



American Hop Museum

Teacher's Essentials Guide



Location:

American Hop Museum, 22 So. B Street, Toppenish, WA

Target Audience:

Middle School (6 - 8th grade)

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Teacher Overview

The core experience is designed for grades 6-7. Activities can be adjusted in depth for grade 8, particularly through discussion and post-visit reflection.

Field Trip Focus

Agriculture, plant science, technology, and community history — using hops as the lens.

What This Is (and Is Not)

This museum visit explores how plants grow, how hops are harvested and dried, how technology and people shape agriculture, and how farming has changed over time — through real objects, machines, and stories. It is not about alcohol or drinking.

Recommended Grade Levels

- Best fit: Grades **6–7**
- Works for grade **8** with discussion extensions

Total Time At Museum

- About **75 minutes**

Group Size

- 6–10 students per adult

Optional Enhancements

- The museum pairs well with:
 - A walk to nearby Toppenish murals
 - A visit to the Railroad Museum across the street

What Students Will Experience

Students will stand next to towering hop plants, examine massive harvesting machines, and connect real objects to real people and local history.

Student Experience Includes

- Seeing **real historical farming equipment**
- Standing next to live hop plants (seasonal)
- Examining and smelling real hop cones
- Observing **how hop plants grow vertically**
- Exploring a large outdoor hop history mural
- Learning how **families, workers, and technology** shaped agriculture in the Yakima Valley

Important Note

This is an **observation-based visit**. Writing is minimal. Students learn by looking closely, discussing, and asking questions.

Bottom Line for Teachers

This field trip is a **low-prep, high-engagement** way to connect science, history, and place-based learning using real-world examples.

Before the Visit: What Teachers Need to Do

Required (30-45 minutes total)

- Review **basic hop vocabulary** (see list below)
- Assign students to small groups
- Review museum behavior expectations

Strongly Recommended

Choose **one short pre-visit discussion**

- What do plants need to grow?
- How has farming changed over time?

You DO NOT Need To

- Teach hop chemistry in advance
- Assign research
- Quiz students

Must-Know Vocabulary

- **Hop:** A vining plant grown for its flowers, which contain natural compounds that add flavor, aroma, and preservation to food, beverages, and other products.
- **Cones:** The flower of the hop plant.
- **Trellis:** An open structure that contains wooden poles or metal wires and string on which vines grow and that holds the heavy weight of the hop plant.
- **Harvest:** The time when everyone works together to gather the crops.

During the Visit: How the Field Trip Works

Group Rotation

The best way to experience the museum is by forming smaller groups of 8 - 10 students. Students rotate through **three main areas**:

- **Front of museum** (hop plants and cones, seasonal)
- **Indoor exhibits** (history, machines, people)
- **Outdoor hop history mural**

Chaperones (1 per 10 students max) help keep groups together and encourage students to talk about what they see. No hop expertise required.

Suggested Timing

- 45 min - Indoor exhibits
- 15 min - Hop plants & smelling cones
- 15 min - Outdoor mural

Best Teaching Strategy

Encourage students to:

- Look before reading
- Talk with their group
- Answer: “*What do you notice?*”

“Hoppy” the Frog (Optional)

Hoppy is a friendly frog mascot hidden around the museum to encourage curiosity and close looking.

- Best for: **Grades 5-6**
- Optional for older students
- Scavenger hunt materials are provided **upon request**

👉 Please tell us when booking if you would like to include Hoppy.

Must-See Exhibits (If Time Is Short)

If you only have time for a few stops, focus on these **highlights**.

Front of the Museum: Live Hop Plants (Seasonal)

Seeing and touching the crop itself

Guiding Observation Question

What do you notice about how the plant grows, feels, and smells?

Exhibit 2: Planting & Tending Hops

How a small root becomes a 20-foot plant

Guiding Observation Question

What do you notice about how tall hop plants grow and what they need for support?

Exhibit 5 & 6: Harvest & Harvest Camp

The human story of families and community

Guiding Observation Question

What do you notice about the tools used and where families lived during harvest?

Exhibit 7: Equipment Yard

How machines changed farming

Guiding Observation Question

What looks heavy, powerful, or fast about these machines compared to hand tools?

Exhibit 8: The Kiln - Drying & Baling

Why science matters in agriculture

Guiding Observation Question

What do you notice about how heat and air would move through the kiln?

Hop History Wall (Outdoor Mural)

The story told through images

Guiding Observation Question

What scenes or tools do you recognize from inside the museum?

After the Visit: Choose ONE Activity

If you are short on time, pick **one** post-visit activity to reinforce learning. All activities take **20-40 minutes**.

Best All-Around Choice

- **Museum Observation Reflection**

Students describe what they saw and how farming changed over time

Best for STEM

- **Hop Drying Challenge**

Students reason about time, heat, and moisture

Best for Projects

- **Design a Hop Exhibit**

Students create a mini display teaching others

What Students Will Take Away

By the end of this experience, students will:

- Understand how hop plants grow and are harvested
- See how farming has changed over time
- Learn why Yakima Valley is important to agriculture
- Recognize the role of families and cultures in farming
- Practice explaining what they observed using evidence
- Discover why Yakima Valley is important to hop history

Washington State Standards Alignment

This field trip supports Washington State Learning Standards across multiple subject areas. Teachers may select pre- and post-visit activities that best match their grade level and curriculum pacing.

Science

- MS-LS1: From molecules to organisms—structures and processes
- MS-ESS3: Earth and human activity (human impacts on natural systems)

Social Studies

- Geography: Human–environment interaction
- History: Change over time; technological innovation
- Civics/Economics: How industries support communities

Mathematics

- Ratios and proportional reasoning
- Multi-step problem solving in real-world contexts

English Language Arts

- Speaking & Listening: Collaborative discussions and presentations
- Informational Text: Vocabulary development and comprehension

Quick Logistics & Booking Checklist

Having a plan for your field trip will allow you time to engage in preliminary classroom activities, arrange for transportation, contact the museum, and receive appropriate school and parent permissions.

Scheduling

- Choose a field trip date (have 2 backups)

- Estimate the number of students _____
- Identify your Secondary Contact, phone and email _____

- Notify the museum in advance if you would like hop cones, the Hoppy scavenger hunt, or have accessibility or sensory considerations.
- Visit americanhopmuseum.org/group-tour to book your tour.

Task List

- Received confirmation of a scheduled trip for (date/time) _____
- Arrange transportation
- Sent home permission slips
- Assign chaperones
- Discuss museum etiquette with students

Museum Provides

Exhibits, Staff Support, Hop Cones

Teachers Bring

Students, Chaperones, Curiosity