Getting to the Core

English Language Arts

Grade 12 Unit of Study

“The Art of Modern Poetry”

Final Version: April 30, 2014
ELA Grade 12 *The Art of Modern Poetry*

Unit Timeline (actual implementation times will vary)

This 2-3 week unit provides students with the opportunity to experience artistic expression through poetry and the arts. Students will analyze a variety of paintings and related poems to discover universal themes. In their final performance task, students will create an art-inspired poem and write an essay that examines the analytical process comparing the poetry and art. While not all activities need to be completed (some teachers may choose to exclude the text and activities focusing on the topic of *ekphrasis*), this unit offers a rich collection of materials designed to stimulate and deepen students’ thinking.

**Big Idea:** Art reflects life.

*Enduring Understanding:* Works of visual art and poetry often represent universal human experiences.

**Essential Questions:**
1. How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s or poet’s inner experience?
2. What do art and poetry have in common? How are they different?
3. How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?

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<td><strong>Lesson 1:</strong> Review poetry terms; use TP-CASTT method to analyze Anne Sexton’s poem, “The Starry Night;” compare and contrast “Vincent” and “The Starry Night” using Double Bubble Map; Round Robin; Ticket Out the Door reflective writing prompt</td>
<td><strong>Lesson 2:</strong> Art analysis using Observation Worksheet (individual and group); corresponding poetry analysis in groups using TP-CASTT</td>
<td><strong>Lesson 2:</strong> Complete poetry analysis; group poster development</td>
<td><strong>Lesson 2:</strong> Gallery Walk; feedback and class discussion; Process Journal reflection</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson 3:</strong> Complete poetry drafts; revise and edit poems with peer feedback and teacher guidance</td>
<td><strong>Lesson 3:</strong> Introduce essay assignment; students write first draft</td>
<td><strong>Lesson 3:</strong> Students revise and edit essays with peer feedback; publish final essays; Gallery Walk; Process Journal with impressions; Round Robin feedback</td>
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**Unit:** The Art of Modern Poetry  
**Lesson #1**  

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<th>Grade Level/Course:</th>
<th>Duration: 2 days (times will vary)</th>
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**Big Idea:** Art reflects life.  
**Essential Question:** How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s or poet’s inner experience?

**Common Core Standards:**

**Reading Literature:**

- RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

- RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

- RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

- RL.11-12-7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.

**Reading Informational Text:**

- RI.11-12-1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

**Writing:**

- W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Speaking and Listening:**

- SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**Language:**

- L.11-12.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and
a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

### Materials/Resources/Lesson Preparation

- **Resource 1.1** Quick-Write Prompt
- Vincent van Gogh’s painting, “Starry Night” (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: [http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743](http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743))
- **Resource 1.2** Process Journal: Lesson 1
- **Resource 1.3** Short Biography of Vincent van Gogh (Lexile 1540)/Annotation Symbols Chart
- **Resource 1.4** Thinking Map: Describing Vincent van Gogh
- YouTube video featuring van Gogh’s paintings and Don McLean’s song, “Vincent” (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: [http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743](http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743))
- **Resource 1.5** “Vincent” by Don McLean (Lyrics)
- **Resource 1.6** Optional Vocabulary Notebook
- **Resource 1.7** Poetry Terms
- **Resource 1.8** TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis Worksheet: “The Starry Night” by Anne Sexton
- **Resource 1.8T** TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis Worksheet: Teacher Edition (possible answers)
- **Resource 1.9** “The Starry Night” by Anne Sexton
- **Resource 1.10** Ticket Out the Door Prompt
- Paper and writing instruments (student-provided)
- Computer with Internet access and audio capability, projector, and speakers
- Document camera
- Whiteboard and markers as needed
- Dictionaries for student reference (if needed)

### Objectives

**Content:** Students will
- analyze two poems inspired by the same van Gogh painting by deconstructing the literary elements and determining the themes
- compare and contrast the poems using textual evidence to support their analysis

**Language:** Students will
- collaborate using academic language to analyze two poems and draw inferences about each speaker’s different experiences

### Depth of Knowledge Level

- ✗ Level 1: Recall
- ✗ Level 2: Skill/Concept
- ✗ Level 3: Strategic Thinking
- ❏ Level 4: Extended Thinking

### College and Career Ready Skills

- ✗ Demonstrating independence
- ✗ Responding to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
- ✗ Comprehending as well as critiquing
- ❏ Using technology and digital media strategically and capably
- ✗ Coming to understand other perspectives and cultures
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<th>Common Core Instructional Shifts</th>
<th>KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING</th>
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<td>Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction texts</td>
<td>paraphrase, literal, connotation,</td>
<td>palette, linen, hue, epileptic, lucidity,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading and writing grounded from text</td>
<td>denotation, figurative language,</td>
<td>asylum, inimitable, fusion, lyrically</td>
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<td>Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary</td>
<td>imagery, sound elements, sarcasm,</td>
<td>rhythmic</td>
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<td>awe, interpretive, line, tone, theme, stanza</td>
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<th>Pre-teaching Considerations</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Make sure to download the “Starry Night” image and video and check the audio before class begins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students should be familiar with basic poetry terms.</td>
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<td>• Students should be familiar with using Thinking Maps.</td>
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<td>• Students may need practice with effective partner and group work.</td>
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**Lesson Delivery**

**Instructional Methods**

- Modeling
- Guided Practice
- Collaboration
- Independent Practice
- Guided Inquiry
- Reflection

**Prior Knowledge, Context, and Motivation:**

1. Have students respond to the following Quick-Write prompt (**Resource 1.1**):
   - Think about an example of visual art that you enjoy. This could be something as simple as an illustration from a graphic novel or a wall mural. What does the art mean to you? Why do you like it?

2. Call on students to share their responses with the class. Let students know that in this unit they will be examining several paintings and then analyzing poems written about the paintings. Students’ final performance task will be to write their own poem about a work of art of their own choosing.

**Body of the Lesson: Activities/Questioning/Strategies/Technology/Engagement**

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<td>3. Project Vincent van Gogh’s painting, “Starry Night” on the whiteboard or screen (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: <a href="http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743">http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743</a>). Students will use their Process Journal: Lesson 1 (<strong>Resource 1.2</strong>) to respond to the projected painting.</td>
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<td>4. After they have finished writing, have students turn to a partner and share their responses. <strong>Resource 1.2</strong> contains sentence starters that students may use as needed.</td>
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**Differentiated Instruction:**

**English Learners and Students Who Need Additional Support:**
If possible, give students time to review the lesson’s materials in advance.

**Step 5:** Instead of
5. Next, have students turn to Resource 1.3, *Short Biography of Vincent van Gogh*. Students will read the text and annotate it independently using the symbols provided on the attached chart (or whichever symbols students typically use) following the text. If students are not familiar with annotating text, the teacher may need to model it with the first paragraph.

6. After reading and annotating the text, students will work with a partner to share their annotations. Sentence starters are provided in the annotation chart.

7. On Resource 1.4, students are directed to work with a partner to create a Thinking Map describing van Gogh using evidence from the text. Give students an opportunity to come up with their own Thinking Map (it could be a Bubble Map with adjectives or a Tree Map with categories of description). Teacher might need to model using evidence from the text, as shown below:

8. Let students know that they will now watch a video highlighting van Gogh’s paintings that is accompanied by Don McLean’s song, “Vincent.” Teacher may direct students to jot down their impressions on the lyrics sheet (Resource 1.5) as they watch.

9. Show the video (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: [http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743](http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743)). Ask students to share their impressions first with their partners, and then with the class. Point out that the video was made “For the artist patients of Mississippi State Hospital,” as noted at the end of the video.

10. Open the Internet home page of the Mississippi State Hospital (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: [http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743](http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743)). Have students look at the home page while the teacher reads the mission statement aloud. Ask students to discuss with their partners any ideas they have about why the video was dedicated to patients from this hospital. After partner
sharing, call on volunteers to share their (or their partner’s) thoughts with the class.

11. Have students turn back to their Process Journal: Lesson 1 (Resource 1.2), and add any new or revised insights based on what they have learned about Vincent van Gogh. It may be helpful to project the painting while students write.

12. Arrange students into groups of four and have each member of the group share their new insights in a Round Robin format (see procedure below). If time allows, groups can select a spokesperson to share one new insight with the class.

Students will conduct a Round Robin following these directions:

- Share your responses one by one with your group members
- Everyone shares
- Others may not interrupt or comment until everyone has expressed his/her ideas.

In Round Robin sharing, emphasize the importance of being an active listener (no interruptions). The teacher may want to model this process and have the directions posted or placed in front of students until they become familiar with this structure.

Day 2

1. Review Poetry Terms (Resource 1.7) and TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis Worksheet (Resource 1.8) with students.

**NOTE:** TP-CASTT (pronounced “typecast”) is only one method for teaching poetry analysis; the teacher may choose another tool. However, materials are provided in this lesson to model the TP-CASTT method.

2. Display the TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis Worksheet (Resource 1.8) using the document camera and point out the title, “The Starry Night.” Ask students to make predictions about what the poem is about before they read it. Have them write down their answers on their own worksheet as you model it on the overhead.

3. Have students turn to “The Starry Night” by Anne Sexton (Resource 1.9). The teacher will read it aloud without

students may find it enriching to participate in discussions about art as a form of expression for people with mental or emotional disabilities.
providing any commentary as students follow along.

