

New Westminster Arts & Heritage

SCHOOL PROGRAMS GUIDE





Located within the Anvil Centre, the New Westminster Arts & Heritage departments oversee the creation and delivery of curriculum relevant school programming in connection to the exhibitions and themes present within the New Westminster Museum & Archives and New Media Gallery.

Heritage

The New Westminster Museum & Archives is comprised of three locations: The New Westminster Museum & Archives located at the Anvil Centre, Irving House, and the Samson V. Our School Programs focus on showcasing the land, people, and development of the place now known as New Westminster. All programs are inquiry-driven, curriculum-connected, and rooted in local heritage and community. Through hands-on activities and critical thinking, students explore the past to better understand the present.

Art & Technology

New Media Gallery and the Art & Technology LAB are located within the Anvil Centre, and centered around encouraging a broad understanding of how technology can be used for creativity, pedagogy, critical thinking and the creation of meaning. New Media Gallery Exhibition Tours are developed for a range of ages and are regularly available in conjunction with a scheduled program or independently at no cost. Tours are 30 – 45mins in length and led by a Curator or Curatorial Programmer.

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Onsite School Programs

\$170.00 (GST Included)

*Maximum 30 students per booking.

All onsite school programs are led by experienced and knowledgeable Educators. Students are encouraged to use their critical thinking skills to explore exhibitions and collections and dive deeper into curriculum-relevant themes.

Heritage



Stories of the Samson V

Samson V | Available May–October only

90 mins

PRESCHOOL

Curriculum Connections: Science, Social Studies
All aboard the Samson V! In this hands-on, story-filled program, preschool students climb aboard the last floating steam-powered sternwheeler in North America to explore how people have travelled by water for centuries. Students will learn about the important role of the Samson V in keeping the Fraser River clean and discover stories of other boats that once shared its path. With a strong focus on exploration and observation, this program encourages curiosity about local history, technology, and the environment. Students will also create their own model boats to take home as a fun reminder of what they've learned.

*Please note due to the age and architecture of the Samson V Sternwheeler this program is not wheelchair accessible.

Heritage at Home

Irving House

90 mins

KINDERGARTEN – GRADE 2

Curriculum Connections:
Science, Social Studies

What makes a house a home? In this interactive program based at historic Irving House, students explore ideas of family, community, and heritage through storytelling, discussion, and hands-on activities. Moving through different rooms in the house, students reflect on their own family traditions and home lives while making connections to how people lived in the past. With a focus on building empathy and understanding, this program encourages students to recognize both the uniqueness and commonalities of diverse households and communities.

*Please note due to the age and architecture of Irving House this program is not wheelchair accessible.



Mapping Stories

New Westminster Museum

90 mins

GRADE 4 - 6

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies

In this engaging, inquiry-based program, students explore the New Westminster Museum to uncover local stories and learn how communities and places have changed over time. Using maps, archival records, and hands-on activities, students investigate key historical events, geographic features, and the diverse people who have shaped this region. Along the way, they'll build skills in map reading, spatial thinking, and historical inquiry – all while developing a deeper understanding of how New Westminster has grown into the community we see today.





Welcoming New Westminster

New Westminster Museum

90 mins

GRADES 5 – 6

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies

New Westminster is home to a rich diversity of cultures, languages, and traditions - but was it always this way? In this program, students will engage in guided exploration of the New Westminster Museum to learn about the histories and experiences of various newcomer communities, including early immigrants from China, Japan, and South Asia. Through inquiry-based activities, students will examine the challenges these communities faced, their contributions to the city, and the evolving meaning of belonging in New Westminster. The program encourages reflection on immigration, identity, and how diverse histories shape the community today.

Roots of Reconciliation: Early New Westminster

New Westminster Museum

90 mins

GRADES 5 – 7

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies

Roots of Reconciliation explores the complex interactions between Indigenous Peoples and early settlers on the land now known as New Westminster. Through inquiry-based activities, students will think critically about these relationships and how they shaped exploration, industry, and settlement in the region. The program concludes with a reflection on the lasting legacies of these early interactions and invites students to consider their role in the ongoing journey of reconciliation.



