

Fun Things to do on Governors Island

If you have a little bit of extra time on the island but not enough time for a whole activity or lesson, there are still plenty of fun places you can stop on the way back to the ferry. Please see the attached map of Governors Island with each location starred and numbered. Below each spot will be explained in more detail along with the approximate length of time to get there from the Teaching Garden, and the approximate length of time to get back to the ferry.

****Important note: All of these attractions are only open to the public between May and October****

If you are visiting the garden in April or November, these areas will not be open.

- 1. The Hills:** The hills are a collection of three hills (Slide hill, Discovery hill, and Outlook hill) on the bottom of the island. The hills were created using salvaged material from demolished buildings on the island. The hills are great if you want to see some nice views but you don't want to travel too far from the garden. The Hills are about a 5 or 10 minute walk (depending on the age and speed of your students) from the garden. It is about a 20 or 25 minute walk to get from the hills back to the ferry.
- 2. The Slides:** Slide Hill contains 4 slides of varying lengths including the longest slide in NYC (57 feet)! The slides are constructed from metal so if you are visiting in the summer or during a time of year that is hot be sure to keep this in mind, the slides may be too hot to slide on. The slides are about a 5 or 10 minute walk from the garden. They are about a 20 – 25 minute walk back to the ferry.
- 3. The Hammocks:** Hammock grove contains about 50 hammocks! They are spread out among a few different grassy spots in this area. This is a great place to bring students to relax or to complete some school work. The hammocks are about a 5 minute walk from the garden, and about a 15 or 20 minute walk to the ferry.
- 4. The Oval:** The oval is a great place to bring students to get some energy out. This is a wide open grassy field that is excellent for running games or free play. Occasionally this area is off limits to the public due to private events or other things happening on the island. Most of the time however, this area is wide open. It is a 1 minute walk from the garden, and about a 15 or 20 minute walk back to the ferry.
- 5. The Wooden Playground:** This play area is another great place to bring energized students. This area has wooden structures and swings that are great to climb and play on. This area is about a 5 minute walk from the garden, and about a 15 or 20 minute walk back to the ferry.

- 6. Picnic Point:** Picnic point is furthest from the ferry but home to some great views of the Statue of Liberty, Red Hook, the Verrazano Bridge, and the NY harbor. You can also reserve grills or up to two picnic tables and stay for a BBQ or picnic. Reservations must be placed at least two days in advanced. Picnic point is about a 10 minute walk from the garden, and about a 20 to 30 minute walk back to the ferry (depending on the way you walk and the speed of your group).

- 7. Fort Jay:** Fort Jay is a national monument and a former US Army post. This fort is open between 10 am and 4:30 pm, and you can usually find a park ranger that can give you a little more information about things. There are cannons and great views of the city. Fort Jay is about a 15 or 20 minute walk from the garden, and about a 5 minute walk to the ferry.

- 8. Castle Williams:** Castle Williams is a circular structure that was once part of the defensive system for the inner harbor. You can visit the 1st floor anytime between 10 am and 4:30 pm, or you can join a National Park Service Ranger for guided tours that explore all three floors. These tours are available at 11:30, 1:30, and 3:30 daily. Castle Williams is about a 10 or 15 minute walk from the garden, and about a 5 minute walk to the ferry.