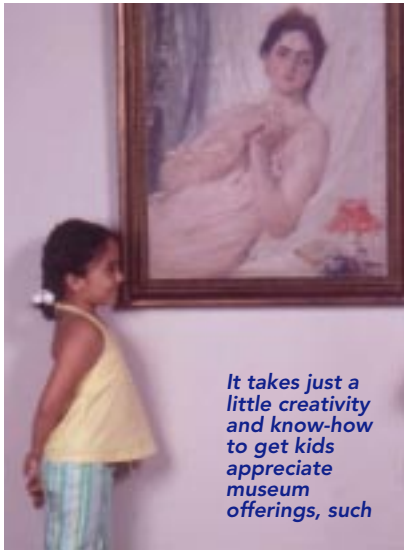




# MAKE THE MOST OF Museums



Are your museum field trips as effective as they can be? Find out how you can take advantage of all the educational opportunities these places have to offer.



*It takes just a little creativity and know-how to get kids appreciate museum offerings, such*

**S**tar Teacher does a Q&A with Mariles Ebro Matias, former museum director of the prestigious Lopez Museum in Pasig City. She has also worked at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila and now teaches at Beacon International School. With her unique background, she's able to share insightful and practical tips on how teachers can maximize museum resources for student learning.

## What can museums offer teachers and students?

A museum is yet another space where learning can take place. Educators look to museums as places where we can learn about our past, because museums are repositories of artifacts that have cultural and historical significance.

When we can tell our students, for example, about Rizal's many letters to family and friends, we often show them a textbook containing a photo of some of these letters. But wouldn't it be even better for our students to see these actual letters? The Lopez Museum has quite a number of Rizal's letters. Some are pep-

pered with thanks to his family for food and how he loves receiving their *pasalubong*; some talk about daily life in Dapitan; there are also receipts for a bookcase and payment of a gas bill.

Visitors get a chance to see and appreciate Rizal not only as a heroic, larger than life figure, but as someone like us who delighted in simple pleasures. So when we as teachers ask our students if they are able in some way to relate to

## As museum professional in the past and now as a teacher, what have been your personal experiences with using museums as learning resources?

There's nothing like showing visitors "the real thing." Objects like Juan Luna's violent and dramatic painting, the *Spoliarium*, have that special quality of drawing the onlooker and engaging all the senses, that a book—even with pictures—cannot. When you come face to face with the real thing and experience it for yourself, learning is magnified.

When the tours are targeted specifically to the students' interests and learning goals, the visits are almost always successful. A good partnership between the museum and the teachers is crucial. If your tour guide is boring, and you yourself are not an expert on the subject matter, then chances are the students won't really find the experience memorable.

When I conducted tours in the past, it was always a thrill to have the students ask questions because they were genuinely interested. Motivating the students and getting them all excited to go to a museum is important. Show that you yourself are thrilled about your upcoming museum trip.

Rizal on a personal level, then perhaps (hopefully!) they will say yes.

## How can students and teachers best benefit from museum resources?

Before your field trip, have a learning objective or a series of learning goals in mind. Try to visit the museum yourself beforehand so that you can see the exhibits and even take the tours yourself. This way, you can make the museum visit an integral part of your lesson plan.

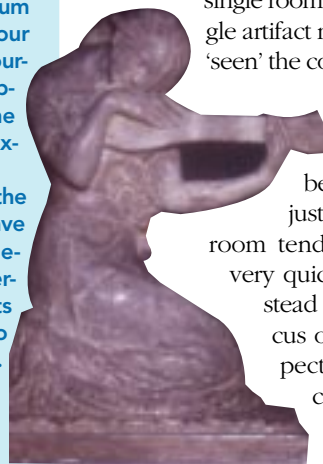
If you want to enrich your Science lessons on vertebrates and invertebrates, for example, you may want to check out the Zoology department of the National Museum. Ask the curator or museum education specialist if the students can visit the collection and have a Q&A with one of the scientists. Or if your Araling Panlipunan lessons focus on the rites and rituals of certain Filipino tribes, you may want to visit the CCP's Museo ng Kalinangang Filipino.

## Are there common procedures practiced by schools and teachers that you would advise against doing when visiting museums?

Don't expect that a quick peek into every single room to view every single artifact means that you've 'seen' the collections and that

learning has taken place. My experience has been that kids who just go from room to room tend to lose interest very quickly. I suggest instead that teachers focus on a particular aspect of a museum's collection.

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PHOTOS: COURTESY OF SMART PARENTING



# do things better bookmarks

There's always room for improvement in our lives. Cut out these handy bookmarks, thread some colorful yarn through the circle printed on each, and presto: Something to use with what you're currently reading. Keep one and give the rest away to your friends and co-workers. Check out the back for inspiring quotes!

## HOW TO LOVE YOUR home



It feels great to live in a place you can be proud of. Here are some things you can do to make your house feel more like home.

- **Keep plants in rooms.** They'll make the space more attractive, keep the area cool, and freshen the air.
- Make it a habit to keep surfaces like tabletops and sinks sparkling clean and dry. It's easy to do, but it gives you a great sense of accomplishment.
- **Involve the whole family,** even the youngest member, in taking care of your home. Assign specific tasks to people and make home care a bonding experience.
- **Declutter.** Give away or recycle things that have outlived their purpose. Some common clutter culprits: old phone directories, magazines, broken ornaments, calendars, and old clothes.

## 5 ways to manage stress



### 1. Exercise at least three times a week

Exercise can be as simple as walking for 20 minutes. The point is to make physical activity a regular part of life.

### 2. Make a list

Don't run away when you do too much work. Make a to-do list, prioritizing the most important stuff and checking off each item as you complete it.

### 3. Ask for help

When you're in over your head, don't be too proud to shout out an SOS. More often than not, a co-worker will be willing to lend you a hand.

### 4. Remind yourself

Put up relaxation posters and notes to yourself at work. Tape the word "breathe" onto your desk mirror and take in a lungful whenever you look at yourself!

### 5. Eat right

No matter how busy you are, start the day right with a good breakfast. Have a healthy snack in between meals.

## SAVE money now



● **Skip the sachet.** We're fond of getting things *tingi-tingi* because it seems so painless: just a few pesos here and there. But everything adds up, and you'll actually save a lot if you buy in larger quantities. This goes for prepaid cellphone loading, too.

● **Use a landline.** Texting is so cheap, we've forgotten that landline phone calls are free! So before you grab your mobile, look for a landline phone.

● **Swap stuff.** Organize regular gatherings with friends and co-workers to exchange possessions you don't need any more but that others might want, such as books, magazines, clothes, and household appliances.

● **Keep beauty simple.** Take stock of how often you go to the parlor, how much jewelry you buy, and how many beauty products you use. Weed out the extras from the essentials and you just might save a bundle.

## TO YOUR health



● **Do you have fragile bones?** Many women who suffer from osteoporosis—a disease that results in bones that can easily break—don't even realize they have it, until an accident causes a hip, wrist, or the spine to fracture. Older women who have gone through menopause are most at risk, because of the loss of estrogen.

It's actually easy to prevent osteoporosis by having enough calcium in the body to combat it. So start early! Think of it as depositing money in the bank regularly to save up for retirement.

### What are some of the best natural sources of calcium?

- Milk, cheese and yogurt
- Dark green vegetables like spinach and broccoli
- Soy products like *tokwa*
- Fish, especially sardines, salmon, mackerel

Calcium can help relieve PMS, too!