Lesson Title - Visual Thinking Strategies - Using Art to Transform Learning

Presenters - Patricia Naczinski and Lisa Murray

Grade Level - 1-5

Background information - Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), is a research-based teaching method that promotes critical thinking skills through interaction with visual art. VTS encourages a deeper level of thinking and sharing of multiple perspectives. These strategies are useful for almost any subject, including: looking at artwork, exploring poetry, observing science, investigating math concepts, and introducing new topics. The routines in this lesson help students make careful observations and thoughtful interpretations while stimulating curiosity.

National Visual Arts, California State Visual Arts, and Common Core Standards -

Grade 1 - VA:Re8.1.1a Interpret art by categorizing subject matter & identifying the characteristics of form VA:4.2 Identify and describe various reasons for making art. Speaking & Listening #2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. Reading Info #7 Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas. Writing #8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Grade 2 - VA:Re8.1.2a Interpret art by identifying the mood suggested by a work of art & describing relevant subject matter & characteristics of form. VA:4.2 Compare different responses to the same works of art. Speaking & Listening #2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media Writing #8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Grade 3 - VA:Re7.2.3a Determine messages communicated by an image. VA:4.1 Compare and contrast selected works of art and describe them, using appropriate vocabulary of art. Speaking & Listening #1b Follow agreed upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion)

Grade 4 - VA:Re7.2.4a Analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages. VA:4.1 Describe how using the language of the visual arts helps to clarify personal responses to works of art. Writing #1a Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose

Grade 5 - VA:Re7.1.5a Compare one’s own interpretation of a work of art with the interpretation of others. VA:4.3 Develop and use specific criteria as individuals and in groups to assess works of art. Writing #1a Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose
Learning Objectives- Students will:

- Collaborate with colleagues to observe, analyze, draw, and write what they see while viewing selected artwork.
- Explore VTS strategies that encourage critical thinking and communication skills.
- Learn ways to connect visual art, language arts, and Common Core Standards.

Vocabulary- Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), Interpret, analyze, subject matter, mood.

Materials- Various art prints, pencils, markers/crayons (optional), handouts.

Motivation- Keynote presentation to introduce VTS. Art Prints, of paintings, sculptures and photographs to inspire students to write, draw, and speak.

Procedures- Facilitate VT strategies, using both whole group and small group exercises and individual drawings.


Lesson- Distribute tree map handout to each person. Ask participants to look/discuss asking the question “What do you think is happening in this photograph?” Participants’ share out ideas, then write their ideas on handout, next ask “Who do you think the man is?” continue this procedure until all questions are discussed and written, then tell them the “What’s really happening in the photo”. Follow up by showing them more photos by Vivian Meyer and explaining her style of photography and subject matter.

Assessment- Participants’ will look at their handout and see how many ideas they got correct.
**Small Group Exercise:** *Distribute selected art prints.*

- **Name:**

**Visual Thinking Strategies**

**SEE**
- List and describe the objects and/or people you see.

**THINK**
- What do you think is happening in the artwork?

**WONDER**
- What is the meaning, mood, and feeling you get from the artwork?

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*The Dog Barking at the Moon, 1952, by Joan Miro*

**Lesson** - Distribute tree map handout to each person. In small groups, observe the art print presented and complete the see, think, wonder questions. Share group findings with the whole class.

**Assessment** - Participants’ will share new insights. Did the exercise increase your observation skills and/or curiosity? How?

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**Individual Exercise:** Display *The Gulf Stream, 1899, by Winslow Homer.*

- **Name:**

**Visual Thinking Strategies**

**BEGINNING**
- **MIDDLE**
- **END**

*Draw what you think may be happening before and after.*

**Lesson** - Distribute handout to each person. Participants will view the center image and using pencils, crayons or markers draw what they think may have happened before and after.
**Assessment** - Participants will share what clues they observed in the artwork to determine their own drawing ideas. Explain your thoughts about what may have happened before and after.

**Extensions** - Use the theatre technique of tableau to interpret a work of art.