



International
Quilt Museum
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

At-Home Lesson 2: Be a Curator!

Age level: K-5

Supplies

For this activity, you will need:

1. A quilt or blanket
2. Your favorite writing instrument
3. A piece of paper
4. A camera
5. An audience

Lesson: Be a Curator!

Curators have many jobs at a museum. They pick out the pieces of a collection. They take care of the collection, and they decide which objects to put in exhibitions.

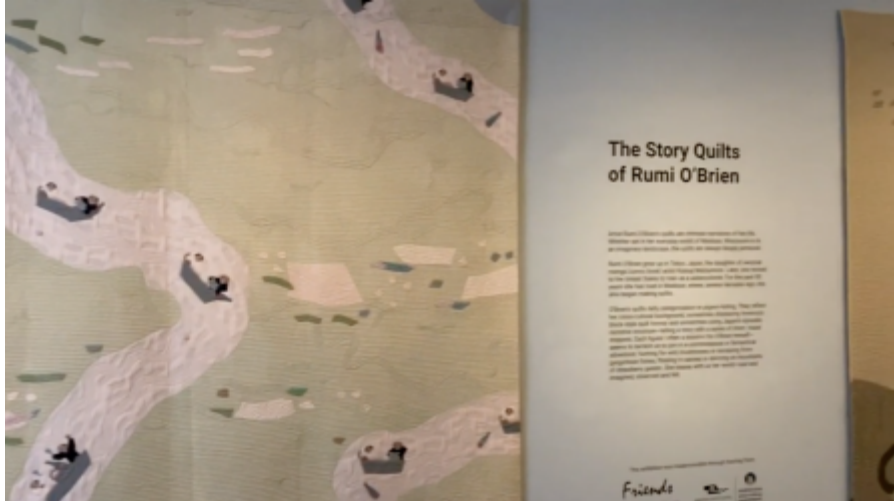
This is what that looks like at the International Quilt Museum:



[Click here](#) to watch a 1.5-minute video.

After curators pick out pieces for an exhibit, they write labels for visitors to read.

For example, this is one of our exhibitions at the International Quilt Museum. It is a group of quilts made by an artist named Rumi O'Brien. This is what the exhibition looks like:



[Click here](#) to watch the 2.5-minute video.

Rumi O'Brien makes quilts that tell stories. When she wrote the labels for the quilts, the curator shared some of those stories.

This is what one of the labels looks like:



One Spring Day in a Canoe
1999

Madison, Wisconsin
Collection of the Artist

"I was a hard worker—in the house, in the garden—and I did all sorts of handiwork like sewing, spinning, and knitting. If my husband suggested going somewhere, I would prefer to remain in the backyard, which I liked so much. But work can be tiring and so I began thinking it would be nice to put us in a canoe and let the current of Six Mile Creek near our home take us gently along its course.

"So, I did that. I got a large piece of cloth ready and let the creek meander upon it. From the start, I enjoyed the ride, no frantic catching up with this or that project, but just relaxing and

basking in the sun. On each side of the creek the meadows were alive with spring grasses and the returning geese were making merry in small groups. As usual my husband had a book along and was probably oblivious to the surroundings. We usually have coffee and cake around ten o'clock at home, but we couldn't easily brew coffee in a canoe. The air was warm and the current was gentle. It was really nice, this relaxed canoe ride."

For some exhibit labels, a curator might share facts about the piece. Like, who made it, when, and where? Does the piece have a name?

A curator may also write what they think about a piece and how it fits with others. This is called interpretation.

Activity:

For this assignment, you can be a Quilt Curator at home. Pick out a quilt or blanket. Write down the name. You can give it one if it does not have one already. Then, write what you know about it. Last, write what you want people to know or see when they look at the quilt. Congratulations! You are now a curator!

When you are done, you can have a grown-up help you share a picture of your quilt and your label with us. We will create an online exhibit of all of your quilts!

For Grown-ups: Send your student's quilt pictures and labels to info@internationalquiltmuseum.org with the subject "at home quilt exhibit." Please include your young curator's name and age.