

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Forging Connections Between Visual Literacy and English Language Arts

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE FOR EDUCATORS



Matsumura Goshun (1752-1811), *Hat Maker with Haiku*, Ink and color on paper, Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 77.84

*“Nobleman’s hat maker
Put on the official’s hat
The evening’s moon.”*

While Visual Art and English Language Arts are distinct disciplines, they inform and enrich each other. Foundational skills in English—reading, writing, speaking, and listening—are evergreen elements of the curriculum that can help students articulate their understanding of visual art more effectively, both in writing and in conversation.

The educator resources provided by the New Orleans Museum of Art includes short descriptions and images of seven artworks from NOMA’s permanent collection. Guiding questions are included to aid and encourage conversation and discussion within the classroom setting. Finally, these resources also include several lesson plans, including activities that are adaptable for most ages and abilities.

LIST OF WORKS

Matsumura Goshun (Japan, 1752–1811), *Hat Maker with Haiku*, c. late 18th century, ink and color on paper, Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 77.84

Imogen Cunningham, (United States, 1883–1976), *Chris*, 1972, Gelatin silver print, Gift of Mrs. P. Roussel Norman; Accession, 91.461

Alexandre Marie Colin (France, 1798–1875), *Othello and Desdemona*, 1829, Oil on canvas, Museum purchase, The Bert Piso Fund, 2001.329

Willie M. Birch (United States, b. 1942) , *Labor Day Parade*, 2005, Acrylic and charcoal on paper, Museum purchase, Carmen Donaldson Fund, 2011.74.f

Larry Rivers (United States, 1923–2002), *Portrait of Sunny Norman: Parts of the Face*, 1963, Oil on Canvas, Gift of Mrs. P. Roussel Norman, 91.235

Sister Gertrude Morgan (United States, 1900–1980), *It Is Time to Set in the Swing*, n.d.,Crayon, gouache, pen on paper, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Ryan, 74.5

George Rodrigue (United States, 1944–2013), *Stand Up Straight and Tall*, 2001 Medium: Acrylic on canvas, Gift of Pat and Henry Shane, 2007.109

MATSUMURA GOSHUN



Matsumura Goshun (1752-1811), *Hat Maker with Haiku*, Ink and color on paper, Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 77.84

Matsumura Goshun was a Japanese painter and poet of the Edo period, known for blending the literati style, which emphasizes personal expression, spiritual cultivation, and philosophical ideals over technical perfection or realistic representation style of painting with a delicate, narrative sensibility. Born in Kyoto, he studied under Yosa Buson, a master of haiku and painting, and later became the founder of the Shijō school, which emphasized naturalistic subjects painted with expressive brushwork. *Hat Maker with Haiku* reflects this fusion of poetry and image, showing a craftsman at work while a written haiku accompanies the scene. This integration of text and image was a hallmark of Japanese visual culture during the Edo period, where art, literature, and daily life were deeply intertwined.

The haiku adds another layer of meaning, transforming the portrait of labor into a moment of reflection. For students, the piece offers an accessible entry point into cross-disciplinary learning—combining visual analysis with poetry writing, cultural history, and vocabulary building. The intimate scale and simplicity invite careful observation, while the presence of text naturally supports English Language Arts connections, making it an ideal work for developing visual literacy alongside writing skills.

GUIDED QUESTIONS

What do you notice about the way the artist drew the hat maker? What details stand out?

How does the haiku change how you see the painting?

If you could ask the hat maker one question, what would it be?

What do you think the hat maker is feeling at this moment?

How might this scene sound, smell, or feel if you were standing there?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Haiku from the Workshop
Picture to Poem

IMOGEN CUNNINGHAM



Imogen Cunningham, (United States, 1883–1976), *Chris*, 1972, Gelatin silver print, Gift of Mrs. P. Roussel Norman; Accession, 91.461

Imogen Cunningham was a pioneering American photographer whose career spanned more than seven decades. Known for her botanical studies, industrial landscapes, and modernist portraits, Cunningham was also a champion of straightforward, unretouched photography that revealed the natural beauty and individuality of her subjects.

In *Chris*, Cunningham captures a young subject in a candid, intimate moment. The portrait's simplicity—soft light, direct gaze, and minimal background—invites viewers to focus on the person's expression and presence. The lack of distraction allows subtle details, like posture and facial expression, to speak volumes. This work offers students an opportunity to explore character analysis through visual cues, translating observation into descriptive and narrative writing. By encouraging students to read “visual text” as closely as a written story, the photograph builds skills in inference, detail recognition, and empathetic storytelling.

GUIDED QUESTIONS

What three words would you use to describe Chris?

What do you think Chris might be thinking about?

How does the lighting affect the mood of the portrait?

If this were the cover of a book, what kind of story would you expect?

What details tell you about Chris's personality?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Detail Detectives

WILLIE M. BIRCH



Willie M. Birch (United States, b. 1942) , *Labor Day Parade*, 2005, Acrylic and charcoal on paper, Museum purchase, Carmen Donaldson Fund, 2011.74.f

Willie Birch is a New Orleans-based artist known for his large-scale paintings and papier-mâché sculptures that celebrate African American culture, history, and community. His work often draws from the traditions, neighborhoods, and everyday life of New Orleans, blending personal memory with collective experience. *Labor Day Parade* captures the joy and rhythm of a community gathering, where music, dance, and movement create a vibrant visual beat. The painting's bold patterns, expressive lines, and layered textures pull viewers into the scene, allowing them to feel the pulse of the celebration.