Where in the World is Billy Miner?

New Westminster Museum

90 mins

GRADES 5 – 6

Curriculum Connections: English Language Arts, Social Studies
Billy Miner also known as the “Grey Fox” is one of the most notorious criminals of the 20th Century. The legendary train robber was not only able to evade law enforcement for years, but even escaped from the infamous BC Penitentiary right here in New Westminster. So how did he do it and where did he go? Students will put their literacy and social studies inquiry skills to the test as they work in small groups to explore primary and secondary sources and solve the mystery of Billy Miner.

Standing in Solidarity (available in 2026)

New Westminster Museum

90 mins

GRADES 9 – 12

Curriculum Connections: Career Education, Social Studies

Step into the story of labour history in New Westminster through our dynamic new exhibition. Students will explore how the power of organizations shaped the rights and freedoms many workers benefit from today. Through inquiry-based activities, group discussions, and a hands-on workshop, students will develop a deeper understanding of collectivization and its lasting impact on our working lives.



Art & Technology



Stop-Motion Animation

Art & Technology LAB | New Media Gallery

90 - 120 mins

GRADES 3 – 12

Curriculum Connections: Arts Education, Language Arts
Students will take a tour of the current New Media Gallery exhibition, examining its themes through discussion and observation. Next they move into the Art & Technology LAB and participate in a stop-motion animation workshop, where meaning, creativity, and experimentation are emphasized. Students will experiment with materials, movement, and storytelling to create collaborative animations. This program directly supports grade-level learning outcomes by fostering critical thinking, visual literacy, and technical skills while encouraging imaginative approaches to expressing ideas through art.

Kinetic Sculpture

Art & Technology LAB | New Media Gallery

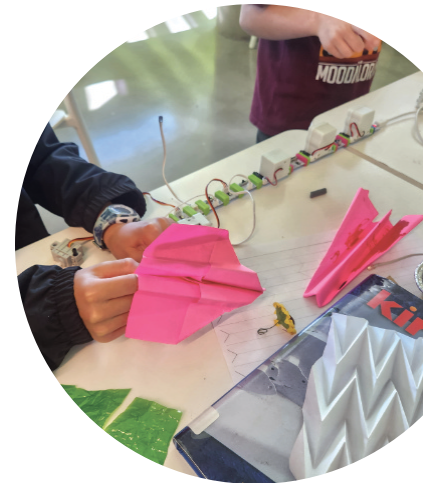
90 - 120 mins

GRADES 3 – 12

Curriculum Connections:

Arts Education, ADST

Combining fine art with science in a workshop that uses circuitry and motors to create kinetic sculptures. Using the themes present in New Media Gallery's current exhibition, students will learn the basics of circuitry, motors, and movement while creating sculptures that explore expression and mechanical function. Art, design science, and technology are combined in a fun and engaging learning experience. This program directly supports grade-level learning outcomes by fostering critical thinking, visual literacy, and technical skills while encouraging imaginative approaches.