4. Working together, continue filling out the TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis Worksheet on the overhead as students fill out their own worksheets (possible answers are provided for teacher use only on Resource 1.8T). The teacher may wish to model how to paraphrase the first line, identify the first example of figurative language, etc.; then have students work in partners or groups to complete each section.

**NOTE:** For more detailed analysis information, refer to Rebekah Richards’ article “Analysis of Anne Sexton’s ‘The Starry Night’” (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: [http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743](http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743)).

5. When the analysis is complete, refer students back to the “Vincent” lyrics (Resource 1.5) and think about how the two poems reflect different experiences for each speaker. It may be helpful to create a Double Bubble Map on the board (or students can create their own with or without a partner) to chart the similarities and differences, including the emotions/tone of the two poems. Students should use textual evidence to support their answers. An example is shown below:

6. In a class Round Robin, have students each share out one similarity or difference between the poems citing textual evidence. Alternatively, groups could add to a class Double Bubble.

**Concluding Activity:**

7. As a Ticket out the Door (Resource 1.10), have students think about and respond to the essential question, “How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s or poet’s inner experience?” Let students know that without knowing about the poets’ backgrounds, they will need to make some inferences based on the text.
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Quick-Write

Think about an example of visual art that you enjoy. This could be something as simple as an illustration from a graphic novel or a wall mural. What does the art mean to you? Why do you like it?

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SAUSD Common Core Unit
Process Journal: Lesson 1

Respond to the projected painting:

- Look at the picture for a few minutes.
- Write about the picture. Consider these questions:
  - What is going on in this picture?
  - What do you see that makes you think that?
  - What else can you find?

Possible sentence starters:

When I look at this picture, I can see…

I think that______________ because...

In looking further, I notice…

- After discussion: Write any new ideas you have.

- After watching the video and participating in discussion: Write any new or revised insights you have.
Short Biography of Vincent van Gogh (pronounced “van Go”)

A pastor’s son born in 1853 in the town of Groot – Zundert, the Netherlands, Vincent van Gogh’s main tool of expression was color. The extremely emotional Vincent grew up in a religious environment and during his entire life the gifted artist suffered from low self esteem.

Van Gogh decided to become a painter between 1860 and 1880 after he had experienced two tragic romances and unsuccessful jobs as an art salesman, bookshop clerk and preacher.

After being dismissed as preacher in a Belgian mining region he decided to stay in the country to study art, convinced that creating beauty was the key to happiness. Vincent’s early Dutch period’s creations are sharply lit, somber-toned genre works of which “The Potato Eaters” (1885) is the most renowned.

In 1885 Vincent moved to Antwerp. It was in this city where Vincent van Gogh discovered the paintings of Peter Paul Rubens and purchased an extensive collection of Japanese prints. One year later Vincent travelled to Paris where he joined Théo, his brother and manager of Goupil’s (pronounced “Goo-pil’s”) gallery.

During his stay in Paris Vincent studied with Cormon and inevitably met Gauguin (pronounced “Go-gan”), Monet (pronounced “Mo-nay”) and Pissarro. He started to lighten his extremely dark palette and began painting using the impressionists’ short brushstrokes.
Van Gogh’s nervousness and lack of confidence made him an extremely difficult companion and around-the-clock discussions combined with creating art during the day seriously damaged his health. Vincent decided to go to Arles (pronounced “Arl”) in southern France hoping his companions would follow his footsteps and help him to establish an art school. Paul Gauguin did join Vincent but the result was disastrous.

During an epileptic¹ haze, Vincent pursued his companion armed with a razor blade. Gauguin managed to stop him but he ended up removing a part of his ear lobe with the sharp blade. Since this weird event Vincent’s mental states began to alternate between lucidity² and madness. He was admitted to the Saint-Remy (pronounced “San-Remmy”) asylum³ for treatment.

In 1890 by May, Van Gogh’s health seemed to have improved and under Dr. Gachet’s (pronounced “Gă-shay’s”) supervision, he went to stay in Auvers-sur-Oise (pronounced “Owe-vair-soor-wahz”). Two months later Vincent van Gogh committed suicide by shooting himself. He had sold only one painting during his short career!

The inimitable⁴ fusion⁵ of content and form invented by Van Gogh is emotional, powerful, lyrically rhythmic⁶, dramatic and imaginative. The Dutch painter’s works were heavily influenced by his effort explaining either the struggle against insanity or trying to comprehend man and nature’s spiritual essence.

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¹ Epileptic (adjective): pertaining to or symptomatic of epilepsy, a disorder of the nervous system resulting in seizures
² Lucidity (noun): the ability to see things clearly; rationality; sanity
³ Asylum (noun): an institution for the maintenance and care of the mentally ill, orphans, or other persons requiring specialized assistance
⁴ Inimitable (adjective): incapable of being copied or imitated; matchless
⁵ Fusion (noun): the state of being blended together
⁶ Lyrically rhythmic (adverb + adjective): having the form, beat, and musical quality of a song or poem
**ANNOTATION SYMBOLS CHART**

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<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Comment/Question/Response</th>
<th>Sample Language Support</th>
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<td>?</td>
<td>• Questions I have&lt;br&gt;• Wonderings I have&lt;br&gt;• Confusing parts for me</td>
<td>• The statement, “…” is confusing because…&lt;br&gt;• I am unclear about the following sentence(s)…&lt;br&gt;• I don’t understand what s/he means when s/he states…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>• Ideas/statements I agree with</td>
<td>• I agree with the author’s idea that…because…&lt;br&gt;• Similar to the author, I also believe that…because…&lt;br&gt;• I agree somewhat with the author when s/he argues that…because…</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>• Ideas/statements I disagree with</td>
<td>• I disagree with the author’s idea that…because…&lt;br&gt;• Unlike the author, I do not believe that…because…&lt;br&gt;• The author claims that…However, I disagree because…</td>
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<tr>
<td>★</td>
<td>• Author’s main points&lt;br&gt;• Key ideas expressed&lt;br&gt;• Significant ideas</td>
<td>• One significant idea in this text is…&lt;br&gt;• The author is trying to convey…&lt;br&gt;• One argument the author makes is that…</td>
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<td>!</td>
<td>• Shocking statements or parts&lt;br&gt;• Emotional response&lt;br&gt;• Surprising details/claims</td>
<td>• I was shocked to read that…(further explanation)&lt;br&gt;• How can anyone claim that…&lt;br&gt;• The part about…made me feel…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○</td>
<td>• Ideas/sections you connect with&lt;br&gt;• What this reminds you of</td>
<td>• This section reminded me of…&lt;br&gt;• I can connect with what the author said because…&lt;br&gt;• This experience connects with my own experience in that…</td>
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</table>
Thinking Map: Describing Vincent van Gogh

Using a Thinking Map to organize your thoughts, work with a partner to describe Vincent van Gogh. Justify your description with evidence from the text.
Starry, starry night
Paint your palette blue and gray
Look out on a summer's day
With eyes that know the darkness in my soul
Shadows on the hills
Sketch the trees and the daffodils
Catch the breeze and the winter chills
In colors on the snowy linen

Now I understand what you tried to say to me
And how you suffered for your sanity
And how you tried to set them free
They would not listen, they did not know how
Perhaps they'll listen now

Starry, starry night
Flaming flowers that brightly blaze
Swirling clouds in violet haze
Reflect in Vincent's eyes of China blue
Colors changing hue
Morning fields of amber grain
Weathered faces lined in pain
Are soothed beneath the artist's loving hand

Now I understand what you tried to say to me
And how you suffered for your sanity
And how you tried to set them free
They would not listen, they did not know how

1 Palette (noun): a thin and usually oval or oblong board or tablet with a thumb hole at one end, used by painters for holding and mixing colors.
2 Linen (noun): fabric woven from flax yarns
3 Hue (noun): a gradation or variety of a color; tint

Perhaps they'll listen now
For they could not love you
But still your love was true
And when no hope was left inside
On that starry, starry night
You took your life as lovers often do
But I could have told you, Vincent
This world was never meant
For one as beautiful as you

Starry, starry night
Portraits hung in empty halls
Frameless heads on nameless walls
With eyes that watch the world and can't forget
Like the strangers that you've met
The ragged men in ragged clothes
A silver thorn, a bloody rose
Lie crushed and broken on the virgin snow

Now I think I know what you tried to say to me
And how you suffered for your sanity
And how you tried to set them free
They would not listen, they're not listening still
Perhaps they never will
## VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK: The Art of Modern Poetry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word &amp; Translation</th>
<th>Picture/Image</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Original Sentence</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> preacher <em>(from Resource 1.3)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>predicador <em>(Spanish)</em></td>
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Poetry Terms

**Alliteration:** the repetition of a sound at the beginning of two or more neighboring words  
*Example:* “I have **stood still** and **stopped** the sound of feet” (from “Acquainted with the Night” by Robert Frost)

**Metaphor:** a figure of speech in which a word or phrase meaning one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a similarity between them  
*Example:*  
"The fog comes on little cat feet. It sits looking over harbor and city on silent haunches and then moves on." (From “The Fog” by Carl Sandburg)

**Personification:** the representation of a thing or idea as a person or by the human form *Example:* “I like to see it lap the miles, And lick the valleys up, And stop to feed itself at tanks...” (From “The Railway Train” by Emily Dickinson)

**Repetition:** the act or an instance of repeating **Example:**  
“Because I do not hope to turn again Because I do not hope Because I do not hope to turn....” (From “Ash Wednesday” by T. S. Eliot)

**Rhyme:** close similarity in the final sounds of two or more words or lines of verse *Example:* “Sometime too hot the eye of heaven **shines**, And often is his gold complexion **dimmed**; And every fair from fair sometime **declines**, By chance, or nature's changing course **untrimmed**.” (From “Shall I Compare Thee...” by William Shakespeare)

**Simile:** a figure of speech in which things different in kind or quality are compared by the use of the word **like** or **as**  
*Example:*  
“O My Luve's **like a red, red rose**, That's newly sprung in June; O My Luve's **like the melodie** That's sweetly played in tune.” (From “A Red, Red Rose” by Robert Burns)

*Definitions taken from Merriam Webster’s Student Dictionary*
TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis

Title of Poem: “The Starry Night” by Anne Sexton

TITLE: Consider the title and make a prediction about what the poem is about.

