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An Egyptian Temple

Wow! It’s easy to see why kids chose this temple. Built by the Roman emperor Augustus about two thousand years ago, the temple honors the Egyptian goddess Isis and two sons of a local chief. The carvings on the temple show images of the natural world: Can you find papyrus, lotus water plants, and representations of sky and water?

You pick number one!

What’s your favorite thing to see in the Museum? In the space below (or on a separate sheet), draw a picture of your pick and explain why it’s your favorite. Tell us its title and what part of the Museum it’s in (for example, the Egyptian galleries). Send it to the address below, or drop it off at one of the Information Desks in the Museum. We’ll use your suggestions to create a whole new issue of Kids’Q&A! Don’t forget to include your name, age, and address—we’ll send everyone who sends us something a Museum goodie.

What are some of kids’ favorite things to see in the Museum?

So many of you have asked this question that we went right to the source and asked dozens of kids what they thought. Based on their top picks, we came up with the selections in this issue of Kids’Q&A. These “greatest hits” will take you to many different parts of the Museum. Take a look at all or just some of the works, and in any order you like. What do you think of these choices? As you travel through the Museum, make a note about what you might pick as your favorite!
Music in Motion

Do you play an instrument? The young man on this jar plays a kithara, a kind of lyre that was used in public performances. The figure on the other side is most likely a judge—identified by his clothing and staff—who observes the performer. Although the scene probably shows a competition, it’s really about the importance of music. It is almost as if a spotlight were shining on the young man. He sways to the music and is totally absorbed in his performance. In addition to playing an instrument, he is making music in another way. Can you tell what it is?

I wish [the Museum] had pictures of panda bears, but I do like the paintings of kids. —Courtini, age 9

Mysterious Mask

Of what material do you think this is made? It’s not hard to imagine why kids singled out this unusual mask. Buried in the tombs of Peruvian leaders about a thousand years ago, gold masks like this were sometimes found in groups of five—four might be stacked at the feet, while one covered the head. The red paint seen here was often used on masks, along with ornaments and other materials, such as copper and feathers. The thin wires might show a certain expression in the eyes, but we’re not sure.

I didn’t know museums had instruments. I thought they were just things you played. —Angus, age 4

Take Five

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A French Family at Home

Meet Ganesh, a Hindu god. One story says he has an elephant head because his father cut off his human head by mistake, and then gave him the head of the first creature his father could find. You can probably tell that Ganesh likes to eat sweets—do you see the one he’s holding? Hindus believe he can remove obstacles.

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Don’t play musical fantasy. I know what an instrument is. I don’t like musical fantasy. —Angus, age 4

Musical Fantasy

Can you imagine actually playing this instrument? Near this harpsichord, Polyphemos, a one-eyed Cyclops (on the left), plays a bagpipe to please Galatea, the sea nymph he loved (on the right). At one time Galatea held a lute (a stringed instrument). The harpsichord was part of a museum display in Rome; the figures would have stood in front of a backdrop with pictures of sea and sky. What sea creatures can you find frolicking across the instrument?

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Peaceful Garden Court

Do you ever want to take a break and just read or think somewhere calm and quiet? Modeled after a scholar’s court in China, this peaceful garden courtyard is the perfect place. With its rocks, water, and seasonal plants it offers a miniature version of the natural world. In China, rooms of a home were often built around a courtyard, giving each room a view of the outdoors. The Chinese principles of yin and yang—opposites such as dark and light, hard and soft—are also showcased here. Can you find examples of opposites?

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Chinese Garden Court, gift of the Vincent Astor Foundation, opened to the public in 1981
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Don’t forget! Kids’Q&A tells you everything you want to know about the Museum, based on the questions you send us. So keep those questions coming!

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