For students, the piece provides a dynamic visual text to analyze—identifying characters, actions, and atmosphere. The abundance of details offers rich opportunities for descriptive writing, sequencing events, and imagining dialogue between figures. The scene is also a gateway to discussing the significance of parades in cultural identity and storytelling.

GUIDED QUESTIONS

What is happening in this scene? How can you tell?

Which part of the painting draws your eye first? Why?

If you were in this parade, what would you see, hear, and feel?

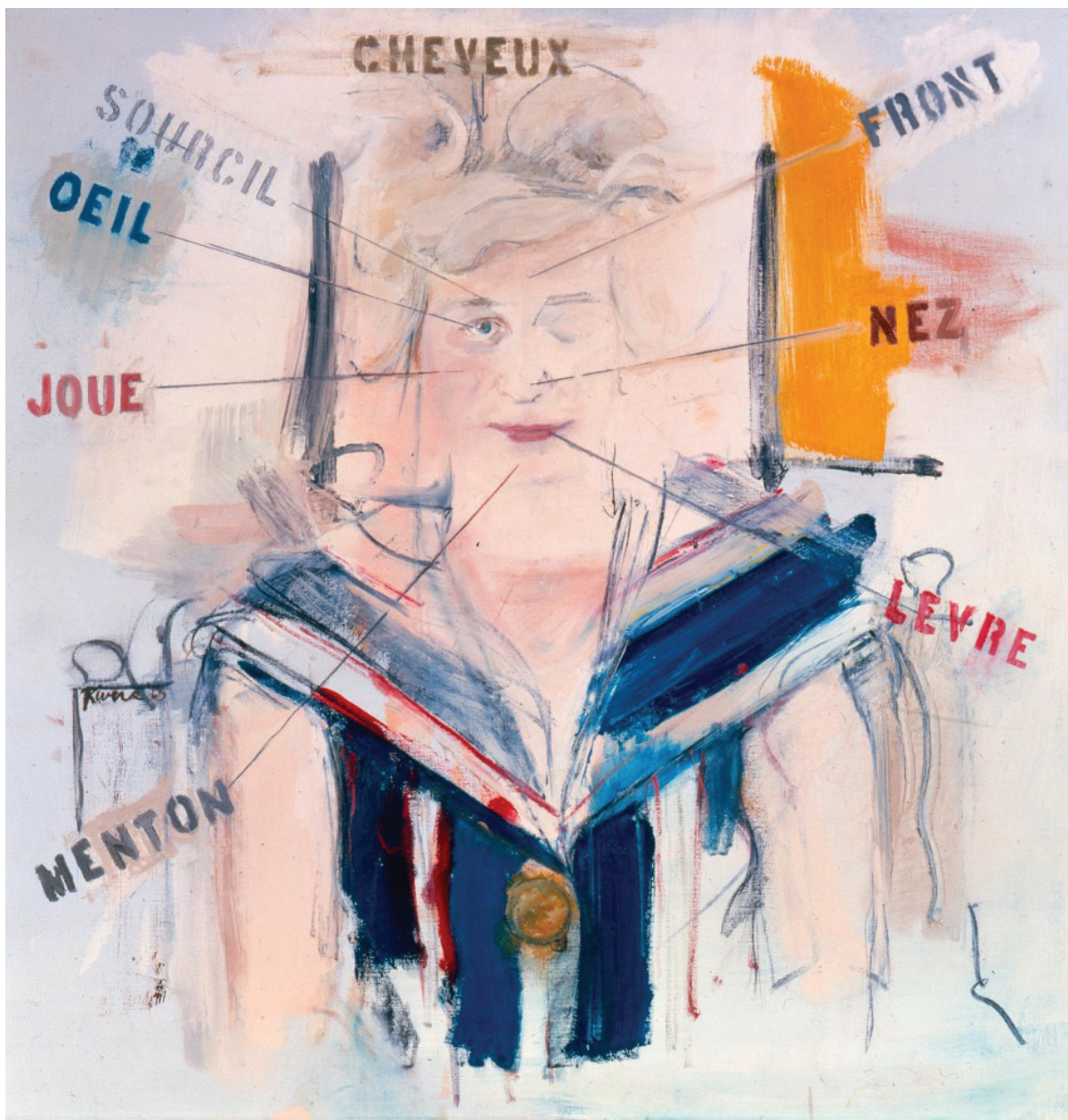
How might the parade change if it took place at night?

Why do you think the artist chose to show this particular moment?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Parade in Words

LARRY RIVERS



Larry Rivers (United States, 1923–2002), *Portrait of Sunny Norman: Parts of the Face*, 1963, Oil on Canvas, Gift of Mrs. P. Roussel Norman, 91.235

Larry Rivers was an American artist whose work often blurred the boundaries between Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, and traditional portraiture. Known for mixing figurative imagery with text, Rivers challenged viewers to think about how meaning is constructed. In *Portrait of Sunny Norman: Parts of the Face*, the artist combines a traditional portrait with labeled facial features, turning the work into both a study in anatomy and a playful commentary on art and education.

This piece invites students to think about how words and images interact. The labels encourage viewers to notice details they might otherwise overlook, while also raising questions about how naming something changes how we see it. For ELA connections, the painting is a springboard for vocabulary building, descriptive writing, and discussions about identity.

GUIDED QUESTIONS

How do the labels change the way you look at the portrait?

What mood do you think Sunny Norman has? How can you tell?

Why do you think the artist combined art and text?