PARAPHRASE: Translate the poem line by line into your own words on a literal level. Look for complete thoughts (sentences may be turned around) and look up unfamiliar words.

CONNOTATION: Examine the poem for meaning beyond the literal. Look for figurative language, imagery, and sound elements.
ATTITUDE/TONE: Notice the speaker's tone and attitude. Humor? Sarcasm? Awe?

SHIFTS: Note any shifts or changes in speaker or attitude. Look for key words, time change, punctuation.

TITLE: Examine the title again, this time on an interpretive level.

THEME: Briefly state in your own words what the poem is about (subject), then what the poet is saying about the subject (theme).
TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis

**Title of Poem:** “The Starry Night” by Anne Sexton

**TITLE:** Consider the title and make a prediction about what the poem is about.

**Possible answer:** Since I have already viewed Vincent van Gogh’s painting, “Starry Night,” I’m pretty sure the poem will have something to do with that.

**PARAPHRASE:** Translate the poem line by line into your own words on a literal level. Look for complete thoughts (sentences may be turned around) and look up unfamiliar words.

**Possible answer:** There is no town except where one dark, bushy tree sticks up like the reaching hand of a drowning woman into the vibrant sky. There is no sound from the town; there are eleven wild stars above. Oh, night filled with stars! I want to die like this. The sky is alive with movement. Even the moon looks huge and angry, pushing away its children. The invisible snake eats the stars. Oh, night filled with stars! I want to die like this: headfirst into the mouth of the night snake, not stopping to slow down, eat, or cry.

**CONNOTATION:** Examine the poem for meaning beyond the literal. Look for figurative language, imagery, and sound elements.

**Possible answer:** The speaker personifies the tree in lines 2-3—“one black-haired tree slips / up like a drowned woman into the hot sky”—to represent herself as someone who is perched on the edge of life and death. This idea is supported by the juxtaposition of “The town is silent” followed by “The night boils with eleven stars” (line 4) and “It moves. They are all alive” (line 7). There are religious similes and metaphors as well, such as “the moon bulges in its orange irons / to push children, like a god, from its eye” (lines 9-10), which suggests that life is being rejected; and references are made to the devil—“The old unseen serpent” (line 10) and “that great dragon” (line 14)—that further signal the imminence of death. Metaphors continue with the lines “to split / from my life with no flag, / no belly, / no cry” (lines 14-17) that symbolize the quickness of death with no time to slow down or surrender (white flag, perhaps?), take a meal (or show weakness?), or even to mourn the loss of life.

**ATTITUDE/TONE:** Notice the speaker’s tone and attitude. Humor? Sarcasm? Awe?

**Possible answer:** The tone is reflective and intense. The speaker seems to be grappling with the enormity and suddenness of death, and views it as a powerful force. She also expresses a certain courageousness and personal choice in the face of death when she states, “This is how I want to die” (lines 5-6 and 11-12).

**SHIFTS:** Note any shifts or changes in speaker or attitude. Look for key words, time change, punctuation.

**Possible answer:** In the first stanza, the speaker seems to be contemplating the elements of van Gogh’s painting and relating them to her own situation with impending death. She expresses passion with the line “Oh starry starry night!” using an exclamation point to emphasize the cruel beauty of the scene. By ending the stanza with the simple statement, “This is how I want to die,” the speaker asserts her wish to face death in all its intensity. In the second stanza,
although there is a repetition of the lines “Oh starry starry night! This is how I want to die:” (lines 11-12), she uses the colon to signal her acceptance of what is to come and that she will embrace it.

**TITLE:** Examine the title again, this time on an interpretive level.

*Possible answer:* Having analyzed the poem, the title seems to represent the intense power of death. Although it does use imagery from van Gogh’s painting, it moves beyond it by expressing the speaker’s own experience.

**THEME:** Briefly state in your own words what the poem is about (subject), then what the poet is saying about the subject (theme).

*Possible answer:* The poem is about facing death. The poet is saying that even though death may seem cruel and sudden, it is better to accept it bravely, and even embrace it as a force as strong as life.
The Starry Night
By Anne Sexton

1 The town does not exist
2 except where one black-haired tree slips
3 up like a drowned woman into the hot sky.
4 The town is silent. The night boils with eleven stars.
5 Oh starry starry night! This is how
6 I want to die.

7 It moves. They are all alive.
8 Even the moon bulges in its orange irons
9 to push children, like a god, from its eye.
10 The old unseen serpent swallows up the stars.
11 Oh starry starry night! This is how
12 I want to die:

13 into that rushing beast of the night,
14 sucked up by that great dragon, to split
15 from my life with no flag,
16 no belly,
17 no cry.
Ticket Out the Door

How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s or poet’s inner experience? (Without knowing about the poets’ backgrounds, you will need to make some inferences based on the text.)

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Unit: The Art of Modern Poetry Lesson #2

| Grade Level/Course: English 12 Benchmark | Duration: 3 days (times will vary) |

**Big Idea:** Art reflects life.

**Essential Questions:**
- How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s or poet’s inner experience?
- What do art and poetry have in common? How are they different?
- How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?

**Common Core Standards:**

**Reading Literature:**

RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

**Writing:**

W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Speaking and Listening:**

SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the
investigation or complete the task.

**Language:**

L.11-12.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials/Resources/Lesson Preparation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Color slide of selected artworks to be projected on the board or screen (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: <a href="http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743">http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.1</strong> Observation Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.2A</strong> Painting by Lun-Yi Tsai, <em>Disbelief</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.2B</strong> Painting by Johannes Vermeer, <em>Young Woman with a Water Pitcher</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.2C</strong> Painting by Edward Hopper, <em>Nighthawks</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.2D</strong> Painting by Kitagawa Utamaro, <em>Girl Powdering Her Neck</em></td>
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<td>• <strong>Resource 2.3</strong> Academic Conversation Placemat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.4A</strong> Poem by Lucille Clifton, <em>September’s Song, a Poem in Seven Days: Tuesday, 9-11-01</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.4B</strong> Poem by Stephen Mitchell, <em>Vermeer</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.4C</strong> Poem by Samuel Yellen, <em>Nighthawks</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.4D</strong> Poem by Cathy Song, <em>Girl Powdering Her Neck</em></td>
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<td>• <strong>Resource 2.5</strong> TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis Worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.6</strong> Optional Reading in Four Voices Instructions with Chunked Text</td>
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<td>• <strong>Resource 2.7</strong> Group Poster Assignment: Instructions and Example</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Resource 2.8</strong> Process Journal: Lesson 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paper and writing instruments (student-provided)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Computer with Internet access, projector, and speakers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Whiteboard and markers as needed</td>
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<td>• Dictionaries for student reference (if needed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Poster paper (could be butcher paper, construction paper, etc., if poster paper not available) and markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Post-it notes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content: Students will</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• analyze, compare, and contrast a painting and its corresponding poem by deconstructing the visual and literary elements and determining the themes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• reflect on the ways that art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language: Students will collaborate to</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• construct several written pieces that illustrate the themes and meanings, as well as the similarities and differences, of the artwork and poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate their findings in a poster presentation</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depth of Knowledge Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☒ Level 1: Recall</td>
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<td>☒ Level 2: Skill/Concept</td>
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<tr>
<td>☒ Level 3: Strategic Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>☒ Level 4: Extended Thinking</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### College and Career Ready Skills
- Demonstrating independence
- Responding to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
- Comprehending as well as critiquing
- Using technology and digital media strategically and capably
- Coming to understand other perspectives and cultures

### Common Core Instructional Shifts
- Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction texts
- Reading and writing grounded from text
- Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary

#### Academic Vocabulary (Tier II & Tier III)
**Teacher Provides Simple Explanation**
- Vermeer: poised, pitcher, luminous, harbinger
- Nighthawks: bleak, desolate, patrons, contemplative, habituation, complacent
- Girl Powdering Her Neck: sheen, vapor, translucent, nape, solemn, scrutiny, placid, symmetry

**Students Figure Out the Meaning**
- Vermeer: sere, wimple
- Nighthawks: jiff/jiffy, demitasse
- Girl Powdering Her Neck: talc, buckwheat, kimono, chrysanthemums

### Pre-teaching Considerations
- Students need to be familiar with plot, character, and setting.
- Students should have already practiced using the TP-CASTTT method of poetry analysis (or whichever method was used) in Lesson 1.
- Group students strategically to provide them with support as needed.
- For differentiation, consider assigning poems to groups based on length and rigor. For example, English learners and students who need extra support might be grouped to analyze the painting *Disbelief*, by Lun-Yi Tsai, paired with the poem, *September’s Song, a Poem in Seven Days: Tuesday, 9/11/01*, by Lucille Clifton.

