



Welcome to IKEA Museum!

Teacher's Study Guide for the Democratic Design Exhibition (Secondary School or High School)

Here are some tips and facts to include, share and talk about, as well as two suggested ways you can tour the exhibition with your students.

Students and teachers can tour the museum for free under their own supervision. On arrival, please let reception know how many students and teachers there are so we can keep our visitor statistics up to date. Thanks!

As a whole class, start at the photo of Ingvar Kamprad in the entrance lobby and reflect on his vision.

Then go up to Floor 2. We suggest that you send your students out in groups to each specific 'station' in the exhibition. The various stations are shown on laminated worksheets, which you can borrow from reception. Each sheet clearly shows where to go and what to do. There are eight stations in all. The exhibition is colour-coded so it's easy to find your way around.

As a teacher, you know best how to work with your students. If your students are unable to work by themselves for any reason, it's fine for the whole class to visit each station together, complete the task in a given time, and then discuss and reflect jointly. If you do this, you may need to ask reception for more sets of worksheets.

At the stations, students should reflect on the worksheet tasks together. The various zones to visit are called Form, Function, Quality, Sustainability and Low Price, as well as the circular podium with products at the centre of the exhibition. Both Function and Sustainability have several stations.

Time requirement

Let your groups walk around for about 15 minutes. After that, you can visit each station as a whole class. Ask the students to tell their friends what they found out. This part of the tour will take about 10 minutes per station, as you will probably have things to add yourself.

We provide some useful ideas and starting points on the following pages.



Floor 1

The vision – "To create a better everyday life for the many people"

The whole class stops at the photo of Ingvar Kamprad in the entrance lobby. Here, students can reflect on why IKEA uses low price to reach the many people. Ultimately, of course, the young man who started IKEA at just 17 years of age was an entrepreneur at heart. But over time, he became more and more convinced that most people lived rather dull and basic lives because they didn't have enough money. Ingvar Kamprad wanted to change that. The result? Furniture for the many people who didn't have much money.

- Who are the many people?
- What does 'a better everyday life' mean? What kind of things does it include?

This is an excellent opportunity to discuss the equal right of all people and children to security, to be able to lock themselves away in privacy and have a home.

- What are some of the ways to make things better in a home?

IKEA always starts from actual needs.

- What is the financial situation in the households?
- Can creating a better everyday life mean doing more than just selling home furnishings?

IKEA surveys show that many people say they want to live more sustainable lives, but that it's difficult to do.

- What can IKEA do to help people live better and more sustainable lives?

IKEA not only sells furniture, but also home furnishing solutions. For example, food waste is expensive, which is why IKEA designs transparent food boxes. They make it easier to decide which food needs using first.

- Is food a part of creating a better everyday life?
- What does IKEA do to help people eat and store food better?
- Why does IKEA sell plant balls, vegan ice cream, etc.?



Floor 2

Democratic Design

Democratic Design is the philosophy behind all product development at IKEA. Time to go up one floor to the Democratic Design exhibition! Hand the worksheets out to the groups, or go as a whole class if that works best for you. The worksheets are numbered, but only for ease of reference in this guide. You don't have to visit the stations in a particular order.

Form

1. Different influences

- Ellen Key and Karin Larsson were influencers in the 19th and 20th centuries. How have they influenced Scandinavian design?

If you want to learn more about influencers and their impact on Scandinavian design, here is some more information. Karin and Carl Larsson had an idea about "making room for children", and using and living in the whole home, not just one room. It would take a long time, up until 1970 in Sweden, before we got used to the idea that a living room could actually be 'lived' in and used every day, and even used for eating. It used to be called the 'drawing room' or 'formal room'.

In this part of the exhibition, you will also find many examples of functionality. How many functions does this sofa have?

Funktion

2. Function that helps the many people

- Find examples of how product design can create better habits and therefore a better world for us all.

Function can save space, and if furniture can help out with other challenges, such as storage, you get more for your money!

Ask the students to reflect on all the food waste there is in our homes. This is a behaviour that IKEA hopes to change through smart design. Having transparent storage boxes reduce food waste in the fridge – this has been proven.



3. It's important to keep up

- Can you think of any products that are no longer sold, or have disappeared because people's needs have changed?
- Do you know what IKEA does to find out what the needs of the many people are?
- Tip: Go to the tunnel at the beginning of the Democratic Design exhibition.