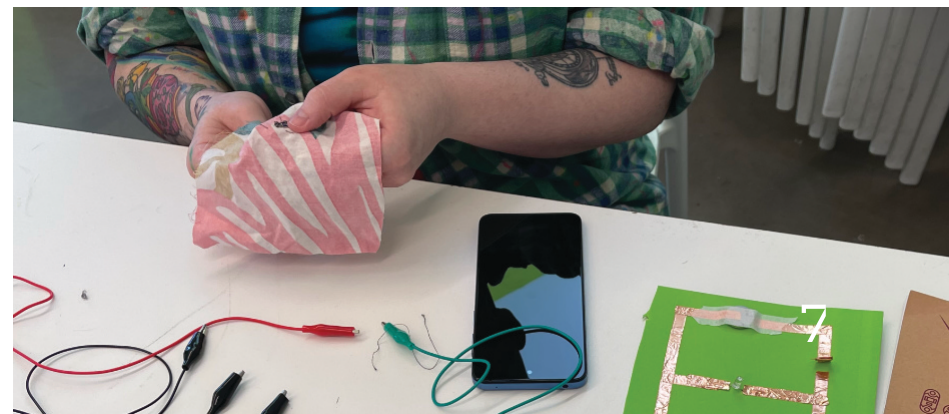
Professional Practice in Art and Tech

Art & Technology LAB | New Media Gallery

90 - 120 mins

TECHNICAL INSTITUTE/COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

Connect with an Art & Technology LAB Senior Instructor or New Media Gallery Curatorial Programmer for a session that combines a professional practice lecture with a hands-on workshop. This program offers students the opportunity to learn highly technical skills and explore technology within a fine arts context. Students will gain valuable insights into contemporary artistic practices, experiment with new media tools, and receive constructive feedback that connects directly to their own creative development. Mediums include interactive art, sound art, and film.



Education Kits

FREE (refundable deposit required)

All Education Kits are available for a 3 week rental period (beginning in January 2026) and include thematic curriculum connected lesson plans, primary and secondary source materials, and more to keep students engaged and learning. Education Kits are picked up and dropped off at the Anvil Centre (777 Columbia Street).



What's Cooking?

KINDERGARTEN – GRADE 3

Food connects cultures, communities, and families – yet everyone brings unique food traditions and cooking practices to the table. In this Education Kit, filled with discussion prompts and inquiry based activities, students will explore artifacts from the teaching collection to learn about cultural cuisines and cooking practices from both the past and present. The program concludes with students sharing their own food stories, traditions, and experiences from home.



Play Time!

GRADES 1 – 3

Have you ever wondered how the concept of play has changed over time? Or how toys and games differ around the world? This exciting Education Kit explores the importance of play and how it differs across generations and continents. Through structured play and inquiry based activities students will gain a deeper understanding of the ways fun impacts our daily lives and the similarities and differences across these divides.

Reframed: Understanding Community Through Photos

GRADES 4 – 9

Photographs tell stories – but whose stories do they tell, and whose are left out? In this thought-provoking Education Kit, students will investigate vintage cameras and historic photographs of New Westminster to explore how images shape our understanding of the past. Through a mix of independent and group activities, students will develop inquiry skills, analyze representation in historical narratives, and engage in ethical discussions about memory and perspective. By the end of the program, students will have built their own informed views on how communities and histories are remembered and shared.





Stories from Yi Fao

GRADES 5 – 9

“Yi Fao,” meaning “second port,” is the name Chinese residents gave to New Westminster’s Chinatown, which existed from 1858 to 1980. But what happened to Yi Fao? Where did it go? And most importantly, why? Answers to these questions and more can be found in this engaging Education Kit filled with lesson plans and resources that equip students with the tools to explore the vibrant community life, cultural practices, and contributions of Chinese Canadians in New Westminster, while also examining the discriminatory policies and events that led to the community’s decline. Through guided inquiry-based independent and group activities, students will reflect on themes of cultural identity, and the importance of community in the ongoing journey toward reconciliation and inclusion.

Professional Development

New Westminster Arts & Heritage are committed to supporting teachers in meaningful and practical ways. We offer a variety of professional development opportunities, including community walking tours, gallery and museum-based programs, in-school presentations, and more. To learn how we can support your professional learning, please email schoolprograms@newwestcity.ca.

Have an idea for a program collaboration?

We love visiting your schools, sharing resources, supporting special projects, and more. To connect with our education department and explore how we can support learning in your classroom, please email schoolprograms@newwestcity.ca.



Getting Here

All New Westminster Arts & Heritage sites are easily accessible by SkyTrain, bus, vehicle, or on foot. Please allow time for parking and walking to your program location.

New Westminster Museum & New Media Gallery

Anvil Centre ([map](#))

Located directly across from the New Westminster SkyTrain Station (Expo Line).

- **Bus/Drop-off:** Columbia Street loading zone (westbound access). No bus parking.
- **Parking:** Paid parking available in the Anvil Centre Parkade (8th St. access), Front Street Parkade, and nearby streets.