### Lesson Delivery
#### Instructional Methods
- Modeling
- Guided Practice
- Collaboration
- Independent Practice

- Guided Inquiry
- Reflection

#### Prior Knowledge, Context, and Motivation:
1. Review the previous lesson’s essential question: “How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s or poet’s inner experience?” The teacher might want to chart student responses on the board in an ongoing Thinking Map and refer back/add to them throughout the lesson when appropriate to do so.
Day 1: Art and Poetry Analysis

Art Analysis

2. Let students know that they will be working in groups of four to analyze a painting using an Observation Worksheet (Resource 2.1). Each group will be assigned one of four different paintings: “Disbelief” (Resource 2.2A), “Young Woman with a Water Pitcher” (Resource 2.2B), “Nighthawks” (Resource 2.2C), or “Girl Powdering Her Neck” (Resource 2.2D). Although students will have black and white copies of the artwork in their booklets, the teacher should project the color slide on the board/screen (can be accessed through the district web page by following this link: http://www.sausd.us/Page/22743).

3. Individually, students will write down their first impressions of the painting at the top of the Observation Worksheet (Resource 2.1).

4. In their groups, students will collaborate to respond to the next three prompts (plot, character, and setting). The teacher may choose to provide some modeling as needed.

5. Then, students will individually respond to the next prompt asking them how the artwork connects to them personally. When finished, they will share their responses in a Round Robin format with the other members of their group.

6. Finally, students will collaborate to summarize the theme of the painting. Students may find it helpful to use the Academic Conversation Placemat (Resource 2.3) to enhance and focus their discussion.

Poetry Analysis

7. Now have students turn to the poem that corresponds with their group’s assigned artwork, as shown below (printed on the back of Resource 2.3 for student reference):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artwork</th>
<th>Corresponding Poem</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Disbelief” (Resource 2.2A)</td>
<td>“Tuesday, 9/11/01” by Lucille Clifton (Resource 2.4A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Young Woman with a Water Pitcher” (Resource 2.2B)</td>
<td>“Vermeer” by Stephen Mitchell (Resource 2.4B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Nighthawks” (Resource 2.2C)</td>
<td>“Nighthawks” by Samuel Yellen (Resource 2.4C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Girl Powdering Her Neck” (Resource 2.2D)</td>
<td>“Girl Powdering Her Neck” by Cathy Song (Resource 2.4D)</td>
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</tbody>
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Differentiated Instruction:

English Learners and Students Who Need Additional Support:
If possible, give students time to review the lesson’s materials in advance.

When working in groups to analyze their assigned poem, students might benefit from using the choral reading strategy, “Reading in Four Voices” to help them make meaning. See Resource 2.6 for instructions using Lucille Clifton’s poem September’s Song, a Poem in Seven Days: Tuesday, 9/11/01.

Accelerated Learners:
Students might add depth to this lesson by researching their assigned artist and poet in order to gain a greater understanding of their backgrounds and work. Students’ research could be presented in a written, oral, or digital medium to share with the class.
8. Students will work collaboratively with their group members to analyze their assigned poem using the TP-CASTT Worksheet (Resource 2.5) while the teacher walks around to check for understanding. Students will continue to work until the end of the period.

**Day 2: Poster Development**

1. Students will work in their groups to complete the TP-CASTT Worksheet.

2. When finished, groups will collaborate to create a poster that presents their findings on both the painting and the poem that they analyzed. Refer them to the instructions and example (Resource 2.7). Point values are provided for content, neatness/legibility, and creativity. Students will use the rest of the period to complete their posters.

**Day 3: Gallery Walk**

1. Give students half of the period to complete their posters; then they will hang them throughout the classroom.

2. Explain to students that they will take a walk around the classroom to view the posters on display. Direct students to take out their Process Journal: Lesson 2 (Resource 2.8), and carry it with them when they peruse the posters. They will use it to respond to the paintings that they did not analyze for their group assignment.

3. Students will be provided with Post-it notes and will walk around the room viewing the group posters. If students have questions, comments (constructive and/or positive), or insights, they will write them on their Post-it notes and stick them to the posters. (If Post-it notes are not available, the teacher may have students take notes to share at the conclusion of the Gallery Walk.)

4. After completing the Gallery Walk, have the groups get up and look at the feedback that was left on their posters. If there are any questions, have them choose a spokesperson to answer them to the class.

5. After seats have been resumed, call on students to share their experience with the art and poetry that they encountered. Discuss the similarities and differences between the art and poetry. Then ask students to think about and comment on the themes that were presented, and consider how they might apply to their own life experiences.
## Closing Activity

6. Students will respond to the prompt on their Process Journal: Lesson 2 (Resource 2.8) that asks the essential question, “How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?”

## Lesson Reflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Reflection</th>
<th>Evidenced by Student Learning/Outcomes</th>
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Observation Worksheet

List the first words that come to mind when you look at this artwork.

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______________________________________________________________________________

**Plot:** What is happening in this artwork? What story is being told?

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**Character:** Who or what is the subject of the painting? How would you describe them?

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**Setting:** What is the mood of the artwork? What sounds, smells, feelings, tastes could you associate with it?

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(Continued next page)
How does this artwork connect with you personally? Does it relate in any way to your own prior knowledge?

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Theme: Now that you have closely observed the artwork, how would you summarize its main idea?

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______________________________________________________________________________
Johannes Vermeer, *Young Woman with a Water Pitcher*. 1660-1662. Oil on canvas.
**ELABORATE**

**Prompt starters:**
- Can you elaborate on...?
- What does that mean?
- What do you mean by...?
- Can you clarify the part about...?
- Tell me more about...
- How is that important? How does it support your point that...
- I understand the part about..., but I want to know...
- Can you be more specific?

**Response starters:**
- I think it means...
- In other words...
- More specifically, it is... because...
- Let's see, an analogy might be...
- It is important because...

**PARAPHRASE**

**Prompt starters:**
- Is that clear?
- Can I hear what you heard?
- Does that make sense?
- Do you know what I mean?
- What do you think?
- I'm not sure of all that I said.

**Response starters:**
- Let me see if I heard you right...
- To paraphrase what you just said, you...
- In other words, you are saying that...
- What I understood was...
- It sounds like you think that...

**SYNTHESIZE**

**Prompt starters:**
- How can we summarize what we discussed?
- How can we bring these ideas together?
- What is our conclusion?

**Response starters:**
- We can say that...
- It boils down to...
- We can agree that...
- Even though some might think that..., we conclude that...

**Academic Conversation Placemat**

**Support Ideas with Examples**

**Prompt starters:**
- Can you give an example from the text?
- Where does it say that?
- What are examples from other texts?
- What is a real world example? Are there any cases of that in real life?
- Can you give an example from your life?

**Response starters:**
- For example,...
- In the text it said that...
- Remember in the other story we read that...
- An example from my life is...

**Build on/Challenge Another’s Idea**

**Prompt starters:**
- How can we add to this idea of...?
- What other ideas or examples relate to this idea?
- What else could support this idea?
- Do you agree?
- What contradicts this?
- What are other points of view?

**Response starters:**
- I would add that...
- Building on your idea that..., I think...
- That idea connects to...
- I see it a different way. On the other hand...
- Let’s stay focused on the idea of.... Let’s get back to the idea of...
- That makes me think of...
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>“Girl Powdering Her Neck” by Cathy Song <em>(Resource 2.4D)</em></td>
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September’s Song, a Poem in Seven Days by Lucille Clifton

TUESDAY 9/11/01

1 thunder and lightning and our world
2 is another place no day
3 will ever be the same no blood
4 untouched

5 they know this storm in otherwheres
6 israel ireland palestine
7 but God has blessed America
8 we sing

9 and God has blessed America
10 to learn that no one is exempt
11 the world is one all fear
12 is one all life all death
13 all one
Vermeer by Stephen Mitchell

1 Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae. Luke 1:48

3 She stands by the table, poised at the center of your vision,

5 with her left hand

7 just barely on

9 the pitcher’s handle, and her right

11 lightly touching the windowframe.

13 Sere as a clear sky, luminous in her blue dress and many-toned

15 white cotton wimple, she is looking

17 nowhere. Upon her lips

19 is the subtlest and most lovely

21 of smiles, caught

23 for an instant

25 like a snowflake in a warm hand.

27 How weightless her body feels

29 as she stands, absorbed, within this

31 fulfillment that has brought more

33 than any harbinger could.

35 She looks down with an infinite

22 tenderness in her eyes,

24 as though the light at the window

26 were a newborn child

28 and her arms open enough

30 to hold it on her breast, forever.

---

1 Latin, from the Bible’s New Testament: "For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden ...."
2 Poised (verb): to be balanced
3 Pitcher (noun): a container, usually with a handle and spout or lip, for holding and pouring liquids
4 Sere (adjective): dry
5 Luminous (adjective): radiating or reflecting light
6 Wimple (noun): a woman’s headcloth drawn in folds about the chin
7 Harbinger (noun): anything that foreshadows a future event
Nighthawks by Samuel Yellen

1 The place is the corner of Empty and Bleak,
2 The time is night’s most desolate hour,
3 The scene is Al’s Coffee Cup or the Hamburger Tower,
4 The persons in this drama do not speak.

5 We who peer through that curve of plate glass
6 Count three nighthawks seated there – patrons of life.
7 The counterman will be with you in a jiff.
8 The thick white mugs were never meant for demitasse.

9 The single man whose hunched back we see
10 Once put a gun to his head in Russian Bank,
11 Whirled the chamber, pulled the trigger, drew a blank,
12 And now lives out his x years guarantee.

13 And facing us, the two central characters
14 Have finished their coffee, and have lit
15 A contemplative cigarette,
16 His hand lies close but not touching hers.

