Tudor Place Historic House & Garden
Teacher Resource Packet

Storytime in the Garden
Grades Pre-K–1
Dear Educator,

Thank you for your interest in *Storytime in the Garden*. Our hope is that this program, which meets state, District, and national standards of education, complements the curriculum that your students learn in class. During their visit to Tudor Place, your students will explore science and history in our 5½-acre garden, which dates back two centuries.

This Teacher Resource Packet is designed to help you link your classroom lessons with the field trip. The included Pre-Visit activities introduce concepts that will be expanded upon during the field trip, while the Post-Visit section contains activities that reinforce elements covered during the field trip.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at education@tudorplace.org.

We look forward to your visit!

Sincerely,

Tudor Place Education Department
202-965-0400 x108
education@tudorplace.org
What is Tudor Place?

Tudor Place is a National Historic Landmark in Georgetown, Washington, DC. The site includes a mansion, completed in 1816, and 5½ acres of gardens. Dr. William Thornton, designer of the first U.S. Capitol, designed the house, and included a full-round temple portico unique in American residential architecture.

From 1805 to 1983, the Peter family stewarded the estate, witnessing and participating in much of American history. The first owners, Thomas Peter and Martha Parke Custis Peter, came from prominent local families. Thomas was the son of one of the first mayors of Georgetown, and Martha was the granddaughter of Martha Washington. In 1814, Martha Peter watched from her bedroom window as British troops burned the U.S. Capitol. Britannia Peter Kennon, her youngest daughter and the second owner of Tudor Place, operated the mansion as a boarding house for Union officers during the Civil War. The third owner, Britannia’s grandson Armistead Peter, Jr., modernized the house in 1914. His son, Armistead Peter 3rd, and daughter-in-law Caroline created a foundation to preserve the site and educate the public about American history.

Prior to the Civil War, the Peters owned and inherited an extensive number of enslaved men, women, and children, who served the family, tended the household, farmed, and cultivated the garden. Records reveal some of their names and duties. For example, Will Johnson, an enslaved coachman, also tended the smokehouse that still stands on the property. Patty Allen, enslaved as a cook, “lived out,” or made her home offsite, in Georgetown with her free husband and their children. During the Civil War, John Luckett escaped slavery in Virginia and gained paid employment at Tudor Place as gardener. Free African Americans and European immigrants operated the estate in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

During 178 years of ownership, the Peters amassed a collection of American, European, and Asian objects dating from the 18th to 20th centuries. Today, the museum holds more than 15,000 objects, from fine decorative arts to everyday household items, as well as an architectural and archaeological collection. The museum has over 200 objects that belonged to Martha and George Washington. An extensive archive holds one of three surviving letters from George to Martha, written in June 1775.

Over the last 200 years, and six generations in one family, Tudor Place has stood witness to the American story. We look forward to welcoming you and your students to this historic home.
Preparing for Your Visit

Museum Manners

- Please review museum manners with your students ahead of time and explain that there is a “no-touch” policy in the museum’s historic rooms and gardens.
- Please have your students wear a nametag to help our museum teachers actively engage everyone.

Logistics

- We require at least 1 adult chaperone for every 10 students, preferably teachers or classroom aides. Chaperones must remain with the students at all times and should assist with class management.
- Please let us know in advance if any students have special needs. The Tudor Place mansion can be made wheelchair accessible with advance notice, and we are happy to work with you to accommodate other special needs, including ASL interpretation, adaptive classroom materials, and technology.
- Please be prepared to divide the class(es) into even, co-ed groups for the tour. In our small historic spaces, programs provide the best experience when groups have no more than 15 students each.
- Please have students use the restroom prior to leaving school. There is a very limited number of restrooms at Tudor Place.
- Outdoor programs take place rain or shine. Students should come prepared for the weather with coats, umbrellas, water bottles, sunscreen, bug spray, etc. as needed.
- With prior approval, school groups may picnic in the Tudor Place garden. Picnics must be scheduled at the time of field trip booking in order to provide for bus scheduling and to reserve space in the gardens. Picnics may not be scheduled after busing is finalized.

