

Exploration Activity for the Falls of the Ohio Rotunda Glass Sculptures



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To help you appreciate more and observe better the impressive, complex Falls Rotunda Glass Sculptures, here are some observation questions for you. You can also find out how the sculpture was designed, created, and built by artist Brook White, Flame Run Gallery of Louisville by visiting the Educational Resources page of the Falls of the Ohio Foundation website.

1. Guess how many total blue water drops there are in the Falls sculpture. *(Hint: The total is more than the age of the U.S. as a country. Make sure you stand directly under it and look upward)*

2. Guess how much the sun sculpture weighs. -----.
3. Artist Brook White tried something new in putting together 47 gray glass platters to create the moon with craters and dust. Look on the side of one of the platters and you will see one design on only one gray glass platter. What is it and what does it represent?

4. What is a common name for the fossil etched on the blue platter located next to the trilobite and 4 crinoid segments? It is etched on the largest blue platter of that outside bar. *(Hint: Today many varieties of this mollusk live in the seas, lakes and rivers).*
5. On the side of the canoe with the skyline glass platter, look at the life form figure on the red Native American glass platter. Be specific and name the life form. -----
6. Suspended from below the canoe, what do the multiple blue-colored glass pieces represent?

7. What is the name of the mammal whose hoof prints are etched on the middle green glass platters, next to the mammoth hoof prints? *(Hint: Once its vast herds of this mammal dominated grasslands and the plains). it was almost exterminated by hunters around 1900. However, this mammal has recovered and thrived. It still lives in Kentucky and Indiana today and once swam in large herds across the Ohio River in the Falls Park area).* -----
8. Look at the end of the Branch of Life where the multi-colored flowers are blooming. What do you see on the inside or middle of the flowers made out of stainless steel? -----
9. Guess how many total pieces of glass are in the entire sculpture. *(Hint: It is much less than how many yards are in a mile and a lot more than ¼ of one ton)* -----.
10. Look at the glass platter on the Native American canoe mobile which has a skyline of a city etched onto it. What is the city? *(Hint: It is the oldest of all the cities at the Falls of the Ohio, one of the oldest along the 981-mile long Ohio River).* -----

ANSWERS to Exploration Activity for the Falls Rotunda Glass Sculpture

1. **465 water drops** in the water sculpture (**If your answer comes within 10 of the correct answer, give yourself a point*)
2. The sun sculpture weighs about **500 pounds**. (**If your answer comes within 10 of the correct answer, give yourself a point*).
3. The design represents a **boot print of a man walking on the moon**. *The first one was Neil Armstrong in 1969.*
4. **Snail** (*Turbonopsis shumardi*). This mollusk is a snail-like marine animal, a **cephalopod**, with a curved coiled shell and internal chambers.
5. **A woodpecker (bird)** (Give yourself a half point if you wrote “bird”)
6. **Water ripples** (If you wrote “waves” or “rapids”, you can claim one point).
7. **Bison** (or American **buffalo**). At its peak population of nearly 60 million, the bison was the most common mammal in the US. It was nearly wiped out in the late 1800s by reckless hunting, reducing its herds to just about 600 animals. But through protection and nature preserves, it has flourished. It can weigh up to 2,000 lbs. and can run with speeds up to 30 mph. It still lives in Kentucky and Indiana today in parks and once swam in large herds across the Ohio River in the Falls Park area).
8. **Stamens** and/or **pistils** are the stainless-steel centers of the flowers. (They are the reproductive part of the flower)
9. **1020 pieces of glass** are in the entire sculpture. (If you get within 100 pieces then give yourself a point)
10. **Louisville, KY**. It was established as a defensive river port above the Falls by General George Rogers Clark in 1778 during the American Revolution. Conqueror of the Northwest Territory from the British, a facsimile of Clark’s cabin overlooking the Falls is located at the western end of the park.