

The
Morgan
Library &
Museum

Family Activity Guide



**Explore the
Morgan Library**

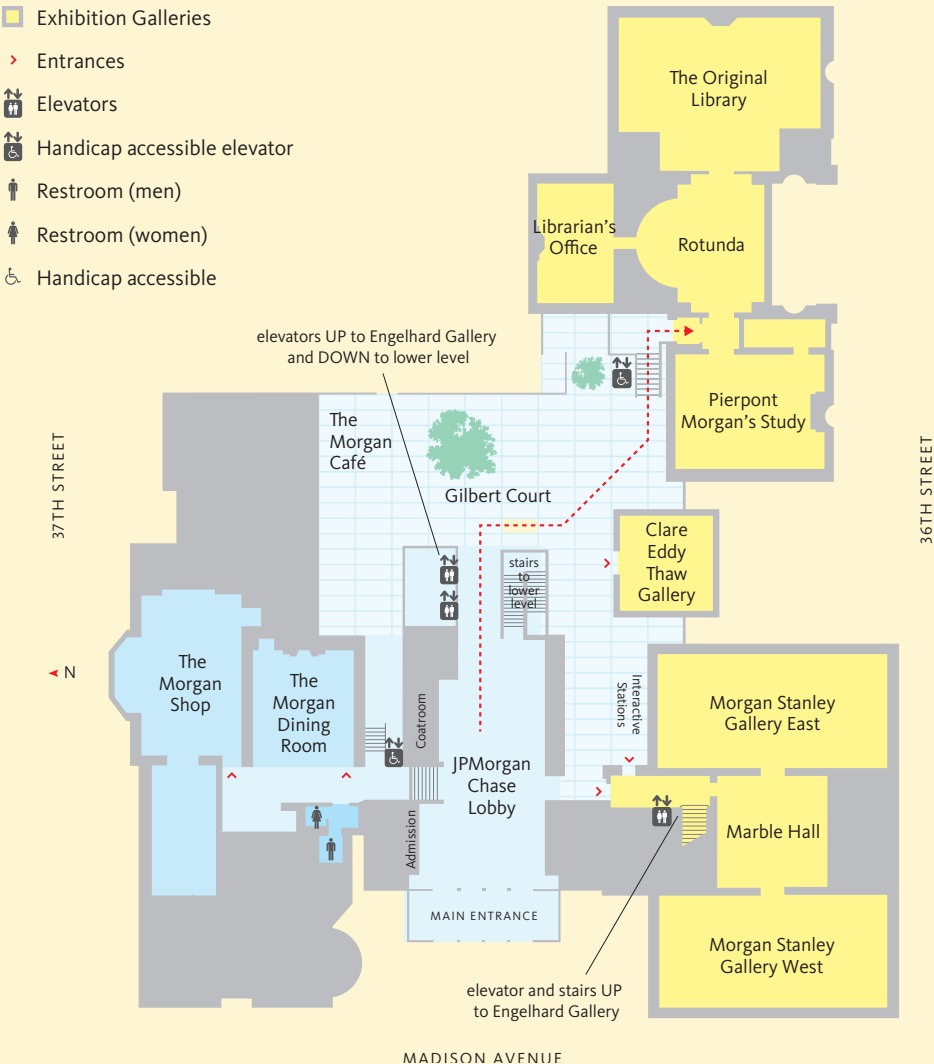
This guide is intended for all ages. It is designed to help you discover the Morgan’s historic 1906 Library with your family. Please use a pencil to do as many or as few activities as you like.

How to get there:

Walk through the Gilbert Court and take the short set of stairs under the red sign that reads “Mr. Morgan’s Library and Study.” To use the lift, please ask a security guard for assistance.

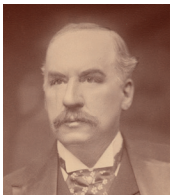
Family resources:

Bathrooms and water fountains are located on the lower level, as well as across from the Morgan Dining Room. Strollers may be brought into the galleries but cannot be checked.



