

# ROBERSON MUSEUM AND SCIENCE CENTER

## Visual Thinking Strategies- Look! Think! Write! Pre-Visit Lesson Plan

**Grade Level:** Pre K-Adult

**New York State Learning Standards:** ELA 1-4; Arts 1-4

**Pennsylvania Learning Standards:** A&H 9.2, 9.4; RWSL 1.4, 1.5, 1.6

**Objectives:** Students will become familiar with how to look at and examine various works of art through observation and critical thinking.

### Materials:

- One photocopy or transparency of an artwork
- Crayons/Markers/Colored Pencils
- Papers
- Other classroom art supplies

### Procedure:

#### Part 1: Observe

Select one photograph of artwork you would like to have your students look at. Try to select a piece with people in it, as it is more likely to have a narrative. If you have the ability, photocopy the work onto a transparency, as this makes group or shared viewing easier.

To begin, have the students take a few moments to view the work of art. Make sure that the title of the work is not visible to the students.

#### Part 2: Explore and Discuss

1. After an extended period of quiet observation, begin by asking students "**What is going on in this picture?**" (If the children are really young, you may rephrase as "What do you see in this picture?").
2. Call on students one at a time. **Point** precisely to what students mention. **Paraphrase** EACH comment. This gratifies students and allows the nuances of language to settle in students' minds. When you paraphrase, be concise and change only the wording, not the meaning of what is said. In rephrasing, demonstrate the use of proper sentence construction and rich vocabulary to assist students with language. Accept each comment as equal in value to all others.
3. After each student's observations, the second question you may ask is "**What do you see that makes you say that?**" This requires students to provide evidence for their observations. There

may be times when this question does not need asking (for example, if a student identifies a ball in the painting, you need not ask, "What do you see that makes you say you see a ball?").

4. **Link** related students' comments. This allows students to feel a part of a conversation about art, is gratifying, and also allows for the group to come to a shared understanding or acknowledge a discrepancy in interpretation.
5. Follow up each comment with "**What more can we find?**" Asking what **ELSE** we can find implies something **OTHER** than what has already been said. **MORE** asks students to look more carefully or deeply at the work of art.
6. Use encouraging body language and facial expressions to foster participation.
7. After approximately 15 to 20 minutes, you should move on to your next work of art. You will be able to feel a long pause in conversation that may feel like the "end" of the discussion. Compliment students on their discussion and move on to the next work of art. When you have completed the entire lesson, tell them what you particularly enjoyed in their discussion. Encourage them to think of viewing art as an open-ended process. Avoid summaries.

### Part 3: Recreate

After the discussion, ask students to redraw or recreate one work of art their own style or how they would have made the work different. Also, have each student come up with their own title for their new art work. Give the students time to create their works using markers, crayons, or other classroom supplies.

**Conclusion:** If time permits, ask for any volunteers to share and explain their artwork and title.

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