17 Not long ago together in a darkened room,
18 Mouth burned mouth, flesh beat and ground

(Poem continues on next page)

---

1 Bleak (adjective): without hope or encouragement
2 Desolate (adjective): having the feeling of being abandoned by friends or by hope
3 Patrons (noun): customers
4 Jiff, jiffy (noun): a very short time; moment
5 Demitasse (noun): a small cup of strong coffee usually served after dinner
6 Contemplative (adjective): thoughtful; reflective; meditative
19  On ravaged flesh, and yet they found
20  No local habitation\(^7\) and no name.

21  Oh, are we not lucky to be none of these!
22  We can look on with complacent\(^8\) eye:
23  Our satisfactions satisfy,
24  Our pleasures, our pleasures please.

---

\(^7\) Habitation (noun): a place of residence
\(^8\) Complacent (adjective): pleased, especially with one’s self or situation, often without awareness
Girl Powdering Her Neck by Cathy Song

1 The light is the inside
2 sheen \(^1\) of an oyster shell,
3 sponged with talc \(^2\) and vapor,
4 moisture from a bath.

5 A pair of slippers
6 are placed outside
7 the rice-paper doors.
8 She kneels at a low table
9 in the room,
10 her legs folded beneath her
11 as she sits on a buckwheat pillow.

12 Her hair is black
13 with hints of red,
14 the color of seaweed
15 spread over rocks.

16 Morning begins the ritual
17 wheel of the body,
18 the application of translucent \(^3\) skins.
19 She practices pleasure:
20 the pressure of three fingertips
21 applying powder.
22 Fingerprints of pollen
23 some other hand will trace.

24 The peach-dyed kimono \(^4\)
25 patterned with maple leaves
26 drifting across the silk,
27 falls from right to left
28 in a diagonal, revealing
29 the nape of her neck
30 and the curve of a shoulder
31 like the slope of a hill
32 set deep in snow in a country
33 of huge white solemn \(^5\) birds.
34 Her face appears in the mirror,
35 a reflection in a winter pond,
36 rising to meet itself.

37 She dips a corner of her sleeve
38 like a brush into water
39 to wipe the mirror;
40 she is about to paint herself.
41 The eyes narrow
42 in a moment of self-scrutiny.
43 The mouth parts
44 as if desiring to disturb
45 the placid \(^6\) plum face;
46 break the symmetry \(^7\) of silence.
47 But the berry-stained lips,
48 stenciled into the mask of beauty,
49 do not speak.

(Continues next page)

\(^1\) Sheen (noun): luster; brightness; radiance
\(^2\) Talc (noun): a soft mineral used to make talcum powder
\(^3\) Translucent (adjective): permitting partial light to pass through
\(^4\) Kimono (noun): a loose, wide-sleeved robe, characteristic of Japanese costume
\(^5\) Solemn (adjective): serious; formal
\(^6\) Placid (adjective): pleasantly calm or peaceful
\(^7\) Symmetry (noun): corresponding proportions
Two chrysanthemums touch in the middle of the lake and drift apart.

---

8 Chrysanthemums (noun): a type of flower native to China
Title of Poem:

**TITLE:** Consider the title and make a prediction about what the poem is about.

**PARAPHRASE:** Translate the poem line by line into your own words on a literal level. Look for complete thoughts (sentences may be turned around) and look up unfamiliar words.

**CONNOTATION:** Examine the poem for meaning beyond the literal. Look for figurative language, imagery, and sound elements.
ATTITUDE/TONE: Notice the speaker’s tone and attitude. Humor? Sarcasm? Awe?

SHIFTS: Note any shifts or changes in speaker or attitude. Look for key words, time change, punctuation.

TITLE: Examine the title again, this time on an interpretive level.

THEME: Briefly state in your own words what the poem is about (subject), then what the poet is saying about the subject (theme).
Reading in Four Voices

Directions: In your group of four, you will take turns reading the lines of this poem aloud. Each of you will read different lines based on the font types, as shown below:

Student 1

Student 2

Student 3

Student 4

Read the poem in four voices once to practice, and a second time to listen closely to the meaning.

September’s Song, a Poem in Seven Days by Lucille Clifton

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1 thunder and lightning and our world
2 is another place no day
3 will ever be the same no blood
4 untouched

5 they know this storm in otherwheres
6 israel ireland palestine
7 but God has blessed America
8 we sing

9 and God has blessed America
10 to learn that no one is exempt
11 the world is one all fear
12 is one all life all death
13 all one
Group Poster Assignment

Directions: Your groups will create a poster that presents your findings on both the painting and the poem that you analyzed. You must include the following elements:

Painting (worth up to 25 points)

- Title and artist—5 points
- Picture (cut out from Resource 2.2A-D and attach to poster)—5 points
- Brief descriptions of the plot, character(s), setting, and theme—15 points

Poem (worth up to 25 points)

- Title and author—5 points
- Poem text (may be handwritten, typed, or cut out from Resource 2.4A-D)—5 points
- Examples from the text of figurative language, imagery, sound elements, etc. that add connotative meaning—15 points
- The theme—10 points

Comparison/Contrast (worth up to 15 points)

- Include a paragraph that compares and contrasts the painting and the poem. What do they have in common? How are they different?

Scoring (total poster worth up to 85 points)

Your group will be scored on content (are all the elements present and thoroughly addressed?—see points possible above), neatness/legibility (worth up to 10 points), and creativity (both in thought and presentation—worth up to 10 points).

Look at the example of a poster based on Vincent van Gogh’s painting, “Starry Night” and Anne Sexton’s poem, “The Starry Night” on the back of this page.
“Starry Night” by Vincent van Gogh

**Description of the Artwork:**
This painting depicts a small European town at night. No one is outside – they might all be asleep inside their homes. The stars, sky, moon, and tree are alive and moving with some great force. This scene seems to represent the theme that human beings are small and insignificant compared to the vastness of the universe.

The speaker personifies the tree in lines 2-3—“one black-haired tree slips / up like a drowned woman into the hot sky”—to represent herself as someone who is perched on the edge of life and death. This idea is supported by the juxtaposition of “The town is silent” followed by “The night boils with eleven stars” (line 4) and “It moves. They are all alive” (line 7). There are religious similes and metaphors as well, such as “the moon bulges in its orange irons / to push children, like a god, from its eye” (lines 9-10), which suggests that life is being rejected; and references are made to the devil—“The old unseen serpent” (line 10) and “that great dragon” (line 14)—that further signal the imminence of death. Metaphors continue with the lines “to split / from my life with no flag, / no belly, / no cry” (lines 14-17) that symbolize the quickness of death with no time to slow down or surrender (white flag, perhaps?), take a meal (or show weakness?), or even to mourn the loss of life.

**Theme:**
The poem is about facing death. The poet is saying that even though death may seem cruel and sudden, it is better to accept it bravely, and even embrace it as a force as strong as life.

**Comparison/Contrast:**
There are many similarities between van Gogh’s painting and Sexton’s poem. For example, the movement of the large black tree and elements of the sky is evident both visually and textually. In the painting, the brushstrokes are short and swirled, which suggest movement; in the poem, Sexton writes “It moves. They are all alive” (line 7). On the other hand, while the painting may represent specific emotions of the artist himself, the poem expresses emotions inspired by the painting. The speaker draws meaning from the visual elements and interprets them from her own perspective.
**Process Journal: Lesson 2**

During the Gallery Walk, respond to each of the paintings that you have not yet analyzed, and use the following guiding questions to make notes:

- Look at the picture for a few minutes.
- Write about the picture. Consider these questions:
  - What is going on in this picture?
  - What do you see that makes you think that?
  - What else can you find?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Painting 1:</th>
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<th>Painting 3:</th>
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**After the Gallery Walk discussion, respond to the following essential question:**

How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?
**Unit:** The Art of Modern Poetry  
**Lesson #3**

**Grade Level/Course:** English 12 Benchmark  
**Duration:** 6 days (times will vary)

**Big Idea:** Art reflects life.

**Essential Questions:**
- How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s or poet’s inner experience?
- How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?

**Common Core Standards:**

**Reading Informational Text:**

RI.11-12-1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RI.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.

**Writing:**

W.11-12. 1(a-f). Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
  - Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Speaking and Listening:**

SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**Language:**

L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.11-12-2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.11-12.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully
when reading or listening.

a. Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g., Tufte’s Artful Sentences) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading.

L.11-12.4b Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable). Apply knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes to draw inferences concerning the meaning of scientific and mathematical terminology.