Transportation

- Directions to Tudor Place are available on our website at tudorplace.org.
- Due to regulations established by the District of Columbia government:
  - All visitors must be dropped off and picked up at the Tudor Place entrance, 1644 31st St, NW. For student safety, please ask your bus to approach the house from the north, via R Street, NW.
  - Buses may not park or idle on 31st Street. Legal bus parking is located at: 2500 - 2600 block of Virginia Avenue, NW - north side; 2000 block of Pennsylvania Avenue, NW - north side; 900 block of 20th Street, NW - east side.
- Free busing for Title I schools is available with prior approval, while grant funding lasts.

Fees and Cancellations

- We request a non-refundable $25 deposit, which counts toward the total cost for the program. If the deposit presents a challenge, please let us know.
- The admission fee is $3 per student, with 2 free chaperones and $2 per additional chaperone. The balance will be due on the day of the program.
- If you need to cancel or reschedule, please contact the Education Department immediately at education@tudorplace.org.
- The museum has the right to shorten or cancel programs that are more than 45 minutes late.
Pre-Visit Activities
This section of the packet contains two activities that you can use with your class before visiting Tudor Place.

All activities meet local and national curriculum standards.

Activity 1: Garden Shapes
Some landscape architecture designs are comprised of geometric shapes. Shapes are also recognizable in the world around us. In this activity, students will identify shapes in a drawing of the Tudor Place garden.

After completing this activity, students will be better able to:

- Identify basic geometric shapes (square, circle, triangle, and rectangle)
- Describe objects in the drawing using names of shapes
- Describe the relative positions of shapes in the drawing
- Correctly name shapes regardless of orientations or overall size

Materials
Worksheets, 1 per student (see next page in packet)
Crayons or markers in the colors red, yellow, green, and blue

Procedure
1. Distribute worksheets to each student to complete.
2. Ensure that each student has access to a red, yellow, green, and blue marker or crayon.
3. Explain that shapes can be found all around, hidden in plain sight. Give an example or two of a shape hidden in the classroom (for example, a whiteboard is a rectangle, and a pen holder has a circle.) Ask students to find some shapes in the classroom.
4. Draw students’ attention to the picture of Tudor Place. Explain that when they drew this picture, the artist imagined that they were flying above Tudor Place like a bird. This kind of picture is called a “bird’s eye view.”
5. Explain that students will look at the drawing of Tudor Place to find shapes. If they see a circle, they should color it red; a triangle, yellow; a rectangle, green; and a square, blue. There are more than one of each shape in the drawing.
6. Encourage students to share with the class the locations of shapes that they have found in the drawing. For example: “How many of you found two circles?” “Where did you see a square in the picture?”
7. Explain that students will see these shapes when they visit the garden at Tudor Place.
Garden Shapes
Shapes are everywhere! Find the shapes in this drawing of Tudor Place and color them in.

Color all circles red
Color all rectangles green
Color all triangles yellow
Color all squares blue
Activity 2: Design Your Own Garden

The Peter family of Tudor Place designed their own garden to decorate their home. Each generation of the family added their own touches, including a lawn tennis court, fountains with beautiful statues, and plants to attract animals. Armistead Peter 3rd, the last owner of Tudor Place, loved animals. In his will, which turned the house into a museum, he left specific instructions that Tudor Place maintain structures and plants that helped the animals in the garden:

Excerpt from Armistead Peter 3rd’s will, Tudor Place Archive.

In this activity, students create drawings of their own dream gardens.

