

Learning to Look

Grade(s): Upper Elementary (3-5), Middle School (6-8), High School (9-12)

Subject(s): Visual Arts

Topic/Theme: Observing Works of Art

Suggested Time: Short Activity (20-30 minutes)

Lesson Overview: Using the acronym CATCH, students will learn qualities, characteristics, and guiding questions to consider when looking at a sign in our collection that CATCHes their attention. These skills can help students slow down while viewing our collection and can provide them with guidance to analyze works of art more deeply.

Materials:

- CATCH acronym anchor chart
 - Teachers can use attached pdf or can make their own and choose the guiding questions that best pertain to their students
- CATCH acronym graphic organizer
- Pictures of Sassy Sally's sign

Objectives:

- Students will be able to define the components of the acronym CATCH and at least 1 guiding question per component, as evidenced by completion of a graphic organizer.
- Students will be able to apply the acronym CATCH in order to analyze a sign in The Neon Museum's boneyard, as evidenced by participation in classroom discussion and completion of a graphic organizer.

NVACS:

- Visual Arts Anchor 7: Perceive and analyze work.
- Visual Arts Anchor 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Visual Arts Anchor 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- Visual Arts Anchor 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Learning to Look

Activity Steps:

1

Show students the provided pictures of the Sassy Sally's sign. Pose the question "What catches your attention when you first look at this sign?". Record their responses for the class to see. Pause once you have at least 5 responses.

2

Explain to students that it might be overwhelming or difficult to describe what you see when you are looking at a piece of art. They might think there are too many things to focus on or they might think there isn't enough to focus on. These feelings might cause us to quickly pass by pieces of art without really stopping to think about what we are seeing and experiencing.

3

Introduce the CATCH acronym to students. Explain that this acronym is meant to help them keep track of important qualities and characteristics to consider when looking at a piece of art.

You may need to remind or explain to students what an acronym is. Explain to students that an acronym is a mnemonic device that can help us remember a larger amount of information by abbreviating each component into 1 letter (e.g. Roy G. Biv is used to remember the colors of the rainbow, PEMDAS is used to remember the order of operations in math).

4

Display the CATCH acronym anchor chart for the class to see. One by one, introduce each component of the acronym to the class and explain how the guiding questions will help students zoom in on different characteristics of a work of art (in this case, the signs in The Neon Museum's boneyard). How in depth you choose to go with the guiding questions is flexible based on your students' needs and abilities.

5

Allow students to practice applying the CATCH acronym by revisiting the Sassy Sally sign. During this step, you can also provide students with the CATCH graphic organizer so that students can write down their observations in the corresponding section. As a class, analyze the Sassy Sally's sign using the CATCH acronym and guiding questions. When possible, refer back to students' initial observations to emphasize that they already consider some of these characteristics when looking at art!

6

During your visit to The Neon Museum, encourage students to utilize this acronym to help them analyze our signs more deeply!



Does this sign CATCH your attention?



C

Color

- What colors do you see?
- What might these colors symbolize or represent?
- How do these colors make you feel?

A

Attraction

- What type of business do you think this sign is for?
- What features does this sign have that help you figure out what kind of business it is for?

T

Theme

- What design theme(s) do you see in this sign?
- How would you expect the inside of this business to look?

C

Condition

- What condition is this sign in?
- Has it been restored?

H

History

- What time period do you think this sign is from?
- Is there a historic event that is connected to this sign?
- Do you know if this business still exists today?

Does this sign CATCH your attention?



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