VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Engaging ELs in Visual Arts

## *Make* learning visible

* Establish content and connected language targets to support students in comparing forms and works of art, sequencing steps for projects, explaining their responses to art, evaluating works of art, etc.
* Draw attention to patterns and relationships in works of art
* Refer to student-generated word walls and skill/style anchor charts to support language development and understanding of fine arts concepts and practices, e.g., elements and properties of art
* Complement word walls and anchor charts with visuals, e.g. water color technique samples
* Use (and encourage students to use) motion and real items to support understanding and retention of new concepts and key terms, e.g., perspective, balance, proportion

## Support the language of Visual Arts

All students can learn! High expectations, asset-based thinking, and growth mindsets are key to student success!

* Provide multiple opportunities for students to communicate about their works of art or their ideas about others’ art
* Explicitly teach the language of visual arts beyond a focus on vocabulary to support conceptual understanding
* Provide sentence starters to support *Visual Arts Standards of Learning* (SOL) and communication of art and design strategies, processes, and thinking, e.g.,
  + Evaluate works by self and others:   
    My/Your/the work can be improved by \_\_\_\_\_.   
    When painting/sculpting, I/you/the artist can improve technique by \_\_\_\_\_.
  + Recognize properties and characteristics of art works: I see \_\_\_\_\_(elements) in this work of art. \_\_\_\_ (title of work) uses \_\_\_\_\_ (technique).
  + Compare and contrast aspects of visual arts:   
    These two art pieces are (similar/different) because \_\_\_\_\_.   
    The element that makes this art (unique/different) is \_\_\_\_.
  + Articulate preferences regard art:   
    This art work makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.   
    I think this art work represents because \_\_\_\_\_.
  + Understand historical and cultural influences:   
    \_\_\_\_ was a popular form in art during (time period) because \_\_\_\_.   
    \_\_\_\_ work of art may have been impacted/influenced by \_\_\_\_.
  + Inquire about art:   
    I wonder why the artist \_\_\_\_?   
    Which art techniques may help to express/represent \_\_\_?

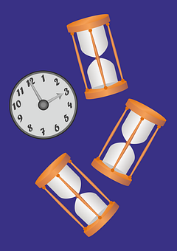
## Connect learning to students’ backgrounds and skills

* Make connections between artwork and tasks with students’ lives
* Highlight artistic contributions and innovations from a variety of cultures
* Facilitate opportunities for artistic processes to be explained in student’s home language
* Model respectful analysis of a variety of perspectives

## Use cooperative learning structures and strategies

* Structure opportunities for students to collaborate and communicate ideas as they work toward a common goal
* Use flexible and fluid grouping of students
* Co-create norms and agreements for sharing and caring for art materials and workspaces. Reinforce those norms with modeling and explaining often.
* Ask students to “Notice” and “Wonder” about works of art together
* Teach “talk moves” so students can engage in academic conversations about theatre, e.g., I would like to build on your idea. I have a different idea to share. Can you please clarify what you just said?

## Reduce cognitive load and allow processing time

* Break tasks and prompts into smaller sections and organize texts using bullet points versus complex paragraphs
* Read tasks and texts out loud
* Use simple sentences and include only details needed to complete the task within reading texts
* Show and explain model and sample products that meet product or performance expectations
* Provide adequate thinking and processing time, and flexible time frames for completing tasks

*High expectations, asset-based thinking, and a growth mindset are key to student success!*

*Virginia Department of Education 2020*