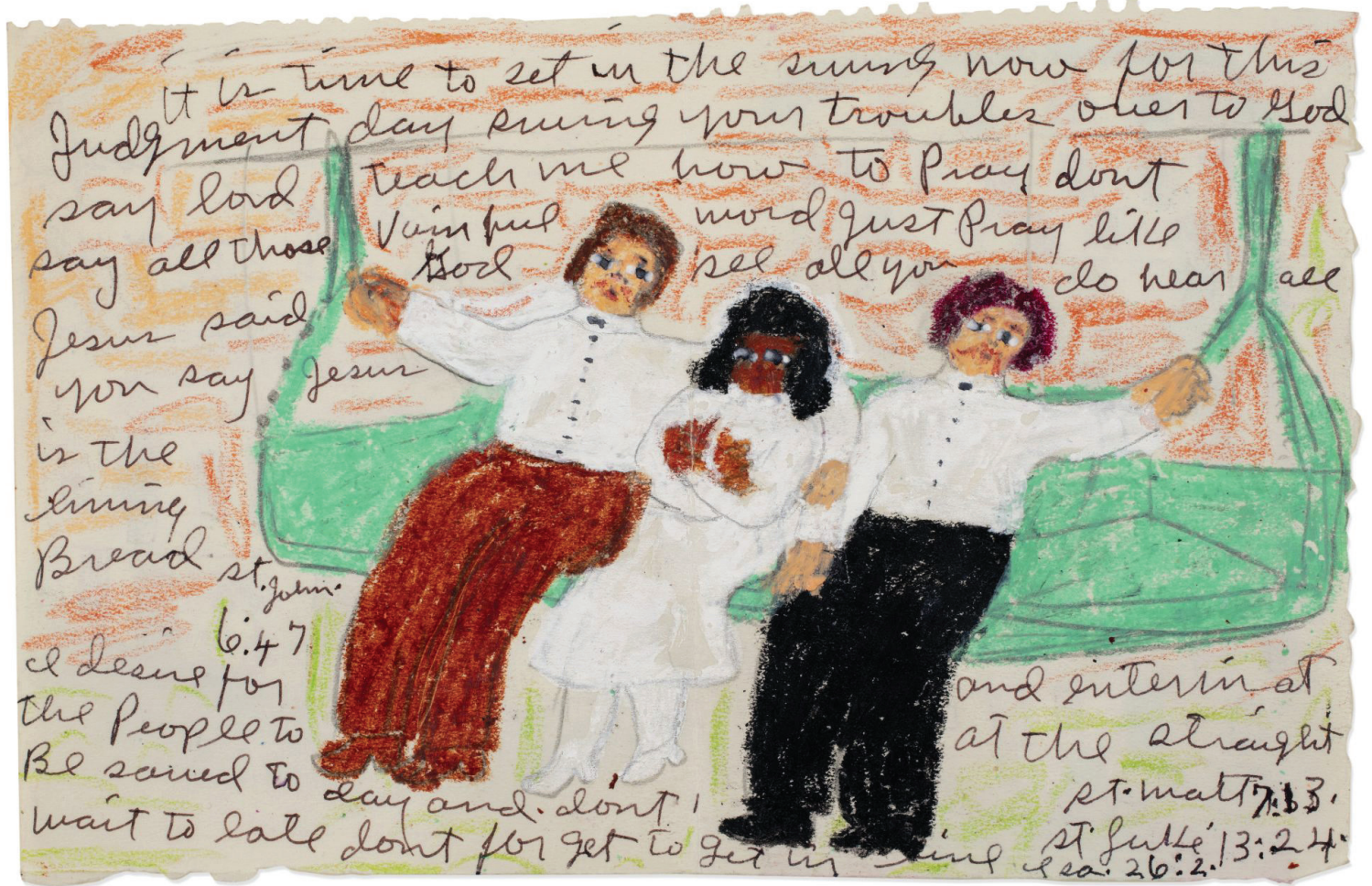
What is one label you would add to this portrait?

How might Sunny feel about having their face labeled?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Label Your World

SISTER GERTRUDE MORGAN



Sister Gertrude Morgan (United States, 1900–1980), *It Is Time to Set in the Swing*, n.d., Crayon, gouache, pen on paper, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Ryan, 74.5

Sister Gertrude Morgan was a self-taught New Orleans artist, street preacher, and musician whose art blended religious vision with vibrant folk style. She used her paintings, often infused with scripture and handwritten text, to share her spiritual message. *It Is Time to Set in the Swing* combines bold colors, stylized figures, and lively composition, capturing her unique blend of faith, art, and storytelling.

This piece offers rich opportunities for students to connect written and visual narratives. The handwritten words and imagery work together to communicate meaning, making it ideal for exploring how text supports visual storytelling. Younger students can focus on word recognition and illustration, while older students can interpret the symbolic meaning behind her imagery.

GUIDED QUESTIONS

What words can you find in the painting?

How do the pictures and words work together?

What story or message do you think the artist is sharing?

What colors stand out most to you, and why?

If you could add a sentence to the painting, what would it say?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Text Meets Image

GEORGE RODRIGUE



George Rodrigue (United States, 1944–2013), *Stand Up Straight and Tall*, 2001 Medium: Acrylic on canvas, Gift of Pat and Henry Shane, 2007.109

George Rodrigue was a Louisiana artist best known for his “Blue Dog” series, which became an iconic symbol of Louisiana art and culture. His work often draws from Cajun folklore, local landscapes, and vibrant color palettes. *Stand Up Straight and Tall* features the instantly recognizable Blue Dog in a bold, graphic style, paired with simple shapes and strong color contrasts.

