 x 110 1/2 in. (191.x 280.7 cm)

Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift and Joseph H. Hazen Foundation Purchase Fund, 1997 (1997.4ab)

Learn more about [Anselm Kiefer \(born 1945\)](#).

Themes to Consider

[Abstract Expressionism](#)

[Alfred Stieglitz \(1864–1946\) and His Circle](#)

[Fauvism](#)

[Precisionism](#)

[School of Paris](#)

[Surrealism](#)

Selected Resources

These and many more resources are available in Nolen Library in the Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education.

Barr, Alfred H. *What Is Modern Painting?* 10th ed., rev. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1984.

Collins, Lisa Gail. *Art by African-American Artists: Selections from the 20th Century: A Resource for Educators*. New York: MMA, 2003.
(Part of the circulating collection available to educators in Nolen Library)

Paul, Stella. *Twentieth-Century Art: A Resource for Educators*. New York: MMA, 1999.
(Part of the circulating collection available to educators in Nolen Library)

Romare Bearden: [Let's Walk The Block](#)

Sparke, Penny. *A Century of Design: Design Pioneers of the 20th Century*. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's, 1998.

Elementary Students

De Paola, Tomie. *The Art Lesson*. New York: Putnam, 1989.

Greenberg, Jan, and Sandra Jordan. *Action Jackson*. Brookfield, Conn.: Roaring Brook Press, 2002.

Gogh, Vincent van. *Vincent's Colors*. Ed. William Lach. New York: MMA, 2005.

Middle School Students

Greenberg, Jan, and Sandra Jordan. *Chuck Close Up Close*. New York: DK Ink, 1998.

Jordan, Denise. *Harlem Renaissance Artists*. Chicago: Heinemann Library, 2003.

Mason, Antony. *In the Time of Warhol: The Development of Contemporary Art*. Brookfield, Conn.: Copper Beech Books, 2002.

High School Students

Cirlot, Lourdes. *The Key to Modern Art of the Early 20th Century*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1990.

Robertson, Jean, and Craig McDaniel. *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art after 1980*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Rush, Michael. *Video Art*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2003.

Sylvester, David. *Interviews with American Artists*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

DVD and VHS

Art21: Art in the Twenty-first Century. Dir. Catherine Tatge. Prod. Susan Sollins and Eve Laure Moros Ortega. PBS Home Video, 2004–. DVD.
(Part of the circulating collection available to educators in Nolen Library)

Faith Ringgold Paints Crown Heights. Dir. David Irving. Prod. Linda Freeman. L&S Video, 1995. Videocassette.
(Part of the circulating collection available to educators in Nolen Library)

New Ways of Seeing: Picasso, Braque, and the Cubist Revolution. Dir. Andrew S. Clayman. Prod. Burton S. Minkoff. By Pepe Karmel. Museum of Modern Art and Home Vision, 1990. Videocassette.
(Part of the circulating collection available to educators in Nolen Library)