

Using Art to Address the CCSS

The Common Core State Standards require students to:

- think at higher levels,
- participate in collaborative discussions,
- interpret input from a variety of sources including text and images,
- engage in evidential reasoning,
- state opinions and develop cogent arguments,
- offer a written and/or verbal rationale for their thinking,
- actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures,
- communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds,
- evaluate other points of view critically and constructively,
- and vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own.

When it comes to developing higher order thinking skills, a dramatic change occurs in the classroom when **students move from literal to inferential thinking** – thinking that is evidenced by a student’s ability to move beyond superficial, literal observations, develop logical conclusions, and engage in metaphorical thinking. Teacher workshops offered at SBMA demonstrate how authentic works of art can be used across the curriculum to support inferential thinking.

SBMA Teacher Workshop lessons feature *Visible Thinking* strategies (Harvard, Project Zero), and include the extensive use of **Thinking Routines**, or learning routines that are thinking rich. Each routine:

- * targets a specific type of thinking
- * is used repeatedly in the classroom
- * consists of only a few step, and is easy to learn and teach
- * develops the student’s academic and general vocabulary
- * and encourages the use of the Language of Thinking.

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The use of Thinking Routines never takes time away from instruction. The Routines effectively enhance the development of central, core ideas in any unit and/or lesson, and are used as a means of investigating and working with integrated art and subject matter content from across the curriculum. They elicit the kind of higher order thinking that is required by the CCSS, for example:

- the “Explanation Game” Thinking Routine invites students to notice details in works of art, formulate hypotheses, and support their opinions with evidence from the image.
- the “Same/Same/but Different” Thinking Routine asks students to compare and contrast two or more works of art, applying a set of criteria.
- the “Symbol Search” Thinking Routine asks students to engage in metaphoric thinking as they discover possible symbolic representations in works of art that connect to content curriculum.

Each workshop also features the use of **VTS Facilitated Discussion Techniques**. In Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) discussions, teachers engage students in thoughtful discourse around an open-ended work of art. Teachers learn to invite student input and observations, elicit evidential reasoning from the hypotheses offered by students, and paraphrase responses to clarify understanding for all the participants in the discussion. Ideas build and develop within the group discussion process, and students come to both consider and appreciate multiple perspectives within the Circle of Viewpoints. The teacher is the *facilitator* of the discussion protocol, moving students to higher order thinking while focusing the balance of the discourse on *student* input.

Our Teacher Workshops offer demonstrations of a variety of **assessment options featuring SBMA works of art** (including formative, summative, and benchmark assessments that connect to the CCSS). The assessments are performance-based, and require students to apply higher order thinking to rich, engaging tasks. In addition to asking students to provide a thoughtful analysis of a work of art, students often read complex reading excerpts (including literature and expository texts), investigate related topics of inquiry using technological resources, and explain their thinking in writing and graphic representation.

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SBMA Teacher Workshops

Multiple resources, including an image bank from SBMA's permanent collection, lesson plans, PPT presentations, and sample assessments are shared with participants in all workshops.

ART MAKING WORKSHOPS FOR TEACHERS

In order to teach skills, a teacher needs to develop personal confidence and fluency.

Therefore, in an effort to provide an immersion into the creative process to teachers, SBMA offers art making workshops throughout the year. Teachers learn the use of various media and a variety of art techniques, and apply the techniques to lessons and projects that connect to content curriculum at their respective grade levels.

The art making workshops are facilitated by a Curriculum Specialist and an SBMA Teaching Artist, and feature connections to:

- the CCSS
- subject matter curriculum
- Big Ideas (or Throughlines) of various units of study or inquiry projects

Each art making lesson includes a thoughtful investigation of SBMA works of art and the applied use of VTS **Facilitated Discussion Techniques and Thinking Routines** (see above). Students are asked to observe and respond to works of art, look for details, form hypotheses, and support their thinking with evidence.

During the workshop, teachers create their own original works of art to use as prototypes with their students, following the demonstrations and lesson plans provided by the Teaching Artists.

The lesson plans foster individual, creative responses to SBMA works of art – each student piece is unique. The emphasis is on improvisation and experimentation, the refinement of ideas and skills, and the open-ended application of demonstrated techniques using suggested art media.

Images of artwork from SBMA's permanent collection and comprehensive lesson plans are provided to attending teachers.