For students, the Blue Dog is approachable and engaging, offering an entry point for learning descriptive language, practicing prepositions, and building imaginative narratives. Younger students can focus on identifying colors, shapes, and positions, while older students can create stories or poems from the character’s perspective.

GUIDED QUESTIONS

What do you notice about the Blue Dog’s posture?

Where is the Blue Dog in the picture? How can you describe its position?

What mood do the colors give the painting?

If Blue Dog could talk, what would it say?

Why do you think the artist painted so many Blue Dogs?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Prepositions with Blue Dog
Blue Dog’s Day Out



Alexandre Marie Colin (France, 1798–1875), *Othello and Desdemona*, 1829, Oil on canvas, Museum purchase, The Bert Piso Fund, 2001.329

Alexandre Marie Colin was a French Romantic painter celebrated for his dramatic use of color and theatrical compositions. *Othello and Desdemona* illustrates a scene from William Shakespeare's *Othello*, a tragedy exploring love, jealousy, and betrayal. The painting captures the tension and intimacy between the characters, offering a visual counterpart to the play's emotionally charged language.

For students, this work is a direct bridge between visual art and literature. It can be paired with reading a passage from *Othello*, allowing students to compare how text and image convey mood, character, and conflict. It's particularly effective for teaching visual literacy, character analysis, and adaptation studies.

GUIDED QUESTIONS

What emotions do you see in the characters' faces and body language?

How does the setting in the painting compare to what you imagine from the play?

What moment from *Othello* do you think this is?

How would the scene change if painted from Iago's perspective?

Which details in the painting help you understand the relationship between Othello and Desdemona?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Page to Painting
Alternate Ending

LESSON PLANS

The following lesson plans are designed to be partnered with the aforementioned artworks. Each lesson includes content standards, as well as the National Core Art Standards that are met. While the lesson plans are organized by grade levels, they can be modified or enhanced to reach all age groups.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (K–5)

HAIKU FROM THE WORKSHOP Writing and illustrating Haiku inspired by *Hat Maker with Haiku*

VISUAL ART TIE-IN Students write their haiku on washi paper and fold an origami envelope to store it, choosing colors/patterns that reflect the poem's mood.

PARADE IN WORDS First-person storytelling from *Labor Day Parade*

PREPOSITIONS WITH BLUE DOG Practicing prepositions using *Stand Up Straight and Tall*

MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6–8)

LABEL YOUR WORLD Students label objects or people in a classroom photograph, then write about how those labels affect meaning

TEXT MEETS IMAGE Creating illustrated sentences inspired by *It Is Time to Set in the Swing*.

BLUE DOG'S DAY OUT Write a short story from Blue Dog's perspective in *Stand Up Straight and Tall*.

HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION (GRADES 9–12)

PICTURE TO POEM (*Hat Maker with Haiku*) Students translate visual details into descriptive sentences before refining into poetry.

DETAIL DETECTIVES (*Chris*) Students list every visible detail, then build descriptive sentences.

PAGE TO PAINTING Comparing literary and visual interpretations in *Othello and Desdemona*

VISUAL ART TIE-IN Students draw their favorite scene from *Othello* or another literary work, pairing it with a caption or excerpt from the text.

ALTERNATE ENDING Rewrite the scene with a different emotional outcome from *Othello and Desdemona*.

HAIKU FROM THE WORKSHOP (*Hat Maker with Haiku*)

Students explore how text and image work together by studying the haiku and painting, then writing their own haiku from the perspective of the hat maker or a customer.



Matsumura Goshun (1752-1811), *Hat Maker with Haiku*, Ink and color on paper, Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 77.84

INTRODUCTION

Imagine you're walking through a busy street in Japan hundreds of years ago. A hat maker sits at his shop, surrounded by colors, shapes, and textures. Every detail tells a story and today, we'll turn those details into a poem. We're going to use the haiku form, a special Japanese style of poetry, to step into the hat maker's shoes or maybe even one of his customers. Let's see how just a few words can capture a whole world.

STEPS

1. Introduce the haiku form (5-7-5 syllables). (5-10 min)
2. Observe the painting closely; list nouns, verbs, and adjectives. (10 min)
3. Discuss the haiku in the artwork and its connection to the image. (5 min)
4. Students brainstorm their own three-line poem using their observations. (20-25 min)
5. Share poems aloud, comparing how different perspectives change tone. (15-20 min)

VOCABULARY haiku, Edo period, artisan, stanza, imagery.

MATERIALS NEEDED Image of artwork, paper, pencils.

OPTIONAL Japanese calligraphy brushes and ink for presentation.

EXTRA SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR VISUAL ART INTEGRATION

1. "Haiku in an Envelope"
 - Students write their haiku on washi paper. (10 min)
 - They fold an origami envelope to store their poem, choosing colors/patterns that match the mood or theme of their writing. (10 – 15 min)
 - Discuss how presentation and design can enhance the meaning of written words. (5-10 min)
2. "Illustrated Haiku Scroll"
 - Students write their haiku vertically (traditional Japanese style) on a strip of paper. (10 – 15 min)
 - They add small, simple illustrations in ink or watercolor inspired by the poem's imagery. (10 – 15 min)
 - Mount the paper on cardboard or thin bamboo sticks to mimic a scroll. (10 min)
3. "Word + Image Collage"
 - Students cut out patterns, textures, and images from magazines or printed Japanese textile patterns. (5 – 10 min)
 - They arrange these on a page to create a background or border for their haiku. (10 min)
 - The collage becomes a visual mood board for their poem.
4. "Stamp & Seal"
 - After writing their haiku, students design a small "signature" stamp (like a Japanese hanko) with their initials or a symbol that represents them. (10 – 15 min)
 - Use foam, cork, or potato stamps with ink to "sign" the poem. (10 – 15 min)
 - Discuss how artists in Japan used seals to mark their work. (10 min)

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR HAIKU FROM THE WORKSHOP ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA:Re7.2.K-5 – Perceive and analyze artistic work.

