

An Example of a Written Lesson Plan for a Five Minute Object Lesson
2019 Garden Docent Training
Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens

Audience: intelligent, curious adults with little to no knowledge of the subject of the lesson

The object and location: Diana sculpture [19th century, based on a marble portrait statue made in 1710 by Antoine Coysevox of Marie Adelaide de Savoy (Duchess of Bourgogne, daughter-in-law to King Louis 14) as goddess Diana] in the French parterre

Objective: As a result of participating in this lesson, participants will be better able to discuss the significance of the Diana sculpture in the French parterre at Hillwood.

Introduction: Hook Question: **Does anyone recognize this figure or want to take a stab at who you think it might be? What do you know about her?** Diana was a figure in Roman mythology. She was the goddess of the hunt and the moon.

Introduction: Advance Organizer: Who has been to Hillwood before?
Let's spend a little time exploring this piece and thinking about why this sculpture is here, what it can tell us about Marjorie Post, and how it fits within the garden's design.

The Body of the Conversation:

(Design) **What are some words that describe her? What do you see?** (she's in mid-stride, dog jumping up, she touches her hair and reaching for dog, toga-like outfit, in her hair is a crescent moon, her quiver on her back, terracotta, above us)

(Function) **Is there any significance to where it is placed in the garden? What if there was no sculpture in this location?** (leads your eye on axis to and from house, looks like she is coming out of foliage)

You might ask why there is a Roman goddess in this French garden. The French, beginning in the 15th century, created many magnificent pleasure gardens and, copying Italian gardens, placed Roman mythological figures in them.

Marjorie Post was big fan and collector of the 18th century French decorative arts throughout her lifetime and refined this garden to enhance the view from her bedroom window and to extend the French drawing room beyond those French doors.

An even stronger French connection exists. This is a 19th century copy of an 18th century French marble original that is now in the Louvre.

(Marjorie Post) **How do you think the garden functioned when Marjorie Post lived here?** (for entertaining, guests arriving for dinner were led to the French Drawing Room and greeted by Post, and the doors could be opened for guests to enjoy their time before being seated to dinner here—8-8:30pm; this is a garden room—with walls—keeps visitors contained so they can be easily led indoors after short pre-dinner cocktails)

In the late 1990s Hillwood completely renovated this garden....a huge commitment of funds, time and expertise. And just in 2013, the boxwoods were all replaced!

(Museum Today) **Why do you think the museum undertook such a big project?** (important for the museum to preserve this garden as part of its historic landscape)

Conclusion: We've discussed this sculpture in terms of several important ideas: how it looks, the role it plays in the design of this garden, how it relates to Marjorie Post's collecting interests and relates to her use of this garden. We also thought about why this garden and the objects in it are important to the mission of the museum.

Question assessing visitors' take aways: **What is one important idea you will take away from this discussion?**

Resources consulted: lecture notes, French Parterre sections in: audio tour, printed tour, Comprehensive Garden Notes