After completing this activity, students will be better able to:

- Think creatively about their interests
- Convert abstract ideas (“I like turtles”) into design choices (“I want a turtle pond in my garden.”)
- Express their interests and preferences with artwork
- Explain the reasoning behind artistic choices (“I put yellow flowers in because my favorite color is yellow.”)
- Practice basic landscape design
Materials
Worksheets, 1 per student (see next page in packet.)
Drawing/Coloring tools
(Optional) Construction paper, garden magazines to cut out and embellish drawings
(Optional) Glue to attach construction paper or magazine cutouts

Procedure
1. Distribute worksheets to each student to complete.
2. Teachers encourage students to add things that reflect their interests. Give examples like colorful flowers, statues of pets, spaces to play sports, sparkling fountains, etc.
3. Students draw or color their gardens.
4. (Optional) Students cut out garden elements, such as flowers, fountains, and statues, from magazines to embellish their gardens, and glue them in place.
5. Ask students to share their gardens and describe the reasons for their choices.
6. Explain to the students that they will encounter the Peter family’s design choices and interests when they visit the garden at Tudor Place.
Design Your Own Garden
The Peter family created a beautiful garden for their home at Tudor Place. What things would you put in a garden of your own? Draw your dream garden in the box.

This garden was designed by ____________________________.
Field Trip: What to Expect

Thank you for joining us for Storytime in the Garden. Over 90 minutes, your students will experience the gardens of Tudor Place with hands-on activities:

Storytime
Students join in an interactive reading by a Museum Teacher of one of the following books:

- Pre-K: Flower Garden by Eve Bunting
- Kindergarten: What Do Insects Do? by Susan Canizares and Pamela Chanko
- First Grade: Seeds Get Around by Nancy White

Please let us know if you prefer a different book that best fits with your curriculum.

Garden Tour
Students tour the garden with their Museum Teacher and explore age-appropriate, seasonal experiences. On the day of the program, your Museum Teacher will choose activities that make the most of conditions in the garden that day. For example, if that morning the Museum Teacher notices butterflies in the garden, they may focus part of the tour on observing the butterflies. Other activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Using magnifying glasses to examine plants and insects in our North Garden
- Learning about the sciences of dendrochronology and dendroclimatology at our 200-year-old Tulip Poplar tree
- Practicing classroom skills by playing follow-the-leader in our Box Knot garden
- Using live flowers to examine the parts of a flower
- Smelling fragrant heirloom roses
- Examining colors and patterns in flowers
- Recreating a 100-year-old tennis game on our East Lawn
- Taking a mini “hike” through our woodland Dell

Please note that activities vary based on seasons, weather, and the interests of your students, and may change at the Museum Teacher’s discretion during the tour.

Hands-On Learning: Watercolor Painting
Students return to our classroom, housed in a repurposed 1914 garage, and review the parts of a flower (roots, stem, leaves, and flower.) Then, using artist watercolor paints, they create their own interpretations of flowers, using all the parts of the flower and referencing the plants they observed at Tudor Place.
Post-Visit Activities
This section of the packet contains two activities that you can use with your class after visiting Tudor Place.
All activities meet local and national curriculum standards.

Activity 1: Counting Tree Rings
At Tudor Place, students learned that trees gain one ring per year, like candles on a birthday cake. Dendrochronology is the science of determining tree age by looking at tree rings. It is also practiced on buildings. At Tudor Place, the students discussed how scientists took samples of wood from parts of the Tudor Place mansion. The scientists used dendrochronology to figure out in approximately what year the wood was cut down, and discovered that those parts of the building were older than we had thought.

In this activity, students practice counting tree rings, then determine the relative ages of two tree “samples.” Note that each tree ring begins with the light band of wood and ends with the dark band. The innermost circle represents the pith of the tree and should not be counted. The outermost thick, beige or brown ring on each sample represents the bark of the tree and should not be counted (Figure 1). For more information, see the Glossary and Additional Resources at the end of this packet.

After completing this activity, students will be better able to:

- Recognize and quantify shapes in the natural world around them
- Infer meaning from observations, i.e. trees have rings, which signify age
- Practice basic dendrochronology science
- Compare and contrast quantities

Materials
Worksheets, 1 per student (see next page in packet.)
Pencils

Procedure
1. Distribute worksheets to each student to complete.
2. Explain that the students will practice counting tree rings to determine the age of the trees, just like they did at Tudor Place. Remind the student that each ring starts with the light band of wood and ends with the dark band of wood, and that the very middle and
very outside rings don’t count. An answer key is provided on the page after the worksheet in this packet.