L.11-12.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

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<td>• Understand the concept of ekphrasis by reading and analyzing an informational text on ekphrasis using textual evidence to support their findings</td>
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<td>• Resource 3.2 Excerpts from “Notes on Ekphrasis (2008)” by Alfred Corn (Lexile 1520)</td>
<td>• write ekphrastic poetry employing effective poetic devices</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Resource 3.3 Excerpts from “Notes on Ekphrasis (2008)” by Alfred Corn with Word Roots</td>
<td>• write an argumentative essay comparing a work of art and the students’ own ekphrastic poetry</td>
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<td>• Resource 3.10 SAUSD High School Writing Assessment Scoring Guide</td>
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<td>• Resource 3.11 Peer Review Form: Essay</td>
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<td>• Resource 3.12 Process Journal: Lesson 3</td>
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<td>• Paper and writing instruments (student-provided)</td>
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<td>• Whiteboard and markers as needed</td>
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<td>• Dictionaries for student reference (if needed)</td>
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<td>• Computers and printers for student use (if needed)</td>
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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Language: Students will</th>
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<td>Understand the concept of ekphrasis by reading and analyzing an informational text on ekphrasis using textual evidence to support their findings</td>
<td>• collaborate to co-construct understanding of academic language and key concepts while reading an informational text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write ekphrastic poetry employing effective poetic devices</td>
<td>• conduct peer reviews of their poetry and essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write an argumentative essay comparing a work of art and the students’ own ekphrastic poetry</td>
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<td>☑ Level 3: Strategic Thinking</td>
<td>☑ Level 4: Extended Thinking</td>
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</table>
### College and Career Ready Skills
- Demonstrating independence
- Responding to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
- Comprehending as well as critiquing
- Using technology and digital media strategically and capably (if students typing their essays)
- Coming to understand other perspectives and cultures

### Common Core Instructional Shifts
- Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction texts
- Reading and writing grounded from text
- Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary

### Academic Vocabulary (Tier II & Tier III)
- **KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING**
  - ekphrasis/ekphrastic poetry (a formal term for a poem inspired by a work of art), transcription, poetic structure, poetic devices, figurative language, imagery, sound elements, empathy, perspective/point of view
  - rhetorical, designate/designating, prose, attributed, latter, depicting, embody, commentary, nuances, intermediary, contemporary, autobiographical, confluence

### Pre-teaching Considerations
- Reserve a computer lab beforehand if students will be typing their final essay.
- Students should be familiar with literary point of view.

### Lesson Delivery

#### Instructional Methods
- Check method(s) used in the lesson:
  - ☒ Modeling
  - ☒ Guided Practice
  - ☒ Collaboration
  - ☒ Independent Practice
  - ☒ Guided Inquiry
  - ☒ Reflection

#### Prior Knowledge, Context, and Motivation:
Ask students to reflect on the essential question from the day before: “How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?”

#### Body of the Lesson: Activities/Questioning/Strategies/Technology/Engagement
- **Day 1: Introduction to Ekphrasis**

  *Teacher Note: Students should be seated in groups of four and form two dyads (Students A/B and C/D) who will interview each other on their answers to the essential question above.*

  1. Have students refer to their Process Journal: Lesson 2 from the previous lesson) to review their answers to the essential question. Explain that students will share their answers in a Three Step Interview. The instructions and sentence starter

#### Differentiated Instruction:
- **English Learners and Students Who Need Additional Support:**
  If possible, give students time to review the lesson’s materials in advance.
can be found on Resource 3.1 for students’ convenience.

**Three Step Interview**

- **Step One** – Student A asks Student B the essential question. Student B responds. Student A must listen carefully because s/he will have to repeat it to the table group. (Student C is also interviewing Student D in the same manner.)

- **Step Two** – Student B now asks Student A the essential question. Student A responds. Student B must listen carefully because s/he will have to repeat it to the table group. (Student D is also interviewing Student C in the same manner.)

- **Step Three** – Each person shares his/her partner’s answer to the essential question with their group members. (All four students – A, B, C, D – are sharing together.)

**Sentence starter for Three Step Interview share out:**

- My partner explained that art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives by…

- Conduct a short class discussion on student responses using the Academic Conversation prompts and frames for responding from Resource 2.3 (from Lesson 2) as needed to enhance and focus student discourse.

2. Explain to students that there is a formal term for a poem inspired by a work of art: ekphrastic poetry, or simply, ekphrasis. Write the terms on the board. Let students know that they will be reading an excerpt of an article about ekphrasis as it relates to modern poetry.

3. Students turn to “Notes on Ekphrasis (2008)” by Alfred Corn (Resource 3.2). Read the first paragraph aloud without commentary while students follow along. Then have students read through the rest of the passage independently while annotating the text (students may refer to the Annotation Symbols Chart (Resource 1.3) from Lesson 1, if needed.

4. After reading and annotating the text, students will work with a partner to share their annotations. Students should use the sentence starters provided in the annotation chart if they need additional support with academic language.

5. Do a mini-lesson on word dissection. Point out that the text dissects (or takes apart) the word *ekphrasis* by breaking it down into its Greek roots (go over the dissection provided in lines 1 and 2). Now dissect the word *transcription* in line...
1 (write it on the board), which comes from the Latin roots 
\textit{trans} (meaning across, beyond, through), \textit{script} (meaning write, written), and the suffix \textit{-tion} (meaning state or quality). Put these parts together and ask students to guess the definition of \textit{transcription}. Have them look at the context in which the word is used and refine their definitions. Ultimately, students should understand that in this case, the word \textit{transcription} means “the act or process of translating from one language to another.”

6. Explain that students will read the text again using \textbf{Resource 3.3}, which features bolded words and includes spaces to write out the word roots and students’ own definitions of the words. As they come across a bolded word while reading, students will turn to the English Language Roots Reference following the text, and determine the definition of the word by putting together the root word meanings. They will then write down their own definitions based on the context in which the word was used. Once finished, students will share and refine their definitions with a partner. Let students know that additional roots and affixes can be found online at PrefixSuffix.com.

7. For the third reading, students will work independently or with their partners to answer the text dependent questions on \textbf{Resource 3.4} (\textbf{Resource 3.4T} contains possible answers for teacher use only).

8. If students do not finish the assignment in class, have them complete it for homework.

\textbf{Day 2}: Ekphrastic Poetry Assignment

1. Let students know that they will be choosing a piece of artwork (not their own) as inspiration for an ekphrastic poem they will write.

2. Provide students with an opportunity to observe a variety of artworks. This can be done in the following ways:
   - Go on a field trip to a local art museum such as Bowers, if time and budget allow. \textit{NOTE: If students want to visit Bowers on their own, the museum offers free admission on the first Sunday of each month.}
   - Have students take a virtual field trip by accessing the following link to the Metropolitan Museum of Art: \url{http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/browse-highlights?rpp=15&pg=1}.
   - Arrange to take a tour of your school’s fine art displays; alternatively, make arrangements with a fine arts teacher on campus for your students to tour his/her classroom.
3. Once students have chosen a piece of art to use as inspiration and have taken a photo or printed it out for reference, have students begin work on their own poem. Remind them that their poems do not have to rhyme, but they should include figurative language, imagery, and sound elements. Refer students to the Ekphrastic Poetry Rubric (Resource 3.5). In addition, let students know that they can write from a different point of view than their own (for example, they can write from the perspective of a character in the artwork).

4. Students may need some help to develop their ideas. Resource 3.6, Perspectives in Writing Ekphrastic Poetry, offers some approaches to get them started. An optional prewriting chart (Resource 3.7) is available as needed. Some students may benefit from transferring their ideas and images to index cards or pieces of paper—one image, word, idea per card—then sorting them on their desks to begin to form their poem.

**Day 3**

1. Once students have developed a draft, have them share it with a partner using the Peer Review Form: Poem (Resource 3.8). As students work in pairs, hold brief conferences with students who need more guidance.

2. Students will revise their poems based on feedback.

**Day 4-6: Essay Comparing the Work of Art and the Poem**

1. Refer students to the essay instructions (Resource 3.9) and SAUSD Writing Assessment Scoring Guide (Resource 3.10), and go over the assignment with them. Students will use their unit materials as a reference to draft an essay that compares their chosen work of art to the poem they have written about it. Remind students that throughout the unit they have been examining three essential questions. Their essay should address these questions:

   - How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s and poet’s inner experience?
   - What do art and poetry have in common? How are they different?
   - How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?

   - Ask students to think about how they will make the transition to writing about what they observed in the work of art, citing evidence from the piece. What does the visual art emphasize?
   - How will they transition to writing about the creation of the poem? How will they describe how they used the visual art to shape their poem? Whose point of view is portrayed in
the poem? What poetic devices are used?

- As they conclude, students should write about how they transformed their understanding of the work of art into a poem. What did they learn about how to analyze art and poetry? What did they learn about how the two artistic forms express universal themes?

2. Give students sufficient time to draft their essays. See the link in the differentiation column for possible support activities.

3. Ask students to work with a partner to revise and edit their work using the Peer Review Form: Essay (Resource 3.11).

4. If students are typing their final drafts, arrange for them to visit the computer lab to type and print their essays.

5. Have students post their work (poems, essays, and pictures of the corresponding artwork) and conduct a Gallery Walk. Students may use the Process Journal: Lesson 3 (Resource 3.12) to record their impressions, which can then be shared in a whole class Round Robin.

Lesson Reflection

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Three Step Interview

**Essential Question:** How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?

Three Step Interview

1. **Step One** – Student A asks Student B the essential question. Student B responds. Student A must listen carefully because s/he will have to repeat it to the table group. (Student C is also interviewing Student D in the same manner.)

2. **Step Two** – Student B now asks Student A the essential question. Student A responds. Student B must listen carefully because s/he will have to repeat it to the table group. (Student D is also interviewing Student C in the same manner.)

3. **Step Three** – Each person shares his/her partner’s answer to the essential question with their group members. (All four students – A, B, C, D – are sharing together.)

**Sentence starter for Three Step Interview share out:**

- My partner explained that art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives by…
**Excerpts from Notes on Ekphrasis (2008) by Alfred Corn**

Ekphrasis (also spelled "ecphrasis") is a direct transcription from the Greek _ek_, "out of," and _phrasis_, "speech" or "expression." It's often been translated simply as "description," and seems originally to have been used as a _rhetorical_ term designating a passage in _prose_ or poetry that describes something. More narrowly, it could designate a passage providing a short speech attributed to a mute work of visual art. In recent decades, the use of the term has been limited, first, to _visual_ description and then even more specifically to the description of a real or imagined work of visual art.

