I. **Overview:** Students describe museum objects using visual analysis and descriptive word cards. Students relate and engage with art objects through discussion and writing a letter to an art object, artist, or figure in the work.

II. **Outcomes:** Students tell stories around art objects with personal meaning.
   
a. **Indicators:** Descriptive Words: Prompts for describing art object with detail and descriptive words.

b. **Indicators:** Relationships: Investigates relationships between object and its time(s), place(s), and people.

c. **Indicators:** Personal Meaning: makes a connection between art objects and own life.

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

IV. **Location:** Galleries (American, NW 3rd Floor, NW 4th Floor, European)  
   90 min

V. **Materials:**
   
a. Pencils
b. Note cards with descriptive words
c. Stationery (with instructions)
d. Clipboards
e. Museum letter worksheet (Teachers may choose to lead this tour themselves, see following pages for the necessary worksheets.)

VI. **Lesson**
   
a. **Opener:**
   
   i. *Today we are going to investigate some objects within the museum and the stories they carry with them, or the stories that you think they tell...*

   ii. The Docent introduces a work of art in the gallery and demonstrates a process for visual analysis involving use of descriptive language. To close the discussion, the docent asks for descriptive words students would use to describe object. (5-7 min)
b. **Procedure**: The Docent gives pairs of students a card with a descriptive word printed on it (see Downloads for Word Cards handout). Students scan the gallery to find a work of art they think reflects qualities of the word. With their partner they discuss, and on the back of the card students list other descriptive words they think describe their shared object (Min 3 words). (3-5 min)
   i. Students share their object choice, and descriptive word choice. The Docent leads brief discussion for each pair. (15 min)
   ii. The Docent directs students to two art objects which the Docent has chosen in the gallery. He/she leads visual analysis, asking students to look silently, and think of descriptive words to describe the first object. (8 min)
   iii. The Docent leads a discussion about the students’ observations and what is known but cannot be seen about the art objects’ time, place and related people, and elicits discussion. (8 min) *This objects story is...*
   iv. The Docent leads students to a second object and engages students in looking and sharing observations (*share the objects story again*), but builds on the previous focus: from descriptive words to constructing meaning. (10 min)
   v. The Docent asks students in which ways they can relate to the art object. Ask: “Why or why not?” and “Which aspect of the art object is it that you relate to?” *This object could be the docent’s chosen object they wrote and letter to. The docent could use their letter to introduce and model what the students will do with their own letter.*
   vi. Docents give each student PAM stationery. Students pick an art object that they perceive has a connection to their life and write a letter. Docents read the instructions to the students and paraphrase and clarify the instructions. Make sure students know this letter should represent their best work and demonstrate thoughtfulness!
      1. Address the letter: Dear Artwork, Artist, or Character in the work, ex: dear curator, or teacher, or mom
      2. Description of what students see, use descriptive words. Or: How would students describe the art to someone who could not see it themselves?
      3. Explanation of the connection between the art and the students’ own lives. i.e. connection to time, place, and/or people, or memory. Does it remind them or something? What has drawn them to it, or captured their imagination?
      4. What questions does the student have about the art object? What would they like to know more about? (3 questions)
      5. (Meanwhile, a museum employee will circulate to take a picture of the student next to their chosen art object.) (25 min)
c. **Closer:** The docent calls either the whole group together, or divides students into pair-shares. Students take their group/partner to their art object and **share** their letter. (10-15 min)
   i. Students then share out a highlight with the whole group
   ii. *Once they have finished sharing the docent asks students whether there is any connection between the museum object they selected and their personal object they told an object story about. If yes how?*

VII. **Modifications:**
   a. Docent may choose descriptive words, and how to print and present them to students.
   b. Letter writing time will vary: docents will need to use discretion when dividing into groups, and/or pairs
   c. Carry extra stationery. Students who complete letter very quickly can re-write a final draft, or someone who messes up can start fresh.
   d. *Instructions.* Please paraphrase to help students understand their instructions. You may have to explain in different ways to different students. Check for understanding my walking to each while they are writing to make sure they are able to get started and address questions for those who seem to be struggling.

VIII. **Extension ideas:**
   a. Teachers will receive the letters and a postcard from the museum with a picture of the student and their chosen artwork.
   b. Students research chosen object and attempt to answer their own questions.
   c. Revise their letter and share with whole class.
   d. Use chosen work as inspiration for a fictional narrative
   e. Teachers can lead this tour themselves, see following for the necessary worksheets.
Dear _____________________________,
(Artist, Art Object, Character)

1. Pick an object
   Artist: __________________________
   Title: ____________________________
   Date:____________

2. In your letter:
   • Describe what you see using detail.
   • What does your object make you think of?
     o A Person?
     o A time or place?
     o An experience?
   • Why are you picking this piece?
   • What questions do you have about the art object? What do you want to know?