Irving House ([map](#))

A 10-minute uphill walk from Columbia SkyTrain Station.

- **Bus/Drop-off:** Merivale Street “Museum Visitor” spot (access via Royal Ave eastbound). No bus parking.
- **Parking:** Free street parking on Merivale, Agnes, and nearby roads; additional parking at Tipperary Park (315 Queens Ave). Check signage for time limits.

Samson V Maritime Museum ([map](#))

A 10-minute walk from New Westminster SkyTrain Station via the River Market overpass (note: not wheelchair accessible).

- **Bus/Drop-off:** River Market loading zone (via Quayside Drive). No bus parking.
- **Parking:** Paid parking at Inn at the Quay, along Columbia Street, or at Anvil Centre.

Booking Information

Details

All onsite school programs are available for a maximum of 30 students per time slot. Programs run Monday – Friday at 10:00am and 12:00pm.

All New Westminster Arts & Heritage sites are accessible by transit, vehicle, or on foot. For information regarding parking, transportation, and more please visit www.nwmuseumarchive.ca or www.newmediagallery.ca

Accessibility

Unfortunately due to their age and configuration programs taking place at the Samson V Maritime Museum and Irving House are not wheelchair accessible. Programs that take place at the New Westminster Museum and New Media Gallery are wheelchair accessible.

Fees & Cancellations

School Programs Fee: **\$170.00/up to 30 students**

Education Kit Fee: **Free (refundable deposit required)**

Fees for Professional Development and specialized programs vary, please contact schoolprograms@newwestcity.ca for more information.

All School Program and Education Kit bookings must be confirmed 3 weeks in advance of the program date.

Cancellation less than 14 days in advance of the program date are subject to a fee.

Payment is due in advance of all programs/rental start date and can be made via

Credit Card, Cash or Cheque in-person, via mail, or over the phone. Please make all cheques out to the ‘City of New Westminster’ and have them delivered to:

Anvil Centre

Attn: School Programs

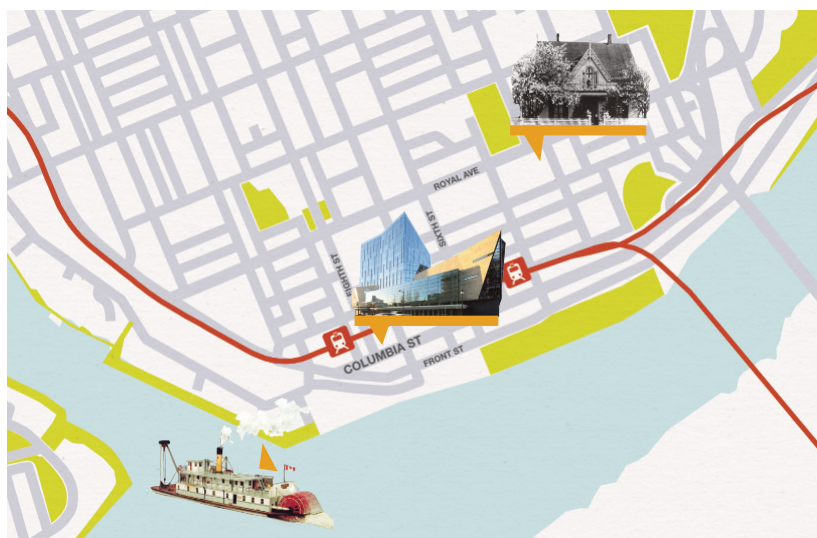
777 Columbia Street

New Westminster, BC

V3M 1B6

schoolprograms@newwestcity.ca

604.527.4640



Book your program today!

Email: schoolprograms@newwestcity.ca

Phone: 604.527.4640



New Westminster Museum & Archives

www.nwmuseumarchive.ca

Anvil Centre 3rd Floor

777 Columbia Street ([map](#))

New Media Gallery

www.newmediagallery.ca

Anvil Centre 3rd Floor

777 Columbia Street ([map](#))

Irving House

302 Royal Ave ([map](#))

Samson V Maritime Museum

880 Quayside Drive ([map](#))

