

TYPES of MUSEUMS

Teachers report that simply brainstorming types and purposes of museums can be a real eye opener for students regardless of their experience. Have students work in pairs to answer the following questions: *What museums have you visited? What is the purpose of a museum?*

Have students write their answer to each question on a large piece of paper that can be posted. Allow students to move about and read the range of answers. Lead students in a discussion so they might appreciate:

- There are many types of museums (Art center, science center, zoo, nature center, natural history museum, and so on.)
- There are many purposes for museums (Preserve, classify, collect, teach, experience)
- They have much knowledge about museums already.
- They will begin to “think like a curator” in this project!

Discussion about the types and purposes of museums can lead to an important observation—all museum exhibits use objects to engage their visitors. Have students list the objects and images they remember seeing in museums and begin to classify them into categories based on the type of museum in which they were found.