

# Rural Arts Initiative Lesson Plans | 6-8

## Objectives:

- Students will analyze how different art techniques (lighting, composition, framing) influence the perception and meaning of artworks across various media (photography, painting, sculpture).
- Students will engage in critical thinking about how exhibitions reflect the community's history, values, and cultural context of the community.
- Students will practice active listening and collaboration through discussions about artwork and its broader implications.

## Overarching Learning Goals:

- I can understand how basic art techniques like lighting, composition, and framing are used in different media, such as photography, painting, and sculpture.
- I can explain how the arrangement and display of artworks in an exhibition reflect a community or society's history, culture, and values.
- I can analyze and discuss artwork with my peers, using evidence to support my ideas and building on others' perspectives.
- I can reflect on how art can challenge or change my views on history, culture, and society.

## Before the Lesson:

### Activity 1A: Art Techniques Exploration

#### I Can Statements:

- I can identify and explain key art techniques used in different media, such as lighting, composition, and framing.
- I can analyze how these techniques influence the meaning of artworks.

## Instructions:

1. Begin with a brief overview of key art techniques such as lighting, composition, and framing.
2. Explain that these techniques vary based on the medium. For example, in photography, lighting, and framing are crucial in shaping meaning, while composition and color choices are more prominent in painting. In sculpture, space, texture, and form are key.

3. Show visual examples from different art forms to highlight these elements. For example:
  - Show a photo with dramatic lighting, and explain how lighting can evoke mood.
  - Discuss how composition and use of space can affect how a viewer interprets the scene.
  - Discuss how the form and positioning of the sculpture interact with the surrounding space.
4. After discussing these concepts, have students analyze specific works and discuss how the artist used these techniques to convey meaning or emotion.

### **During the Lesson:**

#### **Activity 1B: Gallery Walk & Talk**

##### **I Can Statements:**

- I can identify how an exhibition reflects the history and values of the community or culture it represents.
- I can analyze how display methods, location, and personal experiences influence the perception of artworks.
- I can listen actively and build on others' ideas during discussions.
- I can use evidence from the exhibition to explain my thoughts.

##### **Instructions:**

1. Organize the class into small groups and assign each group one of the following focal points to consider as they view the exhibition:

##### **1. Exhibition Design:**

- How are the artworks arranged in the exhibition (e.g., chronological, thematic)?
- What effect does the arrangement have on how you experience the work?
- Can you identify any specific design elements contributing to the exhibition's overall message?

## 2. **Community & Culture:**

- What aspects of the community or culture are reflected in the artworks?
- Can you find any works that represent historical events or traditions?
- How do the artworks make you feel about the community or culture they represent?

## 3. **Interpretation & Perception:**

- How does the way an artwork is displayed (lighting, framing, etc.) influence your understanding?
- How might your own experiences and background affect how you interpret the works?
- Does the exhibition's location (e.g., museum, gallery) influence how you perceive the artworks?

## 4. **Connections & Comparisons:**

- Can you find any artworks that share a similar theme or style?
- How do these works compare and contrast with each other?
- Can you connect any of the works to something you've learned in history or another subject?

## 5. **Personal Response:**

- Which artwork resonated with you the most? Why?
- What emotions or thoughts did any of the artworks evoke in you?
- Did the exhibition challenge your perspective or understanding of anything?

### **Activity 2B: Keep the Conversation Going**

#### **I Can...**

- I can actively participate in group discussions.
- I can encourage others to share their thoughts.
- I can listen to others and respond thoughtfully.

## **Instructions:**

1. Divide students into groups
2. Before the conversation, prepare a large sheet of paper for each group. In the center, have one student draw a circle and write the names of all participants, including themselves, around the circle.
3. As students participate, have them draw lines between their names to show who is talking to whom. Encourage them to pay attention to who speaks often and who speaks less. Draw more lines between the names of students who participate frequently.
4. Have them use the sentence stems below to elevate inclusion amongst the group. The goal is for everyone to participate equally.
  - **Sentence stems for inclusion:**
    - Based on what I've heard...
    - What do you think? What are your thoughts on...?
    - So, what you're saying is...
    - I'm confused about... can you tell me more?
    - What evidence supports what you said about...?
  - **Sentence stems for discussion:**
    - I agree with you. Another example to support this is...
    - I disagree with that point... because...
    - I think... because of what I've read, heard, or saw...

## **After the Exhibition:**

### **Activity 1C: Recreate a Scene**

#### **I Can...**

- I can interpret a work of art and express it through physical representation.
- I can identify key elements like composition, lighting, and emotion in a work of art.
- I can discuss how my physical recreation reflects or differs from the original artwork.
- I can explain how techniques like lighting, framing, and composition impacts the artwork's meaning.

**Instructions:**

1. Choose a work of art from the exhibition and ask students to recreate the scene using their bodies, focusing on key elements like composition, lighting, or the emotional impact of the artwork.
  - o If you'd prefer a less physically active activity, students can also recreate the scene use classroom objects instead of using their bodies.
2. Afterward, discuss how these physical recreations or object-based representations differ from or complement the original artwork, emphasizing the role of techniques like lighting, framing, and composition in shaping meaning.
3. Have each group perform their scene for the class, or have your students walk around and view each other's creations.

**Activity 2C: Viewpoint Writing**

**Objective:** Encourage students to engage in creative writing or drawing to explore different perspectives on a work of art.

**Instructions:**

- Have students select a work of art and imagine it from a different perspective. They can write a short story or draw a complementary image from the viewpoint of another character or entity within the artwork.
- Encourage students to explore how the perspective shift changes the message or theme of the work.

**Debriefing Discussion:**

**Objective:** Reflect on how these activities deepened students' understanding of the exhibition and its connections to community and history.

- Ask students to share insights from their gallery walks, conversations, and creative activities.
- Discuss how the different activities allowed them to engage with the exhibition uniquely and how their understanding of the artworks changed through these activities.

**Activity 2C: Viewpoint Writing & Reflection****I Can...**

- I can create a new perspective on a work of art by imagining it from the point of view of a different character or element.
- I can explain how a shift in perspective changes the message or theme of an artwork.
- I can reflect on how various activities, such as the gallery walk and creative tasks, helped me better understand the artwork and exhibition.
- I can share my ideas clearly with others and contribute to discussions about how the exhibition reflects community and history.

**Instructions:**

1. Have students select a work of art from the exhibition and imagine it from a different perspective. They can write a short story or draw a complementary image from the viewpoint of another character or entity within the artwork.
2. Encourage students to explore how this shift in perspective changes the artwork's message, theme, or emotional tone.
3. After completing the creative task, ask students to reflect on their gallery walk experience, their group discussions, and creative activity.
4. Have students share how these activities deepened their understanding of the artwork and the exhibition.
5. Discuss how engaging with the art through different lenses, both physical (through recreations) and creative (through viewpoint writing), influenced their perceptions of the community and history represented in the exhibition.

**North Dakota Visual Arts Standards (2019):**

- **VA:Pr5.8:** Analyze and evaluate the reasons and ways an exhibition is presented.
- **VA:Pr6.6:** Explain and provide evidence of how museums or other venues reflect a community's history and values.
- **VA:Re7.8.4:** Analyze how the method of display, location, and viewer's experiences influence how an artwork is perceived and valued.

**North Dakota English Language Arts Standards (2023):**

- **7.C.6:** Engage in a range of discussions and/or debates, using active listening skills and referencing others' ideas.

**North Dakota Social Studies Standards (2019):**

- **ND.6\_12.4:** Analyze the historical and current events and their impact on the development of North Dakota.