VA:Cr2.1.K-5 – Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

L.K.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

RL.K.7 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear.

SL.K.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade-level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

W.2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a sequence of events, including details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings.

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA-VA.K-2.MAKE.1 Generate and develop artistic ideas and work.

VA-VA.3-5.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

PICTURE TO POEM

(Hat Maker with Haiku)



Matsumura Goshun (1752-1811), *Hat Maker with Haiku*, Ink and color on paper, Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 77.84

Students translate specific visual details from the painting into a short poem.

50 – 60 minutes

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever looked at a picture and felt like it was whispering a story to you? Today, we're going to listen closely to this image and capture its details into a poem. Think of yourselves as storytellers, you'll notice colors, objects, even moods in the image, then give those details a voice through your writing. The image of the Hat Maker becomes our stage, and your poem is the script.

STEPS

1. Observe the artwork and collect "detail" words. (10 min)
2. Choose a narrative voice for the poem. (5 min)
3. Draft and refine the poem using sensory language. (20 – 25 min)
4. Share aloud and discuss different interpretations. (15 – 20 min)

VOCABULARY narrator, stanza, detail, imagery

MATERIALS NEEDED Image of artwork, paper, pencils

EXTRA SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR VISUAL ART INTEGRATION

1. "Haiku in an Envelope"
 - Students write their haiku on washi paper. (10 min)
 - They fold an origami envelope to store their poem, choosing colors/patterns that match the mood or theme of their writing. (10 – 15 min)
 - Discuss how presentation and design can enhance the meaning of written words. (5-10 min)
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 - Students write their haiku vertically (traditional Japanese style) on a strip of paper. (10 – 15 min)
 - They add small, simple illustrations in ink or watercolor inspired by the poem's imagery. (10 – 15 min)
 - Mount the paper on cardboard or thin bamboo sticks to mimic a scroll. (10 min)
3. "Word + Image Collage"
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 - They arrange these on a page to create a background or border for their haiku. (10 min)
 - The collage becomes a visual mood board for their poem.
4. "Stamp & Seal"
 - After writing their haiku, students design a small "signature" stamp (like a Japanese hanko) with their initials or a symbol that represents them. (10 – 15 min)
 - Use foam, cork, or potato stamps with ink to "sign" the poem. (10 – 15 min)
 - Discuss how artists in Japan used seals to mark their work. (10 min)

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR PICTURE TO POEM ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA:Re7.1.K-5 – Perceive and analyze artistic work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

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| RL.K.7 | Analyze the relationship between illustrations and text. |
| W.3.3 | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences using effective techniques and descriptive details. |
| SL.3.1 | Engage effectively in collaborative discussions. |

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA-VA.K-2.RESPOND.1 – Perceive and analyze artistic work.

DETAIL DETECTIVES

Students build descriptive writing skills by cataloging small visual clues in a photograph, then turning those clues into vivid sentences.

50–60 minutes

INTRODUCTION

Put on your detective hats! Today we're investigating a photograph, but instead of fingerprints or clues at a crime scene, our evidence is in the details: absence of colors, posture, lighting, even facial expressions. Every small clue helps us build a bigger picture about who this person might be and what they're feeling. By the end, you'll turn your notes into vivid sentences that reveal the story behind the photo.

MATERIALS Image of artwork, clipboards, pencils

VOCABULARY detail, inference, texture, lighting, posture

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR DETAIL DETECTIVES ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA:Re7.1.K–5 Perceive and analyze artistic work.



Imogen Cunningham, (United States, 1883–1976), *Chris*, 1972, Gelatin silver print, Gift of Mrs. P. Roussel Norman; Accession, 91.461

STEPS

1. Observe the portrait silently for one minute. (5 min)
2. Record an “evidence log” of visible details such as clothing, posture, lighting, and facial expression. (15 min)
3. Turn each detail into a complete descriptive sentence, adding adjectives and prepositions. (15 min)
4. Combine sentences into a paragraph, focusing on how details reveal personality or mood. (10 – 15 min)
5. Share with the class and compare how interpretations vary. (5 – 10 min)

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

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|--------|---|
| L.3.1 | Demonstrate command of conventions of standard English grammar. |
| W.4.3 | Write narratives to develop experiences with descriptive details. |
| SL.4.4 | Report on a topic or text with appropriate facts and relevant descriptive details |

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA-VA.3-5.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work

LEAF AND LINE POETRY

Students create a short poem paired with a leaf print or pressed leaf inspired by the mood of the portrait.

60–70 minutes

INTRODUCTION

Photographs don't just show people, they carry moods, feelings, and textures. Today, we'll connect the mood of this photograph with a natural element that also appears in the photo alongside the person's image: a leaf. Just like each leaf has its own veins and patterns, every photograph carries unique emotions. You'll pair a leaf print with a short poem, letting art and nature work together to express something deeper.

MATERIALS Artwork image, paper, pencils

VOCABULARY perspective, procession, texture, rhythm

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR LEAF AND LINE POETRY ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA:Re7.2.K–5 Perceive and analyze artistic work
VA:Cr1.1.K–5 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.



