



# Design a Statue

Fourteen of the statues found on the lower level of Emancipation Hall are part of the National Statuary Hall Collection. **Each state donates two statues to the collection, honoring deceased persons notable in the state's history. All 50 states have contributed statues.** Other statues in the collection are displayed throughout the Capitol. Most of the statues are located in National Statuary Hall.

Have you ever thought of being an artist? What would it be like to create a statue? Today you are going to be an artist creating a statue for the National Statuary Hall Collection!

First, walk around Emancipation Hall. Observe the statues. **Choose one statue that you like and stand near it.**

- Why do you like it?
- What makes that statue more interesting than another?
- Use three words to describe the statue.
- All statues in the National Statuary Hall Collection have to be made of marble or bronze. Do you think that bronze or marble was used by the artist in creating the statue? How do you know? Marble is a stone and bronze is metal consisting mainly of copper with some tin.
- How would the statue have looked if bronze or marble had been used instead of what was used?
- What assumptions can you make about the person by observing the statue? What part of the person's story did the artist choose to emphasize?
  - Are you interested in learning more about the person honored? Why or why not?



**Choose another statue and stand next to it.**

- In what way is this statue different from the first statue you observed? Consider the gender, age, occupation, and time period in which s/he lived. Also think about the material used and the texture of the statue.
- In what way are the statues similar? Are there more similarities or differences?
- Find a copy of the United States Capitol Visitor Guide brochure and look up this person’s story. Why was s/he included in the National Statuary Hall Collection?
- Now that you have studied the statue closely, are you more impressed or less impressed with the artist’s skill? Why?



**Before you leave Emancipation Hall, walk around the space again. Closely observe all the statues.**

Think about the person honored and the way the artist depicted that person. Artists make many choices when designing a statue that impact its beauty and the story that is told about the subject.

**Now you can design a statue. The process begins with an idea.**



- Who is a notable person from your state — perhaps a teacher, statesman, explorer, inventor, advocate, artist, or historic figure?
- When you return home, conduct research on the person using the Internet or a library.
- Has that person ever been depicted in a sculpture? If so, try to find a picture of that sculpture. Do you like it? Why or why not?
- What do you think is the most important accomplishment of this person’s life?
- How can that achievement be depicted in a statue?
- Consider the age of the person when an accomplishment occurred, physical appearance, clothing, tools or other objects of interest to include in the sculpture.
- Make a preliminary or first sketch. Are you pleased with the result? Do you need to make revisions?
- You might consider sharing your design with your class. Make a presentation or a display for the bulletin board in your classroom.

**Congratulations on your creativity, knowledge and skill!**