

Statue of Liberty Pedestal and Museum Self-Guided Tour

Suggested Time Frame: 90 minutes

Description

This self-guided program will tour you through the Statue of Liberty's lobby, museum and observation deck.

As you disembark the ferry walk toward the flagpole and then turn right. There will be a large white tent right before the base of the statue. You will need to go through a security check in the white tent before you can proceed into Fort Wood.

Lobby

Point of Interest: Original Torch

This is the Statue of Liberty's original torch. It is the oldest portion of the statue and was removed in 1984 due to structural damage. Along with the Statue of Liberty's arm, it made an appearance at the 1876 Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia and later spent some time in Madison Square Park before being shipped back to France. The original torch was modified throughout the years, the last modification was replacing almost all the copper with stained glass to allow more light. The current torch is covered in 24-karat gold.

Suggested Questions/Activities: Compare and contrast the original torch with the current torch. What is the same about their design? What is different?

Museum

Point of Interest: Replica of Liberty's Face

As you enter the museum you will be greeted by a life-size replica of the Statue of Liberty's face. This is a great stop for discovering both the scale of the statue as well as the thickness of the statue. Dimensions are as follows:

Head-Chin to cranium-17'3" or 5.26m

Length of nose- 4'6" or 1.37m

Width of one eye- 2'6" or .76m

Width of mouth- 3'0" or .91m

Suggested Questions/Activities: Ask students to make an educated guess about how many student noses it would take to make up the Statue of Liberty's nose. Invite students to touch the face to feel the thickness of the statue. Explain that the statue is $\frac{3}{32}$ of an inch thick or the equivalent of two pennies.

Point of Interest: Modeling process

To the left you will find replicas of the modeling process used by Bartholdi to determine his final design for the statue. Bartholdi designed the Statue of Liberty after the Roman Goddess Libertas. He went through many iterations of his design before settling on her current form.

Suggested Questions/Activities: Compare and contrast the various models with the current form of the statue. Ask students what was added or dropped from Bartholdi's design.

Point of Interest: Replica of Liberty's Foot

Next, students will be able to explore a replica of the Statue of Liberty's left foot. Similar to the face, this can be a great stop for exploring the concept of scale. For reference, the Statue of Liberty wears a size 879 shoe.

Point of Interest: Armature Bar System and Structural Models

As students continue through the museum, they will discover models of the armature bar system. The armature bar system was designed by Gustav Eiffel, of Eiffel Tower fame, to support the statue while still being relatively lightweight. Students will see how the armature bars help the skin of the statue to bend and flex in the wind and weather.

Suggested Questions/Activities: Ask students why the statue needs to be able to sway in the wind instead of being a stiff structure.

Point of Interest: The New Colossus

After the engineering section, walk over to the plaque with Emma Lazarus' sonnet The New Colossus. Emma Lazarus wrote this sonnet to help raise funds for the statue's pedestal. Her poem was inspired by her social work with recently-arrived immigrants.

Suggested Questions/Activities: Have students participate in a dramatic reading of the sonnet. Ask them to think about how it feels to hear her words and imagine what it would feel like to be a new immigrant and see the statue in the harbor for the first time. Ask students to pick a word from the sonnet that resonated with them and explain why.

Point of Interest: Liberty in Pop Culture

The next section of the museum shows the Statue of Liberty in pop-culture and advertising. Be sure to check out the advertisements for war bonds.

Suggested Questions/Activities: Ask students to identify any themes they might be noticing in this section of the museum. How is the image of the Statue of Liberty being used? Have they ever encountered the Statue of Liberty in a modern advertisement?

Observation Deck

Point of Interest: New York Harbor

When you have reached the observation deck you may exit out of either door and walk around the promenade. At the time the Statue of Liberty was built, it was the tallest structure in New York.

Suggested Questions/Activities: Ask students to identify familiar landmarks from the deck such as the Empire State building to the North West and the Brooklyn Bridge to the North East. Invite students to envision the landscape the Statue of Liberty first looked out on. When students return to the inside of the monument, look up through the glass ceiling and into the body of the monument. Point out the helical staircase design and Gustav Eiffel's framework. Students will also be able to see the rivets that hold the copper skin together.