3. (Optional) Students complete the worksheet by counting the rings together as a class.

4. Have students compare their own ages to the ages of the trees in the packet. By comparison, the tulip poplar on the South Lawn at Tudor Place is 200 years old.

5. Discuss with the students ways to take care of trees so they are happy and healthy for a very long time. Trees can live a very long time, and in a garden like the one at Tudor Place, gardeners take good care of the trees.
Counting Tree Rings

Like birthday candles on a cake, the number of tree rings tells us how old a tree is. Count the rings. How old is this tree?

Age: __________

Which of these two trees is older? How old is each tree?

Age: ________
Age: __________

How old are you? Are you older or younger than these trees?

__________________________________________________________
Counting Tree Rings (Answer Key)
Like birthday candles on a cake, the number of tree rings tells us how old a tree is. Count the rings. How old is this tree?

Age: 5

Which of these two trees is older? How old is each tree?

Age: 5 (younger)  
Age: 11 (older)

How old are you? Are you older or younger than these trees?  
(subjective)
Activity 2: Class Garden

The Peters lived at Tudor Place for six generations, and each contributed something new to their garden. In this group activity, students will each contribute one element—it could be their favorite element from their dream gardens, or something new—to a class garden.

After completing this activity, students will be better able to:

- Think creatively about their interests
- Convert abstract ideas (“I like turtles”) into design choices (“I want a turtle pond in my garden.”)
- Express their interests and preferences with artwork
- Explain the reasoning behind artistic choices (“I put yellow flowers in because my favorite color is yellow.”)
- Practice basic landscape design
- Contribute their designs to the creation of a greater whole

Materials

Paper, 1 per student (see next page in packet.)
Drawing/Coloring tools
(Optional) Garden magazines that can be cut apart for images
(Optional) Construction paper to cut out and embellish drawings
(Optional) Glue to attach construction paper or magazine cutouts

Procedure

1. Distribute a sheet of paper to each student.
2. Ask the students to each draw one garden element: a flowerbed, a fountain, playing field, statue, tree, animal, etc.
3. (Optional) Students can cut elements out of construction paper to glue on and embellish their artwork.
4. Call the students to circle time and explain that the center of the circle is going to become the class garden.
5. Going around the circle, each student explains their choice, then places their drawing in the center of the circle, arranging it to their liking.
6. At the end of the activity, the class will have a full garden in the center of the circle. Each student will have contributed something new to the garden, just like each generation of Peters did at Tudor Place.
7. (Optional) The teacher takes a picture of the complete garden to save for the class.
Glossary

Bark – the outermost, protective layer of a tree

Climate – the weather in a place over a long period of time

Dendrochronology – the science of using tree rings and other features of trees to learn about the age and history of a tree or piece of wood

Dendroclimatology – the science of using tree rings and other features of trees to learn about the climates of the past

Garden – a place designed by humans where plants are grown, often for enjoyment

Pith – a soft, spongy part of a plant that moves nutrients through the plant. In this lesson, the pith is at the center of each tree trunk.
Additional Resources

History of the Tudor Place garden
http://www.tudorplace.org/who-we-are/garden/history-of-the-garden/

Interactive dendrochronology activity from the National Park Service that divides tree rings into “growth” and “rest” rings, and demonstrates simple cross-dating techniques.
https://www.nps.gov/webrangers/activities/dendrochronology/

“About Tree Rings,” Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research, University of Arizona
Counting tree rings is a simplified form of dendrochronology. This resource delves into more complex concepts and techniques.
http://ltrr.arizona.edu/about/treerings

Video clip (2 minutes) about dendroclimatology from Professor Steven Chischilly, Navajo Technical College