Meet Belle da Costa Greene and Pierpont Morgan

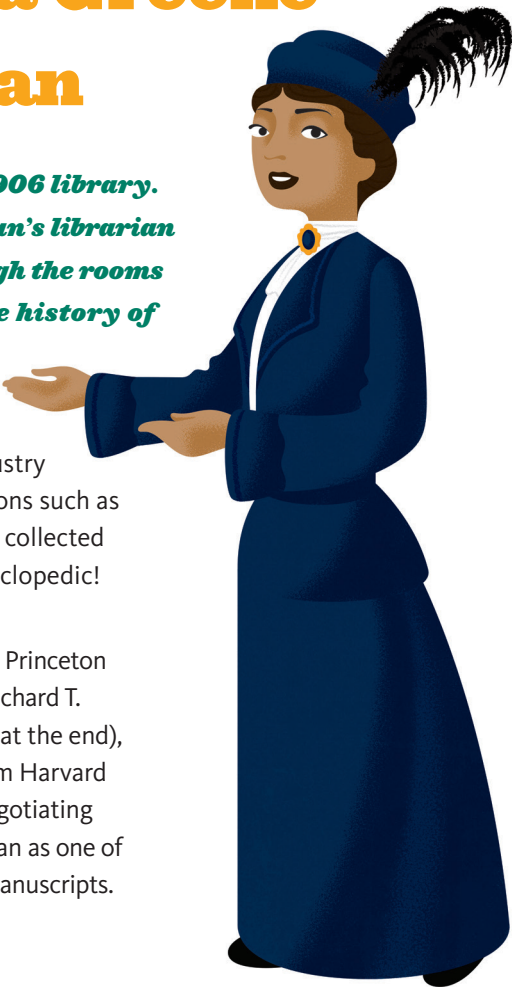
Today you will be exploring Pierpont Morgan's 1906 library. Your guide will be Belle da Costa Greene, Mr. Morgan's librarian and the Morgan's first director. As you travel through the rooms of the library, you will get to know more about the history of the building and its books and other collections.



Pierpont Morgan was an American financier born in 1837. He worked with the railroad industry and foreign investors and launched corporations such as U.S. Steel. Mr. Morgan traveled the world and collected art, and his tastes were like the library—encyclopedic!



In 1905 Mr. Morgan hired a young librarian from Princeton University, Belle da Costa Greene. Her father, Richard T. Greener (who spelled their last name with an r at the end), was the first African American to graduate from Harvard College. With her academic knowledge and negotiating savvy, Belle Greene helped establish the Morgan as one of America's greatest libraries of rare books and manuscripts.



Let's get started!

This guide belongs to

Name

who visited The Morgan Library & Museum

Date



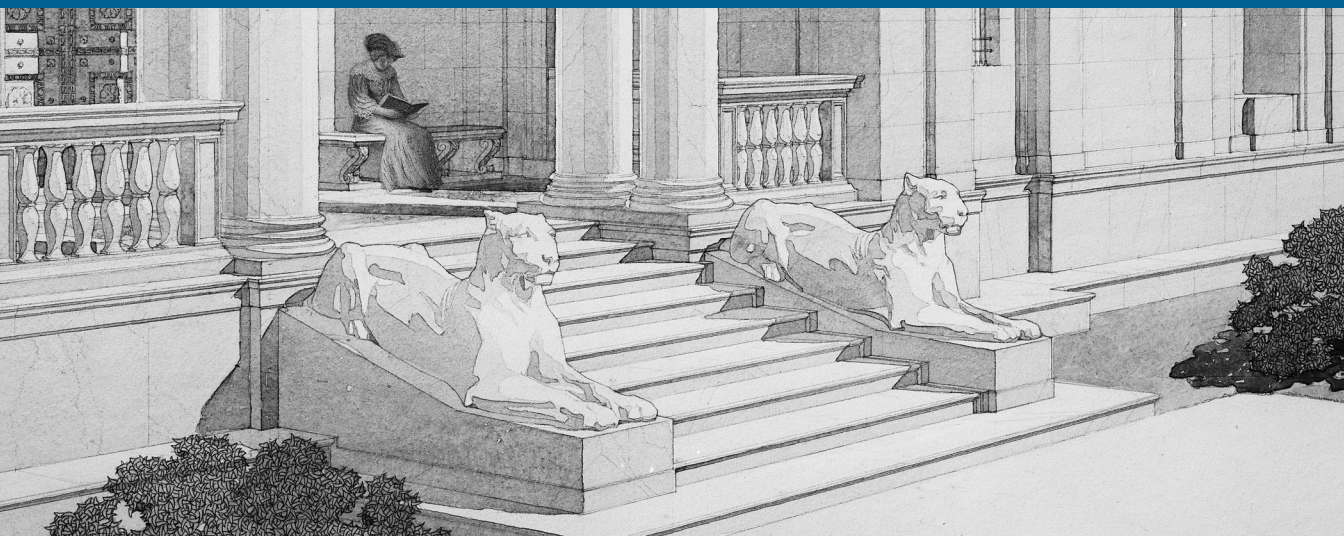
Welcome to the Rotunda.