Imogen Cunningham, (United States, 1883–1976), *Chris*, 1972, Gelatin silver print, Gift of Mrs. P. Roussel Norman; Accession, 91.461

STEPS

1. Study the portrait and identify its mood. (10 min)
2. Select or create a leaf print. (10 min)
3. Write a poem that reflects both the portrait and the leaf's textures. (15 – 20 min)
4. Mount poem and leaf together on art paper. (15 min)
5. Display for a gallery walk. (15 min)

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- SL.2.4 Report on a topic or text with appropriate facts and relevant descriptive details.
- L.2.1 Demonstrate command of conventions of standard English grammar and usage.

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA-VA.3-5.MAKE.1 Generate and develop artistic ideas and work.
- VA-VA.K-2.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

PARADE IN WORDS (LABOR DAY PARADE)

Students write a first-person narrative from the perspective of someone in the parade scene.

40–50 minutes

INTRODUCTION

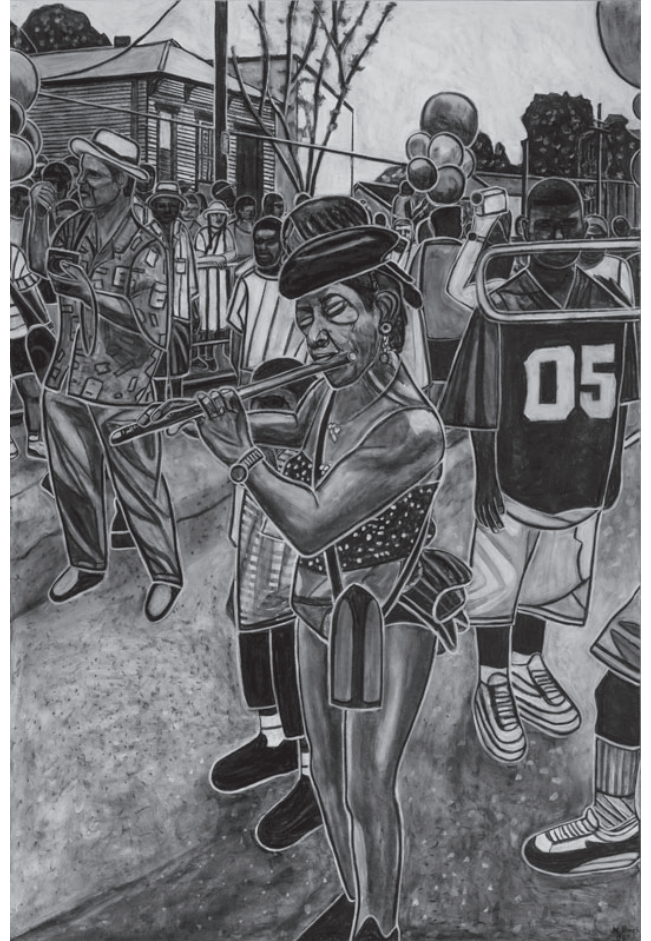
Close your eyes for a moment and imagine standing in the middle of a parade. The music is loud, the dancers are moving, the crowd is full of excitement, the air is full of energy. Now open your eyes and compare the image in your mind to the artwork in front of you. Today, you'll choose a role in the parade; it could be a drummer, a dancer, or even someone watching from the crowd. Tell the story of a character in the parade in your own voice. The same picture can hold dozens of different stories.

MATERIALS Artwork image, paper, pencils

VOCABULARY perspective, procession, texture, rhythm

STEPS

1. Observe the painting; list sensory details. (10 min)
2. Choose a parade role (musician, dancer, spectator). (5 min)
3. Write a first-person narrative describing the parade. (15–20 min)
4. Share aloud to compare perspectives. (10–15 min)



Willie M. Birch (United States, b. 1942), *Labor Day Parade*, 2005, Acrylic and charcoal on paper, Museum purchase, Carmen Donaldson Fund, 2011.74.f

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR PARADE IN WORDS ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA:Re7.2.K–5 Perceive and analyze artistic work
VA:Cr1.1.K–5 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
SL.2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners.
L.2.1 Demonstrate command of conventions of standard English grammar and usage.

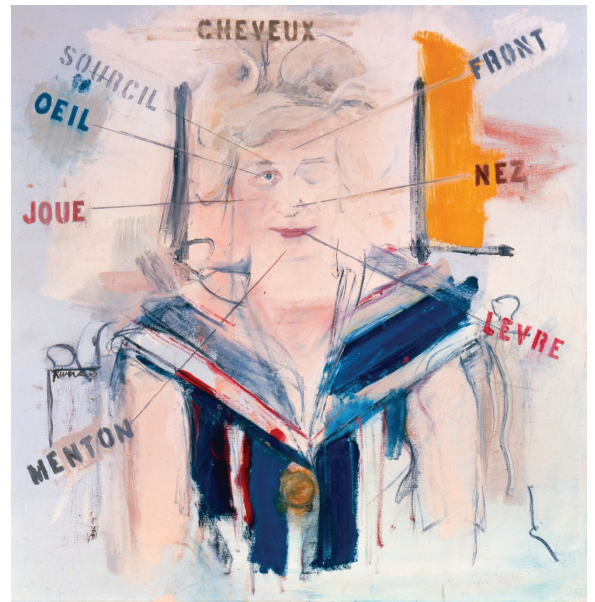
LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA-VA.3-5.MAKE.1 Generate and develop artistic ideas and work.
VA-VA.K-2.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

LABEL YOUR WORLD

Students label a photo or drawing of their environment, then reflect on how labels shape meaning.

