

## **Visual Art Comes Alive: Sound, Movement and Storyboarding**

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Howard Gardner has stressed the importance of engaging students through multiple intelligences to facilitate learning. These ideas are combined with Jason Ohler's description of the story arc in contemporary media (Jason B. Ohler, *Digital Storytelling in the Classroom. New Media Pathways to Literacy, Learning, and Creativity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2013.s) and articles on the use of graphic novels in the classroom (*Art Education* March and Nov, 2008) to create a unit that integrates sound, dialogue, movement, sequencing, storyboarding, and graphic novels and makes use of students' familiarity with movies, TV and comics. A talking-picture activity encourages students to interpret art by creating dialogue based on characters visually presented in art works. Students, working in groups, will consider how characters, location, mood and genre of a story are expressed both visually and through sound. Beginning with an artwork that serves as a movie "screenshot" they will design a soundtrack to accompany it using their voices and bodies. Using both verbal and visual literacies students create a "Screenplay Poem" connecting words to the plot, characters, setting and audience reaction to their movie. The poem is then set in motion by creating interpretive movement using the elements of dance. Art-making activities inspired by these exercises include student-created storyboards starting with an historical photograph. After analyzing the photographs, students shoot their own photos to complete the story arc. An extension of this sequencing activity applies these ideas to the design of graphic novels.

### **Instructions for Activity - Talking Pictures:**

Working in groups of 2:

**Option A:** Choose one art work and become the voices of two of the characters in the art work and improvise a dialogue in which these characters are in conflict.

**Option B:** Each person chooses a different artwork and a character from their work. Become the voice of the character in your art work and improvise a dialogue in which these characters are in conflict.

Questions to think about:

How might the personalities or emotional states of these characters conflict?

How might the social or cultural circumstances of these characters conflict?

Might there be any age or gender conflicts?

### **Instructions for Activity: Sound Effects – Listening to the Paintings**

Look at the painting that you have been assigned. Imagine this work as a movie still. What is the location of this movie like? In what time period is it set? What kind of mood would this movie evoke? What place in the narrative is represented? To what genre would this movie belong? What kinds of sounds would suggest these different elements?

Have each group member choose a sound to build the sound track for this movie moment. Will you include sound effects, music, exclamations or all three? Develop a time sequence and pattern to put all the sounds together. You may not use electronic media for this activity.

### **Instructions for Activity - Screenplay Poem**

In small groups, recall the image that you used to create sound effects yesterday. Create a **Screenplay Poem** using the following format:

Plot - THREE VERBS

Characters - THREE ADVERBS (HOW the characters act)

Setting - THREE ADJECTIVES

Sentence - HOW DOES THE AUDIENCE REACT TO THIS MOVIE?

### **Instructions for Activity - Photographs in Sequence:**

Your group has been given an historical photograph.

This is going to become one image in a four-part sequence that tells a story.

Brainstorm ideas about what is happening in the photograph.

Who are these people? What are they doing and why? What might have happened before? What might happen next? Does your story represent a personal or social conflict? Will that conflict be resolved in your story?

You are going to be using a smart phone to take three other photographs to complete the story. The members of your group will become the characters and your group leader will take the photographs.

Your original image can be placed at any point in the four-part sequence. You will create the other three photographs in the same format (vertical or horizontal).

You have been given a few materials that can become props for your photographs. Photographs will be printed out before next session.

### **Storyboarding:**

Use the double stick tape to affix your photographs to the foam core in the order you have decided upon to tell your story. Create labels to identify the time sequence.

How much time has elapsed between each image? Create a label to title your story.

Create dialogue or thought bubbles if you would like to add the characters' voices or thoughts to your story. Create captions if you think this use of text would enhance your story.

### **Instructions for Activity - Graphic Novels: Creating a Personal Narrative:**

Think of some conflict within your inner life. This may have to do with ethnic identity, gender roles, life and/or professional roles, etc. Identify two aspects of your inner life that are in conflict in some way. Create two characters or symbols to represent these two aspects. You have been given 5 sheets of paper to create a graphic novel. You will be using cut paper and pens to create your images. Remember what you have learned about the qualities of narrative, such as sequencing, setting, plot, and character. How will you arrange your images?