



TIMKEN
MUSEUM
OF ART

Lesson: Visual Art and Literacy Grades K-12th



Look, Talk, Listen, Connect

Look, Talk, Listen, Connect is a first-level activity that should be incorporated in the beginning of each lesson to familiarize students with the focus artwork. Based on the Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) teaching method, this question-based activity centers on open-ended discussions of visual art and has proven to significantly increase students' critical thinking, language and literacy skills.

As a first step, teachers will have to project an image of the focus artwork onto the classroom wall. Go to timkenmuseum.org to download the image. You can also take your students on a field trip to the Timken to have this discussion in front of the original work of art.

After students have been given a few minutes to closely examine the artwork, teachers facilitate a discussion by using these three open-ended questions:

- What's going on in this work of art?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can we find?

As students respond, teachers are asked to:

- Paraphrase comments neutrally.
- Point at the area being discussed.
- Link and frame student comments.

Students are asked to:

- Look carefully at the artwork.
- Talk about what they observe.
- Back up their ideas with evidence.
- Listen to and consider the views of others.

Whether or not this is a ten-minute discussion or an in-depth exploration, this simple activity is a great way for teachers to start out each lesson. As they look, talk and listen, students are enabled to make connections to other social/cultural/ historical information and to their own experiences.



Visual Art and Literacy | K-2nd Grades

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

English Language Arts and Visual Arts

COMMON CORE:

ELA-LITERACY.L.K.1.B

ELA-LITERACY.L.K.4.A

ELA-LITERACY.L.1.1.F

ELA-LITERACY.L.2.4.A

ART MATERIALS:

- Sentence strip worksheet
(See Supplement A on page 5)
- Sheets of blank paper
- Pencils with an eraser
- Something to color with- colored pencils, crayons, pastels

VOCABULARY:

- **Vocabulary** – Words used in a language.
- **Descriptive Words** – Words that describe or give more information about something.
- **Foreground** – The part of the picture that appears closest, is in front.
- **Middle Ground** – The middle part of the picture.
- **Background** – The part of the picture that is in the back, behind objects in the front.
- **Subject Matter** – The main idea of an artwork.
- **Palette** – The colors found in an artwork.

Process

- Begin the lesson with a *Look, Talk, Listen, and Connect* activity (see page 2).
- Take your students through the vocabulary definitions and point out where the vocabulary words are reflected in the painting.
- On the white board, write the sentence "I see..."
- Beginning with the foreground, go around the room and ask students to verbally use a complete sentence to name something they see in the front of the painting using the words "I see...". Write their sentences on the board.
- Repeat the same process with the middle ground and background of the picture, writing students' verbal answers on the board to reference later.
- Define what descriptive words are and provide examples using subjects in the painting to demonstrate how descriptive words work.
- Write "I see...", "The... is...", and "The...has...and..." on your whiteboard.
- Point to an object in your room and ask a student to name it. Fill in the "I see a(n)..." sentence on your white board.
- Pointing at the same object, ask another student what color(s) it is. Fill in "The...is..." sentence on your white board with the color(s).
- Ask another student what else they notice about the object. Fill in "The...has...and ..." with their response. For example: "I see a door. The door is brown. The door has a window and a curtain."
- Point to an object in the painting, and call on students to use descriptive words to identify and describe it using the three sentence examples. For example: "I see a horse. The horse is white. The horse has a black mane and big ears."
- On the white board, write the sentence "I like...". Go around the room and ask students what part of the painting they like the most using a full sentence.
- *For Kindergarten* – Pass out blank paper, pencils, and colored pencils to students and ask them to draw their favorite part of the painting.
- *Note:* Encourage students to use the painting for inspiration, but not feel obligated to copy it exactly. Students will use their imagination to draw an interpretation of what they are seeing.
- *For 1st and 2nd grades* – Pass out (supplement A on page 4). Ask students to fill in the sentence strips and draw their favorite part of the painting at the top. (See Supplement B on page 5 for a finished example).

Supplement A

Add your drawing below:

I see a/an _____.

The _____ is _____.

The _____ has _____ and _____.

Supplement B

Add your drawing below:



I see a/an horse.

The horse is white.

The horse has a black tail and white ears.



Literacy and Visual Art | 3rd-6th Grades

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

English Language Arts and Visual Arts

COMMON CORE:

ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.2, 3.4, 3.6

ELA-LITERACY.L.4.1.F

ELA-LITERACY.L.5.4.A

ELA-LITERACY.L.6.4.A

ART MATERIALS:

- Blank Story Map Templates (See page 9)
- Blank sheets of paper
- Pencils with erasers
- Something to color with- colored pencils, crayons, pastels

VOCABULARY:

- **Vocabulary** – Words used in a language.
- **Descriptive Words** – Words that describe or give more information about things.
- **Foreground** – The part of the picture that appears closest, is in front.
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- **Background** – The part of the picture that is in the back, behind objects in the front.
- **Subject Matter** – The main idea of an artwork.
- **Palette** – The colors found in an artwork.
- **Setting** – The time and place in which a story is told.
- **Character** – A person, animal, being, creature, or thing in a story.
- **Action** – Something that has story consequences.