Some ekphrastic poems describe photographs, and these may be art photographs or else ordinary snapshots, the latter _often_ depicting members of the poet's family. A disadvantage of using family snapshots is that the original image may not _embody_ sufficient artistry to provide the stuff of interesting commentary; nor is that image available to the reader for comparison with the text. Enormous skill is needed in order to convey visual information of this kind, along with the passions and _emotional nuances_ that pictures from childhood arouse in the author. So there is a risk that only a small part of the authors' feelings will actually be accessible to the reader through the intermediary of words alone. Still, some poets have had success writing this kind of poem, for example, Adrienne Rich in "Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law" and Greg Williamson's "Double Exposures."

Perhaps the most effective contemporary poems dealing with visual art are those where the authors include themselves in the poem, recounting the background circumstances that led to a viewing of the painting or sculpture in question; or what memories or associations or emotions it stirs in them; or how they might wish the work to be different from what it is. The center of attention in this kind of poem isn't solely the pre-existing work but instead is _dual_, sharing the

---

1. Rhetorical (adjective): concerned with the art or science of all specialized literary uses of language in prose or verse
2. Prose (noun): the ordinary form of spoken or written language, without metrical structure, as distinguished from poetry or verse
3. Latter (adjective): being the second mentioned of two (distinguished from former)
4. Embody (verb): express, or exemplify in concrete form
5. Commentary (noun): a series of comments, explanations, or annotations
6. Nuance (noun): a very slight difference in expression, meaning, response, etc.
autobiographical focus found in the majority of contemporary lyric poems written in English. Poems like these unite ekphrasis with the autobiographical tradition, which is equally ancient and probably more important than ekphrasis alone. After all, the autobiographical tradition can cite figures such as Ovid, Dante, Ben Jonson, Donne, George Herbert, Pope, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, Whitman, Dickinson, Eliot, Akhmatova, Williams, Crane, Lowell, Roethke, Bishop, Berryman, Larkin, Walcott, Merrill, Adrienne Rich, and Seamus Heaney. Of course you can argue that an ekphrastic poem providing no information at all about the author may still convey autobiographical content indirectly, in the form of "voice," tone, level of diction, and the kind and frequency of judgments made in the course of presentation. In "Archaic Torso of Apollo," Rilke gives us no precise autobiographical facts about himself; nevertheless, we get a strong sense of the author's character and prospects from his presentation of the subject, in particular, when he imagines the torso saying to him, "You must change your life."

Meanwhile, more directly autobiographical ekphrastic poems, like Lowell's "For the Union Dead," Bishop's "Poem," John Ashbery's "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror," Charles Wright's "Homage to Claude Lorraine," or the present author's "Seeing All the Vermeers," locate the act of viewing visual art in a particular place and time, giving it a personal and perhaps even an historical context. The result is then not merely a verbal "photocopy" of the original painting, sculpture, or photograph, but instead a grounded instance of seeing, shaped by forces outside the artwork. In such poems, description of the original work remains partial, but authors add to it aspects drawn from their own experience—the facts, reflections, and feelings that arise at the confluence of a work of visual art and the life of the poet.

- See more at: http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID

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7 Lyric poem (adjective + noun): a short poem that has a songlike quality
**Excerpts from Notes on Ekphrasis (2008) by Alfred Corn**

**Directions:** Read the following passage. When you see a bolded word, refer to the English Language Roots Reference following the text to determine the word’s roots. Write the roots in the box below the line where the bolded word appears, and then determine the definition of the word based on the roots. Write your definition in the box.

Ekphrasis (also spelled "ecphrasis") is a direct transcription from the Greek *ek*, "out of," and *phrasis*, "speech" or "expression." It's often been translated simply as "description," and seems originally to have been used as a rhetorical term designating a passage in prose or poetry that

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<th>designating: roots:</th>
<th>my definition:</th>
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...describes something. More narrowly, it could designate a passage providing a short speech attributed to a mute work of visual art. In recent decades, the use of the term has been limited, first, to visual description and then even more specifically to the description of a real or imagined work of visual art.

...Some ekphrastic poems describe photographs, and these may be art photographs or else ordinary snapshots, the latter often depicting members of the poet's family. A disadvantage of using family snapshots is that the original image may not embody sufficient artistry to provide the stuff of interesting commentary; nor is that image available to the reader for comparison with

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1 Rhetorical (adjective): concerned with the art or science of all specialized literary uses of language in prose or verse
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4 Embody (verb): express, or exemplify in concrete form
5 Commentary (noun): a series of comments, explanations, or annotations
the text. Enormous skill is needed in order to convey visual information of this kind, along with the passions and emotional nuances\(^6\) that pictures from childhood arouse in the author. So there is a risk that only a small part of the authors' feelings will actually be accessible to the reader through the **intermediary** of words alone. Still, some poets have had success writing this kind of poem, for example, Adrienne Rich in "Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law" and Greg Williamson's "Double Exposures."

Perhaps the most effective **contemporary** poems dealing with visual art are those where the authors include themselves in the poem, recounting the background circumstances that led to a viewing of the painting or sculpture in question; or what memories or associations or emotions it stirs in them; or how they might wish the work to be different from what it is. The center of attention in this kind of poem isn't solely the pre-existing work but instead is **dual**, sharing the **autobiographical** focus found in the majority of contemporary lyric poems\(^7\) written in English. Poems like these unite ekphrasis with the autobiographical tradition, which is equally ancient and probably more important than ekphrasis alone. After all, the autobiographical tradition can cite figures such as Ovid, Dante, Ben Jonson, Donne, George Herbert, Pope, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, Whitman, Dickinson, Eliot, Akhmatova, Williams, Crane, Lowell, Roethke, Bishop, Berryman, Larkin, Walcott, Merrill, Adrienne Rich, and Seamus Heaney. Of course you can argue that an ekphrastic poem providing no information at all about the author may still convey autobiographical content indirectly, in the form of "voice," tone, level of diction, and the

---

\(^6\) Nuance (noun): a very slight difference in expression, meaning, response, etc.

\(^7\) Lyric poem (adjective + noun): a short poem that has a songlike quality
kind and frequency of judgments made in the course of presentation. In "Archaic Torso of Apollo," Rilke gives us no precise autobiographical facts about himself; nevertheless, we get a strong sense of the author's character and prospects from his presentation of the subject, in particular, when he imagines the torso saying to him, "You must change your life."

Meanwhile, more directly autobiographical ekphrastic poems, like Lowell's "For the Union Dead," Bishop's "Poem," John Ashbery's "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror," Charles Wright's "Homage to Claude Lorraine," or the present author's "Seeing All the Vermeers," locate the act of viewing visual art in a particular place and time, giving it a personal and perhaps even an historical context. The result is then not merely a verbal "photocopy" of the original painting, sculpture, or photograph, but instead a grounded instance of seeing, shaped by forces outside the artwork. In such poems, description of the original work remains partial, but authors add to it aspects drawn from their own experience—the facts, reflections, and feelings that arise at the confluence of a work of visual art and the life of the poet.

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<th>confluence: roots:</th>
<th>my definition:</th>
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<tr>
<th>English Language Roots Reference (from PrefixSuffix.com)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Root, Prefix or Suffix</strong></td>
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Text Dependent Questions for
Excerpts from Notes on Ekphrasis (2008) by Alfred Corn

Answer the following questions citing evidence from the text.

1. What has the term *ekphrasis* been used to describe in recent decades?

2. What are two disadvantages of using family photographs as the subject of ekphrastic poetry? What is required for this to be successful?

3. According to Corn’s “Notes on Ekphrasis,” what are the three conditions that authors must meet for contemporary autobiographical poems to be most effective?

4. How can an ekphrastic poem that provides no information at all about the author still convey autobiographical content?
5. Consider Anne Sexton’s poem, “The Starry Night” (Resource 1.9 from Lesson 1). Using examples from Alfred Corn’s text to support your reasons, explain how the poem could be an example of autobiographical ekphrasis.
Text Dependent Questions for
Excerpts from Notes on Ekphrasis (2008) by Alfred Corn

Answer the following questions citing evidence from the text.

1. What has the term *ekphrasis* been used to describe in recent decades?

   According to Corn, “In recent decades, the use of the term [ekphrasis] has been limited, first, to visual description and then even more specifically to the description of a real or imagined work of visual art” (lines 5-7).

2. What are two disadvantages of using family photographs as the subject of ekphrastic poetry? What is required for this to be successful?

   The first disadvantage is that “the original image may not embody sufficient artistry to provide the stuff of interesting commentary” (lines 10-11). The second disadvantage is that the image is not “available to the reader for comparison with the text” (lines 11-12). To be successful according to Corn, “Enormous skill is needed in order to convey visual information of this kind, along with the passions and emotional nuances that pictures from childhood arouse in the author” (lines 12-13).

3. According to Corn’s “Notes on Ekphrasis,” what are the three conditions that authors must meet for contemporary autobiographical poems to be most effective?

   Corn states that “the most effective contemporary poems dealing with visual art are those where…

   1. “the authors include themselves in the poem, recounting the background circumstances that led to a viewing of the painting or sculpture in question; or…

   2. “what memories or associations or emotions it stirs in them; or…

   3. “how they might wish the work to be different from what it is” (lines 18-21).
4. How can an ekphrastic poem that provides no information at all about the author still convey autobiographical content?

