
LESSON SUMMARY

Researchers in museums have found that 30 seconds is the average amount of time visitors spend in front of a single work of art. Is that enough? What happens when you spend more? Less?

This interactive museum visit lesson gives students an opportunity to compare and contrast a quick viewing with a longer viewing.

GRADE LEVEL

Middle school

TIME NEEDED

15-30 minutes for Pre-Visit Discussion

30-45 minutes in museum galleries

15-60 minutes for Post-Visit Discussion and Activities

OBJECTIVES

- The student assesses, evaluates, and responds to the characteristics of works of art.
- The student uses writing processes effectively.
- The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS

- VA.D.1.3.1. understands how a work of art can be judged by more than one standard.
- LA.B.1.3.1. organizes information before writing according to the type and purpose of writing.
- LA.B.2.3.1. writes text, notes, outlines, comments, and observations that demonstrate comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.

MATERIALS

- Pencil
- Clipboard
- Stopwatches

VOCABULARY WORDS

- Museum
- Compare
- Contrast

NOTES & WORKSHEETS

- Gallery Worksheet

PRE-VISIT

- Ask students to estimate the average amount of time they spend when looking at a work of art. Record their responses and discuss the factors they believe affect the amount of time.
- Ask students how long they think adults spend, on average, looking at a work of art. Record their responses and discuss why there may be a difference between an adult's and a child's looking.
- After students have answered, explain that researchers have discovered that the average time that adults spend looking at one object in a museum is less than 30 seconds. Is 30 seconds ample to spend with a work of art? Why or why not?

MUSEUM VISIT

- Students should step off the bus with their clipboard, pencil, and Gallery Worksheet.
- Choose a gallery in the museum to begin with. It's a good idea to choose a gallery that's large enough to accommodate your entire class, but allow your students to spread out and look at different paintings.
- Model the activity with one student as the viewer and one as the timer. (Choose a relatively large painting for this, as your whole class will be watching this demonstration.)
 - Have the student stand with their back to the artwork
 - When you say go, student turns around to look at the artwork for 30 seconds.
 - At the end, say stop and student turns around.
 - At this point, have the student record their answers & information on the gallery worksheet.
 - Then, ask student to turn around and look again, taking their time.
 - Students should record things they notice this time, or things they did not record accurately the first time.
- While in large group, review the questions on the gallery worksheet. Determine how many works of art they should do this with, and be sure they have a gallery worksheet for each one.
- Divide students into teams of two. Have students choose their works of art, and begin.
- If possible, have all teams do the same 3 or 4 paintings (rotating through) to facilitate a whole group discussion when you return to class.

POST-VISIT

- *Personal Writing Response:* Have students write about their experience of limited time versus unlimited time.
 - How did it feel?
 - Which was more comfortable? Why?
- *Group Discussion Questions:* For each painting, ask students to share their ideas about what the work of art may be about. If the work of art is narrative in nature, encourage students to speculate on the story.
 - How much longer did you spend looking at the image the second time?
 - Was your first glance sufficient?
 - Does discussing and comparing observations with other people help us understand the work of art?