

## My Museum

Become a curator and create your very own at home museum! Will your museum be a history museum, science museum, art museum, or a little bit of everything? What will you discover and teach to your visitors?

### Supplies:

- Your Museum Objects
- Paper & Markers

(for exhibit labels, optional)

### Instructions:

#### What is a museum, anyway?

A **museum** is a place where **collections of objects** are **stored** and **displayed** for people from all over the world to **learn from**. Many

museums focus on one area like science, history, or art. Some museums focus on a single topic like baseball, or cowboys, or modern art. The Fort Collins Museum of Discovery focuses on many different areas—science, history, music, animals—but we have one big topic... discovery!

#### What kinds of museums have you been to? Which museum is your favorite? Why?

When you visit a museum, you see **exhibits**. These are created by many different people who work at a museum. They are made so that you can see and learn about some of the many amazing objects and **specimens** a museum stores and takes care of. But did you know that you're only seeing a teeny tiny glimpse into a museum? Most museums **have thousands to millions** of objects that aren't on display! **Curators**—people who take care of museum objects—carefully store them so that someday they can be displayed. But they don't just put the objects on a shelf and leave them. Nope! They use those objects and specimens to learn more about history, art, and science so they can teach people through exhibits! Today your challenge is to become a **curator** and create your very own at home museum!



Here is where some of our collections at FCMoD are stored!

Decide what kind of museum you're going to create. Is it going to be a history museum? A science museum? An art museum? A topical museum (maybe sports or superheroes or legos or a museum about you)? Maybe you're going to make a museum like FCMoD and it will have a little bit of everything!

## If you're making a history museum...

1. What is the oldest object in your home? Or what is one of the oldest objects?
2. Go find it! (Ask a grown-up if it is ok if you borrow it for your museum). Remember that old objects are often easy to break. A good **curator** will handle the object gently.
3. Investigate the object. Find the answer to these questions. You may need to ask someone older than you to get the answers. Curators do this too! They'll ask people who might have been alive when this object was made or know more about history. Sometimes they'll take **oral histories** (check out our Story Detectives activity!)
  - What is it?
  - How was it used?
  - When was it used? (this is called **context**. What was happening?)
  - What is it made from?
  - Why is this object important? Why did your family keep it?
  - What does this tell us about history? What does it tell us about your family?
  - What is one thing you want people to learn from this object?
4. Set it aside to add to your museum!

## If you're making a science museum...

1. Will you focus on animals? Find an animal **specimen** (stuffed animal). Or maybe your museum will have live animals like FCMoD! Figure out the answers to these questions.
  - What kind of animal is it?
  - Where is that animal found in the wild? What is its **habitat**?
  - Is that animal an herbivore, carnivore, or omnivore—what do they eat?
  - What is one interesting fact about this animal?
  - What is one thing you want people to learn from this specimen?
2. Will your science museum focus on the planet, environments, and plants? Find some **geology specimens** (rocks) or **plant specimens** (houseplants, leaves, flowers). Figure out the answers to these questions.
  - What kind of rock/plant/leaf/flower is it?
  - Where do you find those types of rocks/plants?
  - How are they formed (rocks) or how do they grow (plants)?

- What is one thing we can learn about our planet from this specimen?
  - Is this a rare or common rock/plant?
  - Where did you find it?
  - What is one thing you want people to learn from this specimen?
3. Will you focus on space and our universe? This one is tricky—even for museums—because likely you don't have a meteorite or a spaceship floating around your house. But you can still teach people about space. Try one of these ideas:
- Create a model of the solar system using household objects. Explain which is your favorite planet. What is one thing you want people to know about it.
  - Draw a picture of your favorite constellation. Explain how to find it.
  - Create a model of a rover, spaceship, or satellite out of blocks or legos. How does it work? What is it investigating?
4. Set your specimens and objects aside to add to your museum!

## If you're making an art museum...

1. Find (or create) a piece of art to display! Answer these questions.
  - Who made it?
  - When did they create it?
  - What type of art is it? (painting, photograph, sculpture, etc.)
  - What materials did they make it out of?
  - What do you see? What is going on?
  - What is your reaction to the art? Why do you think you had that reaction?
  - Which area in the art is emphasized by the artist? Why do you think it is?
2. Set the art aside to add to your museum!

## If you're making a topical museum...

1. Think about what topic you want to choose.
2. Find your objects! (maybe you collect something...this is a great time to share that collection with your family!)
3. Answer these questions.
  - What story do these objects tell?
  - How are these objects all connected?
  - Why is this topic important?
  - What is one thing you want people to learn from these objects?

## Time to make our exhibit!

1. Organize your objects/specimens/art. Think about how you put your exhibit together! What objects do people see first? What bigger story are you telling? You can put your objects inside **cases** (boxes) to keep them safe or pop them up on a stand (use a chair or box)!
2. Add **exhibit labels**. These are for people to read when they visit your museum. They might tell the answers to some of the questions you asked! The exhibit label explains the story behind the object to people and gives them information to investigate!
3. Add **interactives**. Some museums—especially FCMoD—have interactive elements to their exhibits! This let people touch, listen, and try for themselves! What interactive elements will your museum have? Maybe you can recreate your favorite interactive exhibit from FCMoD! Check out our “Ball Run” and “Harness The Wind” Daily Discoveries on [fcmoD.org/blog](http://fcmoD.org/blog) to build some interactives from the museum in your own house (and keep checking for more)!
4. Give a tour! Open your museum for visitors! Give a tour of your exhibit!
5. Share a picture of your at home museum with us @focomod!



Part of a history exhibit at FCMoD.

## Keep Exploring!

Can't visit a museum in person? You can explore some of these museums from the comfort of your own house! Maybe you'll find some inspiration for your museum!

- Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (dinosaurs and elephants oh my!)  
<https://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NMNH/>
- The Vatican (go check out the Sistine Chapel!)  
<http://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/tour-virtuali-elenco.html>
- National Museum of the United States Air Force (if you love planes this one's for you!)  
<http://www.nmusafvirtualtour.com/>
- Google Arts & Culture (visit Rome, the International Space Station, and more!)  
<https://artsandculture.google.com/?hl=en>
- The Louvre! <https://www.louvre.fr/en/visites-en-ligne#tabs>
- Your very own FCMoD! <https://www.google.com/maps/@40.5931092,-105.0777615,3a,75y,320.21h,95.52t/data=!3m7!1e1!3m5!1sAF1QipMrsEpvXJMzoiFj2YpoBzVqnQiA53o-o4TvaEhjD!2e10!3e12!7i13312!8i6656?shorturl=1>