



Classroom Extension Activities

Tools of Expression

In the classroom, students will prepare for and build on their museum experience by viewing works of art and discussing the elements of art and principles of design.

Art Investigation

Before or after museum program

Whole class, 15+ minutes

Learning Target: Students identify how an artist's choices about the Elements of Art and/or Principles of Design influence meaning-making.

Standards:

Washington Visual Arts Standards

- Re8.1.6 Interpret art by distinguishing between relevant and non-relevant contextual information and analyzing subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.
- Re8.1.7 Interpret art by analyzing art-making approaches, the characteristics of form and structure, relevant contextual information, subject matter, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.
- Re8.1.8 Interpret art by analyzing how the interaction of subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, use of media, art-making approaches, and relevant contextual information contributes to understanding messages or ideas and mood conveyed.
- Re8.1.I Interpret an artwork or collection of works, supported by relevant and sufficient evidence found in the work and its various contexts.
- Re8.1.III Analyze differing interpretations of an artwork or collection of works in order to select and defend a plausible critical analysis.

Materials:

A work of art, projected where all students can see it. Recommended works of art can be found in TAM's Teacher Resource collections [here](#). The [Teacher Resource: Elements of Art collection](#) contains works that are good examples of one or more elements of art; the [Teacher Resource: Principles of Design collection](#) contains works that are good examples of one or more principles of design. Both contain works exclusively by women and artists of color. However, you could use any work of art for this lesson, including works from other Teacher Resource collections.

Lesson Procedure:

Project the chosen work of art so all students can see it. First, allow students to quietly look at the image for at least 30 seconds. After 15 seconds or so, you may prompt them with instructions such as:

- Have your eyes start at the top of the picture and slowly work their way down to the bottom
- Have your eyes start at the left side of the picture and slowly work their way across
- Look carefully at what is in the corners of the picture
- Look carefully at what is in the center of the picture

Then, use Visual Thinking Strategies questions to help students analyze the image.

- Ask, "What do you notice?"
 - o Call on one student to point out something they notice in the art.
- Ask, "What do you see that makes you say that?"
 - o Ask that same student to describe why they said what they did. (For example, "It looks like clouds because the shapes are fluffy and layered.")

- o Paraphrase what the student said – this is a good opportunity to incorporate target vocabulary, make connections with other learning or what other students said, and check for understanding.
- Ask, “What else can we find?”
 - o Call on another student to point out something they notice, and repeat the process, asking them to describe their reason.
- Repeat until at least 5 students have had the chance to share something they noticed.

If you are focusing on one element of art or principle of design, bring students’ attention to that element/principle with questions such as:

- How does the artist’s color choice impact the mood of this work?
- How does the artist create a sense of movement?
- Where do you see repetition in this work? How does that help you make sense of the work?

If you are focusing on the elements and principles holistically, focus the conversation with questions such as:

- Which elements or principles are especially obvious in this work?
- Choose one element of art and one principle of design. How does that element and that principle interact in this work of art?

You may also choose to supplement the conversation with an Artful Thinking routine, such as those found here: <https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines#WithArtOrObjects>