

FACILITATION GUIDE

Teaching Visual Analysis

A classroom companion to the student worksheet, with learning goals, pacing options, prompts and an evidence-led assessment rubric.

LEARNING GOALS

- 1 Separate observation from interpretation.
- 2 Use composition, color, light, space and material as evidence.
- 3 Select historical context that changes the visual reading.
- 4 Acknowledge uncertainty and alternative interpretations.
- 5 Write a thesis that connects visual strategy to larger effect.

BEFORE CLASS

- Select one high-resolution artwork and provide a stable museum object page.
- Do not reveal the title or historical interpretation during the first-look phase.
- Decide whether students will work individually, in pairs or in evidence teams.
- Print the student edition or use the live browser-saved worksheet.

CLASSROOM PACING

Two teaching sequences

Choose the compact sequence for one class period or the extended sequence for discussion, research and revision.

50-minute sequence

50 MIN

- 5 min Silent first look
- 10 min Visible inventory in pairs
- 15 min Composition, color and space
- 10 min Interpretation from three details
- 10 min Thesis and exit response

90-minute sequence

90 MIN

- 8 min Silent first look
- 15 min Inventory and evidence map
- 20 min Formal analysis teams
- 15 min Museum object-page research
- 17 min Interpretation and counter-reading
- 15 min Thesis workshop

PROMPTS 01-05

Questions that keep evidence visible

Use these prompts when students move too quickly to biography, symbolism or personal opinion.

01 First encounter

Where did your eye land first? What visual feature caused that response?

ASK FOR A LOCATION IN THE IMAGE

02 Visible inventory

What can everyone in the room verify? Which nouns and verbs describe the scene without interpretation?

ASK FOR A LOCATION IN THE IMAGE

03 Composition

If you drew three directional lines over the image, where would they go? What do they connect?

ASK FOR A LOCATION IN THE IMAGE

04 Color, light and value

Which contrast carries the most information? What becomes less important because of it?

ASK FOR A LOCATION IN THE IMAGE

05 Space and scale

Where is the viewer positioned? How does that viewpoint affect power, distance or intimacy?

ASK FOR A LOCATION IN THE IMAGE

PROMPTS 06-10

From object facts to argument

Guide students toward claims that remain proportional to the available visual and historical evidence.

06 Material and surface

What would change if this image used another medium, scale or support?

EVIDENCE BEFORE CONCLUSION

07 Reliable context

Which fact changes what we see? Which fact is interesting but irrelevant to this argument?

EVIDENCE BEFORE CONCLUSION

08 Interpretation

Which three details support the claim? Do they work together or point in different directions?

EVIDENCE BEFORE CONCLUSION

09 Limits and alternatives

What evidence would a reasonable reader use to disagree? What remains unknown?

EVIDENCE BEFORE CONCLUSION

10 Evidence-led thesis

Can the thesis name a visual strategy, visible evidence and a larger effect in one sentence?

EVIDENCE BEFORE CONCLUSION

ASSESSMENT

Evidence-led analysis rubric

Use the rubric for short responses, presentations or the opening draft of a formal visual-analysis essay.

Pts	4 - Strong	3 - Effective	2 - Developing	1 - Limited
Observation	Precise visible inventory	Mostly specific observation	Mixes observation and assumption	Relies on general reaction
Formal analysis	Explains relationships and effects	Identifies relevant formal choices	Names elements with limited explanation	Little formal evidence
Context	Selective, sourced and relevant	Accurate and connected	Context is broad or loosely connected	Unsupported or distracting
Interpretation	Multiple details support a nuanced claim	Evidence supports a clear claim	Claim has thin or partial support	Claim is asserted without evidence
Thesis	Strategy, evidence and effect are connected	Clear and defensible	Too broad or descriptive	Missing or unsupported

TOTAL: ____ / 20