45 – 50 minutes



Larry Rivers (United States, 1923–2002), *Portrait of Sunny Norman: Parts of the Face*, 1963, Oil on Canvas, Gift of Mrs. P. Roussel Norman, 91.235

INTRODUCTION

What happens when we put labels on things or on people? Labels can guide us, but they can also limit us. This portrait uses labels in a powerful way, and today you'll try it too. You'll add labels to a picture of your own world and then reflect on how those words shape meaning. Do labels help us see more clearly, or do they change the way we see altogether?

VISUAL ART CONNECTION Uses labeling as a design and interpretation tool in both art and written analysis.

MATERIALS Photos or drawings, sticky notes, pens

VOCABULARY label, caption, identity, bias, perspective

STEPS

1. Discuss the labeled portrait in the artwork. (5 – 10 min)
2. Choose a classroom or personal photo. (5 min)
3. Add labels to objects or people in the image. (15 min)
4. Write 5 – 7 sentences reflecting on how labels affect perception. (10 – 15 min)

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR LABEL YOUR WORLD ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA:Re7.2.K–5 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- W.4.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners.
- L.3.1 Demonstrate command of conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

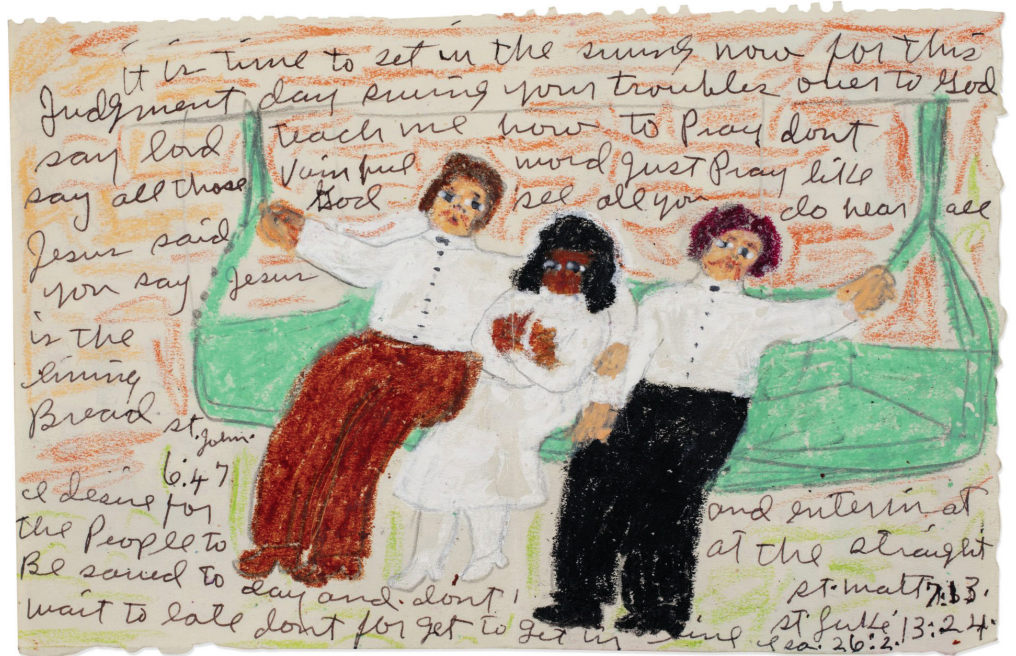
LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA-VA.3-5.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

TEXT MEETS IMAGE

Students create an illustrated sentence inspired by Sister Gertrude Morgan's painting.

45 – 50 minutes



Sister Gertrude Morgan (United States, 1900–1980), *It Is Time to Set in the Swing*, n.d., Crayon, gouache, pen on paper, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Ryan, 74.5

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes artists don't just draw pictures, they draw with words as well. In Sister Gertrude Morgan's artwork, text and image live side by side, each adding to the other. Today, you'll do the same: you'll write a short sentence and then illustrate it so the words and image belong together. Think of it like a duet: the text sings, the image harmonizes.

STEPS

1. Identify visible words in the painting. (5 – 10 min)
2. Discuss how text and image interact. (5 min)
3. Write a short sentence and illustrate it with matching imagery. (15 – 20 min)
4. Share work with the class. (10 – 15 min)

MATERIALS Artwork image, paper, pencils, coloring tools

VOCABULARY folk art, scripture, illustration, message, symbolism

VISUAL ART CONNECTION Integrates text and illustration to communicate a unified message.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR TEXT MEETS IMAGE ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA:Cr2.1.K–5 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work
VA:Re7.1.K–5 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- L.K.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
W.1.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences.
SL.2.4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and descriptive details.

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA-VA.K-2.MAKE.1 Generate and develop artistic ideas and work.
VA-VA.3-5.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work

PREPOSITIONS WITH BLUE DOG



George Rodrigue (United States, 1944–2013), *Stand Up Straight and Tall*, 2001 Medium: Acrylic on canvas, Gift of Pat and Henry Shane, 2007.109

Students practice prepositions while describing Blue Dog's position in the painting.

30 – 40 minutes

INTRODUCTION

Grammar can feel tricky sometimes, but art makes it fun. Today, we'll use George Rodrigue's Blue Dog to practice **prepositions** or those little words that tell us where something is: above, below, beside, in front of. By describing where Blue Dog is in the painting, we'll see how grammar helps us place characters in their world. It's grammar with a splash of color!

