

Artist as Storyteller

Educator Resource Package

Grades 1-6

Artists are storytellers too! Explore the art at the AGA through story in this exploratory visit. Discuss setting, characters, and narrative to learn all about the art of storytelling. This thematic visit includes brainstorming, story sequencing, and oral storytelling activities. Through discovery and play students work to examine the connection between visuals, written text and story!

This package will help to prepare your class for their visit and provide in-class activities to further engage with the key concepts explored during your visit to the Art Gallery of Alberta.

Big Ideas

- Exploration of the connection between visual and written texts
- How do artists create stories? What tools do they use?
- How do artists communicate mood, setting, characters and narrative visually?
- Introduction to multi-sensory, multi-level strategies for interacting with art
- Development of creative narratives in response to visual imagery



Before your visit

Work with your students to explore the concept of *Artist as Storyteller*. Using the reflection questions below, brainstorm with students what they already know and practice interacting with art using a framework for critical analysis.

Big Questions: Artist as Storyteller

Work with students to discuss how a work of art can be 'read' as a story.

What is art? Where can we see art in our everyday lives?

How can we 'read' a work of art?

What is the connection between written texts and visual texts? What is the connection between artists and authors?

What can images tell us that written text can not? And vice versa?

How do artists communicate mood? Setting? Characters? Narrative? How does this differ from an author?

Your Turn: Practice Visual Storytelling

What you need: Drawing tools, paper, your imagination!

What you do: Create a visual story with the students using a visual reference. Each student will contribute a part of the story which is then retold orally as a group.

1. Choose a work of art that tells a story. This can be connected to an area of current study (Language Arts, Science, Social Studies).
2. Give the students the role of storytellers. Challenge them to create a story as a group using the chosen work of art as inspiration. Look closely at the work together and use the FRAMES (focus on the "Time, Space & Place" FRAME) on the next page to explore the art from different perspectives. What is the artist telling us? Is there a story?
3. Lead the students in the creation of an oral/visual story using the questions below. Ask a question, get a response from one student and ask that student to draw their response. Continue with this process until everyone is drawing a part of the story. Remember to refer to the artwork for inspiration. Questions:
 - Where does the story take place? What time of day and year is it?
 - Who is the main character in this story?
 - Who are the other characters?
 - What is the first thing that happens? What is the second thing that happens? Etc.
 - What happens at the end?
4. Once students have finished drawing, put the story images in order and recount the story aloud as a group.

FRAMES

Interacting with Art

First Response

What do you see? What do you think of it?
What does the artwork remind you of?
Where do your opinions come from?

How was the artwork created?
What techniques, materials and tools did the artist use? How do you know?
Describe the elements and principles used by the artist. How do they contribute to the artist's message?

Break it Down

Time, Place, Space

What does the artwork tell us about:

- the time period in which it was made?
- the place in which it was made?
- the culture in which it was made?

How do we make sense of an artwork?
How does the artwork relate to our own lives and experiences?
What new meaning do we bring to the artwork?

New Meanings

Alberta Education Program of Study Connections

Fine Arts

REFLECTION: Students respond to visual imagery throughout the gallery with in-gallery discussions and activities.

- Students will notice and assess commonalities within classes of natural objects or forms and assess the visual qualities of objects.
- Students will interpret artworks by examining their context and less visible characteristics and interpret artworks for their symbolic meaning.

DEPICTION: Students engage in a variety of activities including sketching aiming to develop imagery based on observations of the visual world.

- Students will learn the shapes of things and select appropriate references for depicting images

Language Arts

General Outcome 1: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences.

1.1 Students will discover and explore the relationship between language and image through discussions, writing activities, storytelling and visual representations.

General Outcome 2: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts.

2.1 Students will use strategies and cues to find and articulate stories within a variety of media texts (visual images)

2.2 Students will respond to visual texts orally and in writing

2.4 Students will create original texts (orally and in writing) inspired by responses to visual imagery in the Gallery