Preparing for a Museum Visit

By Teaching Artist Michelle Swinehart
Grade Level(s): Scalable

I. **Outcomes**: Students tell stories about their art objects with description and personal meaning.

   a. **Indicators**: Prompts for describing art object with detail.
      Prompts:
      - What should people do when they visit museums?
      - How can people be creative when they’re at a museum?
      - What is a museum story? How do these unfold?

   b. **Indicators**: Prompts for supporting story and developing meaning.
      i. Students tell about the relationship between art object: time, place, or people.
      Prompts:
      - What is the time of your art object?
      - Where is your art object placed? What is its place?
      - Who is involved with your art object? What is their involvement?
      ii. Students identify the meaning associated with the object.
      Prompts:
      - What is your art object’s story?
      - How does your art object’s story include time, place, and people?
      - How can you defend your art object’s story?

II. **Big Idea**: Objects of all kinds carry personal and cultural stories across time and place.

III. **Materials**:
   - 3 images from Museum Stories selection
   - Stories that correspond to the 3 art images
   - Technology to play video clip

IV. **Lesson** – 60 min

   A. **Opener**– Introducing Museums:
      Project some photographs of people in museum spaces and ask students to describe their observations getting at what people do when they visit a museum. List the class’ observations. (5 min)

   A. **Procedure**–
      1.) Meet Ted* (15 min) - *Ted is a security guard in the Portland Art Museum
i. Project Ted’s picture while students listen to his video clip:
   “This is So Cool, So Sweet”
   http://objectstories.org/stories#!/?Story=20780a55-5b4a-e011-abac-001ec9bb218f

ii. Guided listening: students take notes about what Ted is telling
people to do (in a museum).

iii. With a partner, students share what they notes and why they think
Ted hopes people will follow his advice and why it is important.

iv. Synthesize responses as a group

2.) Art Activity (40 min)

i. Divide the class into 3 groups. Each group will sit together and
receive a featured art object (can be in reproduction).

ii. Groups will read the story that accompanies their art object and
observe the details of their art object.

iii. Students respond to visual analysis prompts that refer to time,
people, place, and tone/emotion. (written)

iv. Students discuss their observations and thoughts about their art
object and its story with their group.

v. Students decide on a story for their art object that includes time,
people, place, and tone/emotion.

vi. Students present their art object’s story to the judges and peers
(judges= teacher, docent, artist.)

vii. Judges deliberate and share their verdict.

C. Closer-
Discuss the three museum stories as a group. How do they differ? How do they
make the piece more interesting to look at? What do you learn from the stories
vs. looking at the piece by yourself?