When the library was completed in 1906, this space was the first you would see when you walked through the nine-and-a-half-foot-tall doors of the original entrance off 36th Street. This is where I came to work every day!

It was quite convenient for Mr. Morgan, who lived right next door in a brownstone on the corner of Madison Avenue and 36th Street.

Make it Yours

The two lionesses on the stairs outside the library were designed by Edward Clark Potter. He created them for this library, and then later produced their mates, the male lions at the New York Public Library at 42nd Street. The NYPL lions are named Patience and Fortitude. **What would you name the Morgan's lionesses?**



NAME LIONESS 1

NAME LIONESS 2

This shape is called a “lunette” because it looks like a half moon.



Who's Who

All of the ceiling paintings were the work of one artist—H. Siddons Mowbray. The paintings celebrate writers, architects, and artists from different periods of history. They show famous authors and characters from their works. In the lunette above the front door, can you recognize King Arthur? He is wearing a crown and a red cloak with a blue tunic, and he holds the Holy Grail in his left hand.

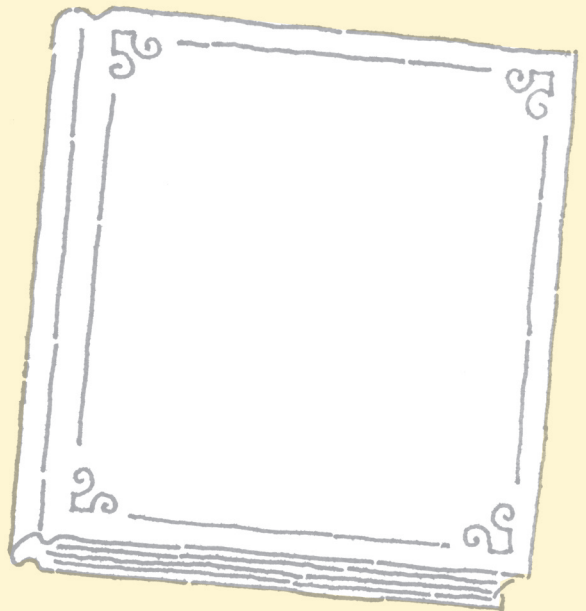
What book are you reading right now?

Do you have any favorite authors?
Share their names or book titles here.



Talk It Out

What is your first impression of
Mr. Morgan from entering this space?
What does it tell you about him?
Would you like to work here like Ms. Greene?