STEPS

1. Review common prepositions. (5 – 10 min)
2. Observe the painting and note the dog's position. (5 min)
3. Write sentences using prepositions to describe placement. (10 – 15 min)
4. Share aloud. (5 – 10 min)

MATERIALS Artwork image, paper, pencils

VOCABULARY preposition, posture, contrast, position, background

VISUAL ART CONNECTION Uses art observation as a real-world application for grammar concepts

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR PREPOSITIONS WITH BLUE DOG ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA:Re7.1.K–5 Perceive and analyze artistic work.
VA:Cr1.1.K–5 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- L.K.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
W.1.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences.
SL.2.4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details.

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA-VA.K-2.MAKE.1 Generate and develop artistic ideas and work.
VA-VA.K-2.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

BLUE DOG'S DAY OUT

Students write a short narrative from Blue Dog's perspective and illustrate one scene.

50 – 60 minutes

INTRODUCTION

Blue Dog isn't just standing still in a painting; he has a personality, color, character, and maybe even a story to tell. Today, you'll become BlueDog's voice and imagine his day. Where does he go? Who does he meet? What adventures unfold? By writing from Blue Dog's perspective, you'll turn a single portrait into a full story, complete with words and illustrations.



George Rodrigue (United States, 1944–2013), *Stand Up Straight and Tall*, 2001 Medium: Acrylic on canvas, Gift of Pat and Henry Shane, 2007.109

STEPS

1. Identify traits based on the dog's posture and surroundings. (10 min)
2. Create a story map with beginning, middle, and end. (10 min)
3. Write an 8–12 sentence story from Blue Dog's perspective. (20 min)
4. Illustrate a single scene from the story. (10 – 15 min)

MATERIALS Artwork image, paper, coloring supplies

VOCABULARY point of view, setting, sequence, posture, contrast

VISUAL ART CONNECTION Integrates narrative writing with character-based illustration.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR BLUE DOG'S DAY OUT ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA:Cr1.1.K–5 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- W.2.3, W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- SL.2.4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details.

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

VA-VA.3-5.MAKE.1 Generate and develop artistic ideas and work.

PAGE TO PAINTING

Students explore how literature and visual art can influence each other by reading a passage from *Othello* and comparing it to the painting *Othello and Desdemona*.

50 – 60 minutes



Alexandre Marie Colin (France, 1798–1875), *Othello and Desdemona*, 1829. Oil on canvas, Museum purchase, The Bert Piso Fund, 2001.329

INTRODUCTION

Art and literature have always spoken to each other. Today we'll see what happens when Shakespeare's *Othello* meets a painting inspired by the play. We'll read a short passage and then compare it to how the artist captured the same characters on canvas. How do words and images interpret the same story differently? By the end, you'll reflect on how art changes the way we understand literature.

STEPS

1. Read aloud a selected scene from *Othello* (Act IV, Scene 2 or Act V, Scene 2) focusing on Othello and Desdemona's interaction. (15 min)
2. Observe the painting closely; note facial expressions, body language, clothing, and background details. (10 min)
3. Discuss similarities and differences between the written text and the visual portrayal. (10 min)
4. Students write a short reflection on how the artist's interpretation changes or enhances the meaning of the scene. (15 min)
5. Share reflections in small groups or as a class. (10 min)

MATERIALS printed passage from *Othello*, image of *Othello and Desdemona*, paper, pencils.

VOCABULARY adaptation, interpretation, staging, composition, symbolism

VISUAL ART CONNECTION Integrates text and illustration to communicate a unified message.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR PAGE TO PAINTING ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA:Re7.2.6–8 Perceive and analyze artistic work, including adaptations across media.
- VA:Re8.1.6–8 Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- RL.7.3 Analyze how elements of a story or drama interact.
- RL.8.7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story or drama.
- SL.7.1 Engage effectively in collaborative discussions.
- W.7.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA-VA.6-8.RESPOND.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- VA-VA.6-8.CONNECT.1 Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context.

ALTERNATE ENDING

Students imagine a different resolution to the scene in *Othello and Desdemona*, exploring how changes in narrative can shift the meaning and tone.

50 – 60 minutes



Alexandre Marie Colin (France, 1798–1875), *Othello and Desdemona*, 1829, Oil on canvas, Museum purchase, The Bert Piso Fund, 2001.329

INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare gave us one version of Othello and Desdemona's story, but what if the ending were different? What if the artist's painting hinted at another possibility? Today, you'll reimagine the outcome: instead of tragedy, maybe forgiveness, maybe surprise, maybe something totally new. You'll see how changing the ending transforms not just the story, but the themes behind it.

STEPS

1. Review the scene from Othello depicted in the painting. Discuss the emotional stakes and character motivations. (10 min)
2. Observe the painting; note the mood conveyed by color, light, and posture. (10 min)
3. Students brainstorm alternate emotional outcomes—reconciliation, mutual understanding, or unexpected plot twists. (10 min)
4. Write a short narrative or dialogue scene depicting the new ending. (15 – 20 min)
5. Volunteers share their endings and discuss how the shift affects the play's themes. (10 min)

MATERIALS printed passage from *Othello*, image of *Othello and Desdemona*, paper, pencils.

VOCABULARY resolution, climax, tone, subtext, foreshadowing

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR ALTERNATE ENDING IMAGE ACTIVITY

NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA:Re7.2.6–8 Perceive and analyze artistic work.
VA:Cr2.1.6–8 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work

LOUISIANA ELA STANDARDS

- RL.7.3 Analyze how elements of a story or drama interact.
W.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear sequences.
SL.7.4 Present claims and findings in a coherent manner.
W.8.3 Write narratives to develop experiences with effective technique and clear sequences.

LOUISIANA VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

- VA-VA.6-8.CREATE.1 Generate and develop artistic ideas and work.
VA-VA.6-8.RESPOND.2 Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.