

Learning to Look

Educator Resource Package

Grade 1-12

How can we 'read' a work of art? What can art tell us about the culture in which it was made? Explore these questions and more with *Learning to Look!* Students explore the art and architecture of the AGA to practice close looking and observation strategies while strengthening their visual literacy and visual thinking skills. This program introduces multiple ways of looking at art while focusing on how students can connect art and ideas to their own lives and experiences.

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

- Personal responses to art
- Structural responses to art
- Exploring cultural, historical, social contexts
- Constructing new meanings
- Interactive art explorations including sketching, concept mapping and discussions



Before your visit

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

Big Questions: Learning to Look?

Work with students to discuss how a work of art can be 'read' and the importance of visuals within their own personal contexts.

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

How can we 'read' a work of art?

Why is it important to be able to 'read' art?

What is the difference between 'reading' a work of art and 'reading' a written text? Which gives more information? Which do you prefer? Why?

Your Turn: Practice Interacting with Art

Introduce your students to different ways of looking at art using the FRAMES framework on the next page. Choose art images related to your current topic of study in order to make connections between new learning and what students already know.

Helpful Hints!

- Use questioning that encourages students to look closer at the work.
 - All students will have opinions about images. To build upon these opinions ask for clarification about responses in order to get students to think critically about their ideas.
 - Encourage students to explain WHY they think what they think.
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Useful Resources

Visual Thinking Strategies: <http://www.vtshome.org/>

LEARN NC, Resources for looking at art: <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/671>

J. Paul Getty Museum Teacher Resources:

http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/index.html

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

Elementary Art Program

REFLECTION: Students respond to visual imagery throughout the gallery through 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

Grade 7-12 Art Program

DRAWINGS: Students will respond to what they see in the Gallery through a range of activities including sketching.

- Students will build upon a repertoire of approaches to recording visual information.
- Students will develop the ability to investigate visual relationships in their recorded images and in the environment.

COMPOSITIONS: Students will examine how images are arranged in order to discover the artist's message and use visual thinking skills to talk about how images are composed.

- Students will analyze the relationships among components of images.

ENCOUNTERS: Students will encounter a wide range of art forms through a variety of 'looking at art' activities.

- *Students will* build upon their understanding of the idea that the role and form of art differs through time and across cultures.
- *Students will* build upon their understanding of the idea that art reflects and affects cultural character.

Language Arts

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

- Students will form tentative understandings, interpretations and positions on different visual imagery
- Students will consider new perspectives as seen in a variety of artwork and imagery

General Outcome 2: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to comprehend literature and other texts in oral, print, visual and multimedia forms, and respond personally, critically and creatively.

- Students will construct meaning from text and context in order to discern and analyze context
 - Students will connect self, text, culture and milieu
 - Students will appreciate the effectiveness and artistry of print and non-print texts
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Social Studies

DIMENSIONS OF THINKING

Students will:

S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:

- evaluate ideas and information from multiple sources
- determine relationships among multiple and varied sources of information
- analyze current affairs from a variety of perspectives

S.2 develop skills of historical thinking:

- analyze multiple historical and contemporary perspectives within and across cultures

Students will:

S.8 demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy:

- communicate effectively to express a point of view in a variety of situations
- use skills of formal and informal discussion and/or debate to persuasively express informed viewpoints on an issue
- ask respectful and relevant questions of others to clarify viewpoints
- listen respectfully to others