Process

- Begin the lesson with a *Look, Talk, Listen, and Connect* activity (see page 2).
- Take your students through the vocabulary definitions and point out where the vocabulary words are reflected in the painting.
- Shift the conversation to thinking of the painting as a story. Who is in the story, where is the story taking place, and what is happening? (Characters, Setting, and Action) Note: Remind students that there are no wrong answers in art. It is not necessary that they guess correctly what the origin of the story is. It is more important that they use their imagination.
- Ask students to read the painting like they would a page in a book (left to right and top to bottom) for 15 seconds. After 15 seconds zoom in on, and around, the campfire scene, where the action of the story is taking place, for another 15 seconds. Note: Let students know they are “reading” the painting to help them to notice as much as possible to avoid focusing in on only one area of the painting.
- As students read the painting, instruct them to think about who the characters are, where they are, and what they are doing.
- Go around the room and ask students to share their interpretations of the painting.
- As students answer, ask follow-up questions that encourage students to find evidence in the painting that supports their interpretation. For example: A student says they think the story is about a group of cowboys who are taking a break from a long journey. Follow-up questions: “Why do you think they are cowboys?” “What do you see in the painting that makes you think they are on a long journey?” “Where do you think they are, and what makes you say that?”
- Pass out the blank story map templates (see page 7), and ask students to fill in the worksheet with their interpretation of the story in the painting including: The name of their story. The names of each character. The state or location where they think the story is taking place.
- For the “Beginning” box on the template, ask students to imagine what happened before the scene in the painting. This may need to be done on a separate sheet of paper.
- For the “Middle” box on the template, ask students to imagine what is happening in the scene shown in the painting. This may need to be done on a separate sheet of paper.
- For the “End” box on the template, ask students to imagine what happened after the scene in the painting. This may need to be done on a separate sheet of paper.
- Once the template is completed, on a separate sheet of paper, ask students to sketch and color a picture that illustrates their interpretation of the painting. The painting can be used as inspiration, but students do not need to try and copy what they see in the painting. Encourage them to be creative and draw what they want.

Story Map

Title: _____

Characters

Setting



Beginning



Middle



End





Literacy and Visual Art | 7th-12th Grades

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

English Language Arts and Visual Arts

COMMON CORE:

ELA-LITERACY.L.7.1

ELA-LITERACY.L.8.3

ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.3

ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.4

ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.9

ART MATERIALS:

- Blank story map template
(See page 7)
- Two sheets of blank sheet of paper
- Pencils with erasers
- Something to color with- colored pencils, crayons, pastels

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Process

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- Take your students through the vocabulary definitions and point out where the vocabulary words are reflected in the painting.
- Shift the conversation to thinking of the painting as a story. Who is in the story? Where is the story taking place? What is happening? (Characters, Setting, and Action) Note: Remind students that there are no wrong answers in art. It is not necessary that they guess correctly what the origin of the story is. It is more important that they use their imagination.
- Ask students to read the painting like they would a page in a book (left to right and top to bottom) for 15 seconds. After 15 seconds zoom in on, and around, the campfire scene, where the action of the painting is happening, for another 15 seconds. Note: Let them know they are doing this to notice as much as possible, and to avoid focusing in on only one area of the painting.
- As they read the painting, instruct them to think about who the characters are, where they are, and what they are doing.
- Go around the room and ask students to share their interpretations of the painting.
- As students answer, ask follow-up questions that encourage them to find evidence in the painting that supports their interpretation. For example: A student says they think the story is about a group of cowboys who are taking a break from a long journey. Follow-up questions: "Why do you think they are cowboys?" "What do you see in the painting that makes you think they are on a long journey?" "Where do you think they are, and what makes you say that?"
- Pass out the blank story map templates (see page 7), and ask students to fill in the worksheet with their interpretation of the story in the painting including: The name of their story. The names of each character, and one descriptive sentence describing the main character of their story, i.e. what she/he looks like, their personality, or relationship to the other characters. This may need to be done on a separate sheet of paper. The state or location where they think the story is taking place.
- For the "Beginning" box on the template, ask students to imagine what happened before the scene in the painting. This may need to be done on a separate sheet of paper.
- For the "Middle" box on the template, ask students to imagine what is happening in the scene shown in the painting. This may need to be done on a separate sheet of paper.
- For the "End" box on the template, ask students to imagine what happened after the scene in the painting. This may need to be done on a separate sheet of paper.
- Ask students to use their story map to draw a picture that illustrates one part of their story.