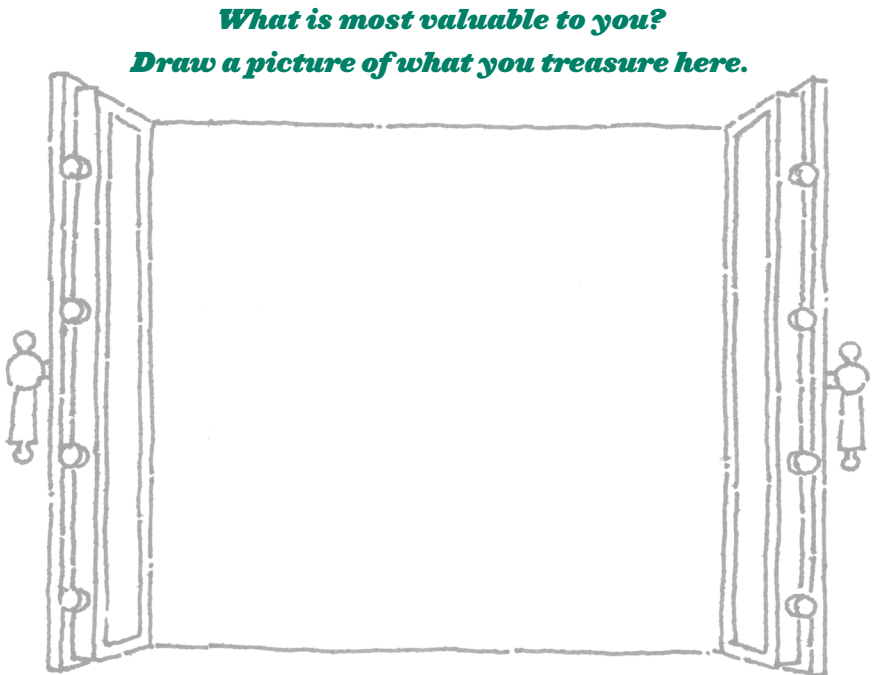


Now we are in Pierpont Morgan's Study.

This room was Mr. Morgan's private space to work and relax. He liked to host important guests here and stay up late playing solitaire at his desk.

It's Priceless

The library's architect, Charles McKim, designed a secure vault for the room. The walls are lined with a half-inch of solid steel and the heavy door is secured by a combination lock. The vault was for Mr. Morgan's most precious objects, such as medieval books with gold and jeweled bindings, as well as manuscripts written by authors like Charles Dickens. In the vault, Mr. Morgan also kept lists of what he had collected.



What is most valuable to you?

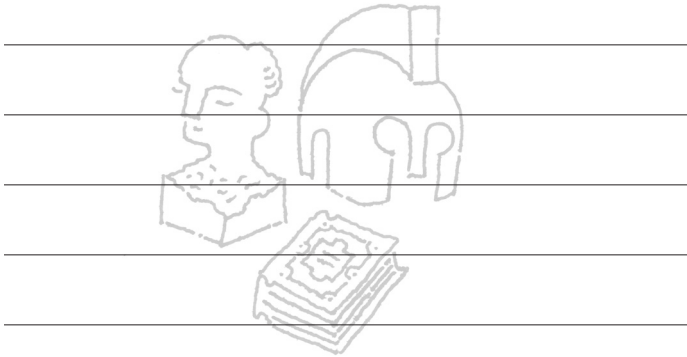
Draw a picture of what you treasure here.

What's Your Take?

Mr. Morgan liked to collect from a young age, starting with autographs! Throughout his life, he acquired a huge number of objects including rare books and manuscripts, sculptures, paintings, tapestries, watches, armor, Mesopotamian cylinder seals, and more.

What do you like to collect now?

What would you like to collect?



Look Up!

The ceiling, dated from the sixteenth-century, was shipped from Florence, Italy to New York in sections and reassembled here.

Make it Yours

A crest is a group of symbols that represents a family. As families grow, they often add more symbols to their crests! You can find examples of these in the fireplace, on the stained glass windows, and in the red wallpaper of the Study.

The wallpaper is made of woven silk with a pattern of a cluster of six mountains and an eight pointed star. It is the crest of a Renaissance family, the Chigi, who were famous bankers and supporters of the arts.

Think about your family members and what they like to do. Consider your favorite classes at school, games and sports, pets, and hobbies.

Design your own crest based on your unique family.



Welcome to my office.

In 1905, I was appointed Mr. Morgan's librarian and I helped him decide what to collect and how to organize his library. In 1928, I became the Morgan's first director and led the museum for twenty years. This office was a private space for the Morgan's directors until the late 1980s and opened to the public for the first time in 2010. Today it is used as an exhibition space for the museum's collection of ancient and early medieval objects.



Here's a few of the gods of Mesopotamia you can encounter at the Morgan.



Inanna, also known as Ishtar, is the goddess of love and war, the morning and evening star, and the Queen of Heaven. Inanna is often shown holding weapons, like this mace.

Seal number: 31



Ea is the god of fresh water. He is the god of wisdom and crafts, who helps humanity. He holds a vase from which clean water endlessly flows.

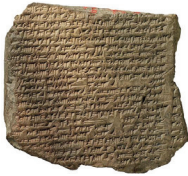
Seal number: 26



Shamash is the god of the sun, justice, and truth. Light shines from between his shoulders as he rises each morning from the mountains, cutting his way through the earth with a saw-toothed blade.

