

## Spotlight on Conservation: Ancient Objects Teaching Resources



**Overview:** Connect with a MFA conservator to explore the art and science of conservation at the Museum. Students will see the MFA's new state-of-the-art [Conservation Center](#) and learn about the processes and treatments behind conserving ancient objects.

**Curriculum:** The Arts, Visual Arts, Careers, Physical Science, Chemistry

**Grade Range:** 6–12

## Teaching Resources

### [The Art of Conservation and Scientific Research](#)

This short video offers an up-close look work of MFA conservators from across six conservation disciplines, as well as research scientists, mountmakers, and exhibition preparators. From examination and documentation, stabilization and repair, scientific sampling and analysis, creation of mounts and framing, to assessment of appropriate display conditions, these activities take place in the galleries and in the labs with the care and discipline that is the art of conservation. (3:37 video)

### [Conservation at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston - MFA YouTube Playlist](#)

Collection of twenty videos featuring a variety of MFA conservation projects ranging from Van Gogh paintings to Japanese Buddhist sculptures.

## [MFA Conservation on Instagram](#)

Follow MFA Conservation and Collections Management as they share their work as conservators, mountmakers, collections care specialists, and research scientists.

## [Rescuing Art: The Creativity and Science of Restoration](#)

CBS Sunday Morning story from November 2019 featuring Rhona Macbeth, Eijk and Rose-Marie Van Otterloo Conservator of Paintings at the MFA.

## [MFA Highlights: Conservation and Care of Museum Collections](#)

*Conservation and Care of Museum Collections* brings readers behind the scenes into the studios and laboratories of museum conservators. Fifty-one works from the comprehensive collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, are explored and illustrated, revealing the secrets of conservation and how museum scientists spot a fake. Through discussion of the ways in which conservators reveal, investigate, and preserve these works of art, this book provides a vivid introduction to the field of art conservation at large. Available through the [MFA Shop](#)

## Conservation Terminology

**Art conservator:** A museum professional dedicated to the long-term preservation of artistic, historic, and cultural materials guided by a code of ethics intended to protect the integrity and authenticity of works of art. Conservators can have training in art history, science, studio art, conservation techniques, and related fields.

**Cleaning:** The process of removing material from the surface of a work of art. Cleaning can be performed with the aid of chemicals (to dissolve varnishes, for example) or by physical means (such as using scalpels to remove corrosion products on metal objects). The materials removed can vary, from dirt or grime to weathering products from exposure to the elements to varnishes and coatings applied during conservation treatments.

**Conservation:** The profession devoted to the preservation of cultural property for the future. Conservation activities include examination, documentation, treatment, and preventive care, supported by research and education.

**Preservation:** The protection of cultural property through activities that minimize chemical and physical deterioration and damage and that prevent loss of informational content. The primary goal of preservation is to prolong the existence of cultural property.

**Restoration:** Treatment procedures intended to return cultural property to a known or assumed state, often through the addition of non-original material.

See the American Institute for Conservation for [additional conservation terminology](#).