

TCU CHILDREN'S GALLERY

Designed for young learners and their caregivers, the TCU Children's Gallery encourages curiosity, creativity, and connection through hands-on exploration and imaginative play. Every space was thoughtfully created with input from local community partners to support meaningful learning experiences that grow alongside children.

This action-packed exhibit features developmentally appropriate areas encouraging your students to become engaged in many different venues and learn through dramatic play. Cooperation, conflict resolution, developing problem solving skills, and important communication skills are all part of what happens during dramatic play in the TCU Children's Gallery.

HOSPITAL

Hands-on exploration helps children better understand how their bodies work while encouraging empathy and caregiving skills through imaginative role-play.

- Explore body systems through interactive models
- Practice empathy through caregiver and patient role-play
- Discover tools and routines used in healthcare settings

FARM

Children investigate the natural world while building foundational science and math skills through observation and hands-on discovery.

- Count, sort, and categorize natural materials
- Examine seeds and specimens using microscopes
- Explore agriculture, nature, and life cycles

ROCKETSHIP

Active, imaginative play encourages teamwork, sequencing, movement, and celebration through an interactive launch experience.

- Explore patterns to create a launch sequence
- Work together to prepare for "blastoff"
- Celebrate with movement, music, and dance



TRAIN STATION

Children explore movement, transportation, and how communities stay connected through collaborative pretend play.

- Engage in imaginative travel and transportation roles
- Practice turn-taking and cooperative play
- Discover how people and goods move through communities

THEATER

Imaginative play inspires storytelling, creativity, confidence, and self-expression through performance and design.

- Perform, pretend, and role-play
- Express ideas through movement, drama, and design
- Develop confidence and creative thinking

MARKETPLACE

Everyday experiences introduce early math, communication, and problem-solving through interactive dramatic play.

- Practice buying, selling, and exchanging goods
- Sort, count, and organize items
- Build communication and decision-making skills



CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

The Children's Museum Gallery encourages students to learn through imaginative play, collaboration, exploration, and problem-solving. These classroom extensions help educators connect museum experiences to learning before and after their visit.

BEFORE YOUR VISIT:

Community Helpers Discussion

Talk with students about different roles people play in a community.

Ask Students:

- Who helps take care of our community?
- What jobs do people do at a hospital, farm, market, or train station?
- How do people work together to help others?

Extension:

Create a classroom chart of community helpers and the tools they use.

Pretend Play Vocabulary Builder

- Introduce vocabulary students may encounter during their visit.
 - Suggested Words: Patient, Caregiver, Transportation, Market, Farmer, Produce, Astronaut, Engineer, Performance

Extension:

Act out vocabulary words using charades or role-play.

SPARK CURIOSITY!

Encouraging children to use **"I Notice, I Wonder, I Imagine"** questions during a field trip can help them engage actively with the exhibits, stimulate their curiosity, and foster their creativity and critical thinking skills. It also provides an opportunity for meaningful discussions and reflections on their experiences.

For Example: "I notice the big selection of fruits and vegetables. I wonder how they keep them fresh for us to buy. I imagine being a farmer and growing my own fruits and veggies for the store."

TEKS:

Science

K: 1B, 2A,B,E, 4A,B, 5A, 6C,D

1ST: 2A,B,E, 3A,B, 4A,B, 5A, 6C, 9A, 10A

2ND: 2A,B,E, 3B, 4A,B, 5A, 6C, 10A

Social Studies

K: 10A, 10B

1ST: 12A, 13A

2ND: 10A, 12A

TRY THIS BACK IN THE CLASSROOM!

Dramatic Play Reflection

Students reflect on the roles they explored during their museum experience.

Writing Prompt:

- "My favorite place in the Children's Museum Gallery was..."
- "I pretended to be..."
- "I helped others by..."

Extension:

Students draw themselves participating in imaginative play and you can create a classroom "story theater" display wall.

Seed Investigation

Connect to the Farm area with a simple plant investigation and discuss the life cycle of seed to plant.

Students Can:

- Observe seeds using magnifying glasses
- Sort seeds by size, shape, or color
- Plant seeds and track growth over time