This is an opportunity to talk about how entrepreneurs are constantly striving to meet demand among their customers. What happens if you don't keep up with changes and developments in society? How many people have CD racks in their homes today?

The entrance tunnel where the *Democratic Design* exhibition begins shows videos from people's homes. We make 'home visits' to find out what the many people need. What do other companies do to find out what their customers need?

Kvalitet

4. Testing for quality

- Discuss the benefits of testing products for quality.
- What impact does poor quality have on sustainability and household finances?
- Tip: Look for the wooden sign that says "Ett långt liv/A long life".

Discuss the benefits of testing products for quality. What impact does poor quality have on our sustainability-oriented mindset and household finances? Ask the students to reflect on 'fast fashion' and how many people mend broken things today.

The ÖGLA chair has been available in many different designs and materials, i.e. different qualities. ÖGLA has been adjusted in different ways over the years to make production more environmentally sustainable, and to bring the price down. Product developers, buyers and engineers have worked hard to take advantage of new technology and innovative ideas that make ÖGLA even better.

Hållbarhet

5. New circular materials



- What facts can you find about the constant quest to find new materials?
- What inspired you the most when it comes to the way IKEA works with sustainability?

Here, students can find examples that inspire them. There are plenty of recycled materials that are used in products, such as aluminium, paper and household plastics. Many different types of natural fibres are increasingly used. You might add that bamboo is a fast-growing plant that consumes more carbon dioxide than trees do. Bamboo grows about 60 cm per day, and some say it grows even faster. Aluminium is a material that uses 80 % less energy when recycled, compared to producing new.

6. Contributing to sustainability

- What is the benefit of using recycled dyed fabric?
- What do you do with your clothes when you no longer want them?
- Tip: Look for the pile of cushions to find more information.

We want to inspire hope in the students, and inform them about what they can do and what IKEA is doing. We would like them to reflect on their own habits and behaviours, for example what they do with old, outgrown clothes. Do they sell them? Donate them? How does this contribute to better sustainability? Old staff workwear at IKEA, for example, has been used in making products.

7. Consumption patterns and waste

- Find all the information you can on the use of recycled materials in new products.
- Do you own any products that are made from recycled materials?

Here, students can find information about recycled materials. Do they separate and sort waste at home, and if so how? Look at the flower pot that's split in half in one of the display boxes. This is a good example of the link between design and keeping prices low. On the outside, the pot is made of white, recycled industrial plastic. On the inside and at the heart of the flower pot, you can see more of a grey/black colour. That plastic comes from household waste (plastic). Recycled household plastics cost less than plastics from industry. A lower price for the many people! To be a designer, you have to be smart and think differently. There are a number of designer portraits in the Form section. Watch the videos if you're interested in their views on designing for IKEA.

Lågt pris

8. Low price requires smart solutions

- What is the purpose of low price at IKEA?



Museum

- Find as many examples as you can of what IKEA does to keep prices low.
- Tip: Think about the IKEA vision. You'll find it on the wall in the museum's entrance lobby on Floor 1, next to the portrait of Ingvar Kamprad.

The vision is to create a better everyday life for the many people. Price is one of the foundations of reaching the many people. If your students are struggling to find examples, ask them to explore the RYET lamp, why IKEA stacks products (stacking makes transport and storage more efficient), why IKEA has flatpacks, or goes directly to a shopping trolley supplier to be inspired by their materials and technology (it saves a lot of money if an existing factory can do the manufacturing, rather than setting up a new one).

The circular product podium



9. The five principles of Democratic Design

- Find the rug called TIPHEDE and read about it on the screen above it.
- What are the benefits of TIPHEDE when it comes to the five different dimensions of Democratic Design?

TIPHEDE meets the five principles like this:

Form – it's simple and stylish

Sustainability – it's made from recycled materials

Function – it comes in different sizes

Quality – it's easy to wash

Low Price – it's a low-price product



Other materials to help with school work

The Story of IKEA

The IKEA Museum website contains a lot of contemporary history about IKEA.

[There are a lot of videos you can watch, and articles you can read or listen to.](#)

Making mistakes is an important part of being an entrepreneur!

Ingvar Kamprad said, "Only those who are asleep make no mistakes."

[Read about the big mistakes on our website](#) and ask your students to discuss:

- Why can making mistakes be a good thing?
- Have you ever made a mistake that ended up leading to something good?
- Can you think of any products that were created by mistake?
- What happens when employees in a company don't have the courage to make mistakes?