

## Gallery activity: Stories Inspired by Art

**Note:** this activity is planned for use in the Museum, but could be adapted to use reproductions or web images of art works.

**Objectives:** Students will learn to look closely at a work of art of their choice. Students will collect their impressions and thoughts about the work on paper. Students will compose a piece of creative writing inspired by the work of art.

**Materials:** Strips of paper with descriptive phrases (suggestions attached at end of this lesson plan); handout with questions to encourage close looking and spaces for writing impressions and thoughts (also included at the end of this lesson plan; pencils; paper.

**Procedure:** Begin by explaining each step of the activity verbally. Ask for any questions.

- Put folded strips of paper with descriptive phrases in a basket so the words can't be seen, and ask each student to select one.
- Students should read the selected phrase, and then pick a work of art in the gallery which they feel connects to those words in some way.
- Standing in front of the selected work, students should read and respond to each question on the handout, writing down their impressions and thoughts in words or phrases.
- Once the handout is complete, students will compose their own story, using the original word phrase selected and impressions and thoughts from the handout, and any additional inspiration from their selected work of art.
- At the end of the session, students can share their selected word phrase, why they chose the work they did, and their creative writing with the group, even if their story is not yet finished.

**Evaluation:** Was the student able to explain how the selected word phrase connected to his/her work of art?  
Did the student examine the work of art closely and complete the handout thoughtfully?  
Did the student utilize the original word phrase and other thoughts and impressions from the handout in the creative writing?  
Did the student share his/her work at the end of the session, and treat the other students' work with respect?  
Could the student follow this process with another work of art and word phrase in a more independent manner?

MAP standards: FA3, CA4  
GLE: Strand III

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**Descriptive phrases for use in Stories Inspired by Art**

Seemingly simple  
Structure and order  
Sensual pleasures  
Costly confections  
Careful planning  
Quiet solitude and ethereal beauty  
Expansive space  
Painstaking detail  
Moralizing messages  
Brilliant highlights  
Surface textures  
Details of everyday life  
Romantic drama  
Natural radiance  
Fanciful composition  
Several disparate elements  
Poetic grouping  
Vastness and grandeur  
The honorable thing  
Stage-like settings  
Comic revelry  
Mastery of color  
Glittery luminescence  
Natural radiance  
Imminent disarray  
Flamboyant carving  
Dignified representations  
Fantasy realm  
Careful planning

## LOOKING & GATHERING IDEAS AND WORDS

Spend some time looking closely at your selected work of art, then respond to the following questions with words and phrases (no need to use complete sentences). Write as many descriptive words as you can. Try to hold off on judgment, and focus on what you actually see.

**What attracted you to this artwork? What do you notice about it? What do you recognize?**

**What does this work of art remind you of? Can you make any connections with things you have already seen or experienced, as well as memories?**

**What feeling or mood might this work convey to you?**

**What does the piece make you wonder about? What more do you want to know about this artwork?**

## Gallery activity: Art Surprise Boxes

**Note: this activity is planned for use in the Museum, but could be adapted to use reproductions or web images of art works.**

**Objectives:** Students will understand what a detail is in a work of art.  
Students will be able to describe details in writing and draw details of a work of art.  
Students will look closely and be able to identify a work of art from details

**Materials:** plain paper, scissors, pencils, works of art viewed during a visit to the Museum or posters

**Procedure:** Either make the template ahead of time or have students measure and cut five squares of equal size that form a cross with one box in the center surrounded by the other four. (see attached sheet)

- Fold so that the boxes all overlap and unfold. This will create five boxes.
- In the center box, write the name of a work of art and the name of its creator.
- Turn the cross over.
- In each of the four “arms” of the cross draw a detail from the work of art or write a clue about the work.
- Then in the center box write “Who (or what) Am I?”
- Fold up the cross so that the “Who Am I” is on the top. Try to put the clues in ascending order of difficulty.
- Students can exchange their Surprise Boxes to see if they can find the work of art before they look at the answer on the back.

**Note: This can also be done using word clues rather than drawings. Encourage students to write clues that move from the general to the particular to make solving the puzzle more difficult.**

**Evaluation:** Did the student follow directions to create the box?  
Did the student complete all four drawings or written clues? Were they of good quality?  
Did the student participate in collaborative activity at end and treat the other students’ work with respect?  
Can the student identify what a detail is?

MAP standards: FA3, 1.4, 2.3

GLE: Strand I, A-D