An “author may convey autobiographical content indirectly, in the form of ‘voice,’ tone, level of diction, and the kind and frequency of judgments made in the course of presentation” (lines 29-31).

5. Consider Anne Sexton’s poem, “The Starry Night” (Resource 1.9 from Lesson 1). Using examples from Alfred Corn’s text to support your reasons, explain how the poem could be an example of autobiographical ekphrasis.

The speaker in Anne Sexton’s poem, “The Starry Night,” describes the scene in Vincent van Gogh’s painting, “Starry Night,” and then builds on the visual by expressing her reaction to the painting; or as Corn puts it, she offers a “grounded instance of seeing, shaped by forces outside the artwork” (lines 40-41). This indicates that the author added “aspects drawn from [her] own experience—the facts, reflections, and feelings that arise at the confluence of a work of visual art and the life of the poet” (Corn, lines 41-13).


# Ekphrastic Poetry Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outstanding (5)</th>
<th>Proficient (4)</th>
<th>Average (3)</th>
<th>Below Average (2)</th>
<th>Insufficient (1)</th>
<th>Not Present (0)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creativity</strong></td>
<td>Unique and original ideas and perspective.</td>
<td>Original ideas and perspective.</td>
<td>Some originality. Some evidence of the creative process.</td>
<td>Lacks originality. Little evidence of the creative process.</td>
<td>Little to no evidence of original and creative ideas.</td>
<td>Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attention to Detail</strong></td>
<td>Effective incorporation of many image details.</td>
<td>Image details incorporated well.</td>
<td>Some image details incorporated.</td>
<td>Few image details incorporated.</td>
<td>Little to no evidence of image details incorporated.</td>
<td>Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degree of Empathy and Thought</strong></td>
<td>Excellent depth of thought and insight.</td>
<td>Shows thought and insight.</td>
<td>Shows some thought, but little insight.</td>
<td>Shows little thought.</td>
<td>Not thoughtful.</td>
<td>Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poetic Structure</strong> (line breaks, punctuation, stanzas, etc.)</td>
<td>Thoughtful use of structure adds to effectiveness of poem's ideas.</td>
<td>Use of structure contributes to poem’s ideas.</td>
<td>Shows some thought put into structural elements.</td>
<td>Little thought put into structural elements.</td>
<td>Poetic structure ineffective.</td>
<td>Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diction and Poetic Devices</strong>: Figurative Language, Imagery, Sound Elements</td>
<td>Effective use of diction and all three poetic devices consistently throughout the poem.</td>
<td>Consistent attention paid to diction and all three poetic devices.</td>
<td>Some attention to diction or poetic devices, but used ineffectively.</td>
<td>Little attention to diction or poetic devices.</td>
<td>Little to no thought put into using diction or poetic devices.</td>
<td>Not present</td>
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</table>

*Highlight or underline on final draft. If not done, highest grade will be a “3” or “average”

**Total Points** __________/25 (x3)

Creative Poem Title? _____ Yes _____ No
Your Name? _____ Yes _____ No  -5 for each “no”
Picture Attached? _____ Yes _____ No

**FINAL GRADE:**
Perspectives in Writing Ekphrastic Poetry

As you begin to write your ekphrastic poems, consider the following approaches:

- Write about the scene or subject being depicted in the artwork.
- Write in the voice of a person or object shown in the work of art.
- Write about your experience of looking at the art.
- Relate the work of art to something else it reminds you of.
- Imagine what was happening while the artist was creating the piece.
- Write in the voice of the artist.
- Write a dialogue among characters in a work of art.
- Speak directly to the artist or the subject(s) of the piece.
- Write in the voice of an object or person portrayed in the artwork.
- Imagine a story behind what you see depicted in the piece.
- Speculate about why the artist created this work.
## Prewriting Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Artwork</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Reactions to Artwork</th>
<th>Possible Perspectives</th>
<th>Possible Poetic Devices</th>
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PEER REVIEW FORM: POEM

Work with a partner to take turns reviewing each other’s poems using the scoring guide and questions below:

**Scoring Guide**
0 = not present
1 = insufficient
2 = below average
3 = average
4 = proficient
5 = outstanding

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<td>1. Does the poem reflect unique and original ideas and perspective?</td>
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<td>2. Does the poem effectively incorporate image details?</td>
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<td>3. Does the poem reflect excellent depth of thought and insight?</td>
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<td>4. Is poetic structure (line breaks, punctuation, stanzas, etc.) used</td>
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<td>5. Does the poem consistently use precise, descriptive words (diction)?</td>
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<td>6. Is figurative language used effectively throughout the poem?</td>
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<td>7. Is imagery used effectively throughout the poem?</td>
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<td>8. Are sound elements used effectively throughout the poem?</td>
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Using the feedback received from your partner, now revise your poem to include any elements that may have been missed and any corrections needed to improve your writing.
Comparison Essay

You will use your unit materials as a reference to draft an essay that compares your chosen work of art to the poem you wrote about it. Remember that throughout the unit we have been examining three essential questions. Your essay should address these questions:

- How do art and poetry reflect the artist’s and poet’s inner experience?
- What do art and poetry have in common? How are they different?
- How do art and poetry help us recognize themes in our own lives?

- While planning your essay, think about how you will make the transition to writing about what you observed in the work of art, citing evidence from the piece. What does the visual art emphasize?
- How will you transition to writing about the creation of the poem? How will you describe how you used the visual art to shape your poem? Whose point of view is portrayed in the poem? What poetic devices are used?
- As you conclude your essay, you should write about how you transformed your understanding of the work of art into a poem. What did you learn about how to analyze art and poetry? What did you learn about how the two artistic forms express universal themes?

Your essay will be scored using the SAUSD High School Writing Assessment Scoring Guide (see Resource 3.10). Be sure to refer to this guide while planning your essay.
## Writing Task Scoring Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Insightfully addresses all parts of the writing task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thoroughly addresses all parts of the writing task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adequately addresses the elements of the writing task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Addresses only parts of the writing task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Addresses only one part of the writing task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Does not address the writing task.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Thesis and Support
- **Contains a **meaningful **thesis** or controlling idea which is thoroughly supported with specific and relevant examples and textual evidence (if applicable).**
- **Contains a thesis or controlling idea which is well supported with details and examples.**
- **Contains a central idea or thesis which is adequately supported with details.**
- **Contains a central idea which is supported with limited details.**
- **May lack a central idea and uses limited details.**
- **May lack a central idea or does not include supporting details.**

### Organization and Focus
- **Maintains a logical and seamless organizational structure, includes coherent paragraphs, and effective transitions between ideas.**
- **Maintains a logical organizational structure, includes paragraphs, and transitions between ideas.**
- **Maintains a mostly logical structure, includes paragraphs and some transitions between ideas.**
- **Offers an inconsistent organizational structure and may not include paragraphs or transitions (or transitions are awkward).**
- **Lacks an apparent organizational structure and transitions, but reader may still follow overall argument.**
- **Lacks an organizational structure which greatly hinders understanding.**

### Audience
- **Consistently demonstrates a clear sense of audience.**
- **Demonstrates a clear sense of audience.**
- **Demonstrates a general sense of audience.**
- **Demonstrates some sense of audience.**
- **Demonstrates little sense of audience.**
- **May demonstrate no understanding of audience.**

### Sentence Structure and Language
- **Consistently provides a variety of complex sentence types and uses sophisticated and descriptive language.**
- **Consistently provides a variety of sentence types and uses precise and descriptive language.**
- **Provides a variety of sentence types and uses some descriptive language.**
- **Includes little variety of sentence types but demonstrates some understanding of sentence structure. Uses basic or predictable language.**
- **Demonstrates little understanding of basic sentence structure and uses vocabulary which lacks ability to convey meaning.**
- **Demonstrates no understanding of basic sentence structure and uses vocabulary which lacks ability to convey meaning.**

### Written Conventions
- **Contains very few or no errors in conventions and demonstrates an excellent command of the language.**
- **Contains few errors in conventions and demonstrates a good command of the language.**
- **Contains some errors but these do not interfere with overall understanding.**
- **Contains many errors in conventions but overall meaning is evident.**
- **Contains many errors in language which often interfere with understanding.**
- **Contains many serious errors in conventions which consistently interfere with understanding.**
**PEER REVIEW FORM: ESSAY**

Work with a partner to take turns reviewing each other’s essays using the scoring guide and questions below:

**Scoring Guide**
1 = far below basic  
2 = below basic  
3 = basic  
4 = proficient  
5 = highly proficient  
6 = advanced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. The essay insightfully addresses all parts of the writing task.</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The essay contains a meaningful thesis or controlling idea which is thoroughly supported with specific and relevant examples and textual evidence.</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The essay maintains a logical and seamless organizational structure, includes coherent paragraphs, and effective transitions between ideas.</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The essay consistently demonstrates a clear sense of audience.</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The essay consistently provides a variety of complex sentence types and uses sophisticated and descriptive language.</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The essay contains very few or no errors in conventions and demonstrates excellent command of the language.</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The essay insightfully answers the unit’s three essential questions.</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The essay clearly relates the writer’s experience with the artwork chosen, the creation of the poem, and the learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the feedback received from your partner, now revise your essay to include any elements that may have been missed and any corrections needed to improve your writing.
Process Journal: Lesson 3

Gallery Walk: Look closely at the artwork and read the poetry and essays on display, then record your impressions.

- What do you notice about the art pieces chosen?
- How do the Ekphrastic poems relate to the art that inspired them?
- What new insights do you get from reading the essays?
- Can you relate to the themes represented? How?