Seal number: 23

Cuneiform Code



Mesopotamia was an ancient region in what is now Iraq and parts of Iran, Syria, and Turkey. Over six thousand years ago, the earliest known system of writing, cuneiform, was developed there. Cuneiform means “wedge-shaped” as its characters were written with a reed plant in soft clay. It is a system with over six hundred signs; compare that to the twenty six letters of the modern English alphabet!

Write your name or a message with cuneiform characters using our translator.

A	▶	D	𐎣	G	𐎡	J	▼	M	𐎠	P	▶	S	▼	V	𐎶	Y	𐎶
B	𐎶	E	▼	H	𐎵	K	▶	N	▶▶	Q	◀	T	▶	W	▶▶	Z	▼
C	▼	F	✓	I	𐎵	L	𐎶	O	▲	R	𐎶	U	𐎶	X	✕		



Make it Yours

Mesopotamian cylinder seals depict mythical creatures whose bodies are composed of the parts of different animals. They sometimes even combine features of animals and humans! The mix-and-match is how the artist shows us the character is imaginary, and lets them design a tougher, faster, and more powerful creature whose purpose is protecting the wearer.

Design your own protective hybrid creature. What powers does it have?

Seek and Find

There’s an entire world inside each scene! See if you can find examples of these animals in the cylinder seals.

Keep an eye out for mythical creatures!

- Eagle
- Spider
- Lion
- Bull
- Scorpion
- Ostrich
- Deer



Our final stop is the East Room, the heart of Mr. Morgan's Library. This space has three stories of books! But how did I get to the shelves on the upper floors? Look closely around the room with your family. See if you can find a hidden passage.

Find out more below.



Compare and Contrast



The Morgan Library & Museum is the only institution in the world to possess three copies of the Gutenberg Bible, the first book printed on movable type in the West. There are around fifty copies total surviving today. With the invention of the printing press,

books could be made more quickly and with less expense, which gradually led to more people being able to read and own books.

However, during Gutenberg's time, people were still interested in the hand crafted elements of manuscripts and early printed books were often decorated by artists. Examine the copy of the Gutenberg Bible on display, and choose a manuscript in the nearby case. Compare and contrast the two books. How are they the same? How are they different?

This library has two staircases concealed behind the bookshelves. If you stand in the room's doorway and look to your left, you will see a single glass case. Examine the wall of bookshelves behind the case and you will find a small brass handle on the left corner. There is a little chink in the wall where you can see the hidden spiral staircase that leads to the upper floors.

Please do not try to open the door—that is for librarians only.

What's Your Sign?

Look up at the hexagon shapes in the ceiling. The gods and goddesses of Greek mythology are paired with the twelve Zodiac signs, painted by H. Siddons Mowbray. If you stand in the middle of the room, look over the entrance door and to the left, and you will see the goddess Aphrodite riding a pink cloud, holding two doves in her hands. Her son Cupid is riding the Zodiac sign of Aries, the ram. This was Mr. Morgan's birth sign! On the right you will see the sign of Gemini, the twins, with the god Hermes, wearing his winged cap and sandals. This was the sign of the wedding anniversary for Mr. Morgan and his wife, Frances Louisa Tracy.



Illustrated Initial

On the left side of the room is a long case with a changing display of medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts. A manuscript is a handwritten book made by many different types of artists—scribes, illustrators and painters, to name a few. The illumination comes from the real gold leaf that brings light to the page!

If you look closely at the books on display, you may notice that many of the pages have a letter that is larger, more colorful and may be decorated with people, animals or plants.



Take a look at these examples and design your own illustrated initial using the first letter of your name.

For more information on family programs including workshops, festivals, and much more, visit www.themorgan.org/programs/family-programs

Join us on the second Sunday of each month for Morgan Explorers, a free drop-in museum experience.

Join the Morgan as a Dual/Family Member and receive a year of benefits listed below!

Call 212 590-0322 or visit themorgan.org/support/membership to join.

Dual/Family Membership

- Free admission for two card holding adults and up to two children
- E-mails with advance notice of exhibitions, programs, and events
- Calendar of Events, including advance notice of and discounts on lectures, concerts, and other public programs
- Discounts in the Morgan Shop
- Advance notice of and discounts to Family Days and other family programs
- Advance notice of holiday shopping days

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Council on
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