



*Image caption: The Summer Teacher Institute at the Penn Museum is an intensive two-day professional development course for Philadelphia's K-12 educators. High-resolution image is available for download [here](#).*

## Professional Development for Educators

### Summer Teacher Institute at Penn Museum Advances Intercultural Understanding Across Philadelphia's K-12 Curricula

PHILADELPHIA, May 15, 2024—The Penn Museum will host the inaugural [Summer Teacher Institute](#), an in-person professional development opportunity, July 17-18, 2024. Open to K-12 educators, the two-day intensive course is designed to **advance cross-cultural understanding through artifact-based learning in school curricula spanning the Philadelphia region.**

Educators will learn to adopt a vast array of teaching methods, such as the **Artful Thinking Routine**—created by Harvard University's Project Zero—which uses objects to strengthen

students' thinking and learning. Through this method, teachers will gain a solid understanding of how to integrate Penn Museum collections into K–12 classroom learning—**highlighting ancient and living histories from diverse cultures**, while leading activities that promote building global competencies, such as observation, inference, active listening, and reflection.

From incorporating object-based teaching and cultivating inquiry-based learning to facilitating student-driven discussions, these approaches not only **enhance students' critical thinking skills**, but also **nourish a deeper appreciation for cultures beyond their own**.

"Strengthening critical thinking and cross-cultural understanding are essential for navigating an increasingly hyperconnected and polarized world," says Jennifer Brehm, Merle-Smith Director of Learning and Public Engagement at the Penn Museum. "As schools are striving to close achievement gaps and enhance students' social-emotional learning post-pandemic, these skills are invaluable in preparing students during their formative years.

The Summer Teacher Institute will introduce the [Global Learning Lab](#), an initiative for K–12 groups launching this fall that will serve as a tool to build these needed skills, building empathy so students can relate better with one another," Brehm adds.

Part tour, part classroom experience, the **Global Learning Lab** will offer K–12 students and homeschooling families **a more inclusive approach to global citizenship** by creating an interactive space where intercultural exchange, dialogue, and understanding can flourish. Education experts from various backgrounds will lead workshops designed to encourage young learners to raise questions and make connections, nurturing worthwhile discussions. In addition, it will highlight the need for the preservation of endangered cultural heritage sites worldwide.

**The Global Learning Lab will be free for all Title I K–12 schools in Philadelphia.**

"The Summer Teacher Institute provides an exciting adventure for educators to participate in professional development while delving into innovative teaching strategies," explains Ah-Young Kim, the Associate Director of Interpretive Programs at Penn Museum who has 25 years of experience in education. "I'm excited to be facilitating lively sessions where classroom teachers can discover meaningful connections between Penn Museum collections and their curriculum, as well as their school community. The Summer Teacher Institute aims to ignite inspiration and

provide the necessary tools for teachers to actively engage in and contribute to the Global Learning Lab program in the future."

The **Summer Teacher Institute** is sponsored by the Penn Arts & Sciences' South Asia Center. Participating teachers will receive 10 professional development credits. The Penn Museum is an Act 48 continuing professional development provider for Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Cost: \$150. [Register here](#).

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### **ABOUT THE PENN MUSEUM**

The Penn Museum's mission is to be a center for inquiry and the ongoing exploration of humanity for our University of Pennsylvania, regional, national, and global communities, following ethical standards and practices.

Through conducting research, stewarding collections, creating learning opportunities, sharing stories, and creating experiences that expand access to archaeology and anthropology, the Museum builds empathy and connections across diverse cultures.

The Penn Museum is open Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00 am-5:00 pm. It is open until 8:00 pm on first Wednesdays of the month. The Café is open Tuesday-Thursday, 9:00 am-3:00 pm and Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am-3:00 pm. On Sundays, the Café is open 10:30 am-2:30 pm. For information, visit [www.penn.museum](http://www.penn.museum), call [215.898.4000](tel:215.898.4000), or follow @PennMuseum on social media.