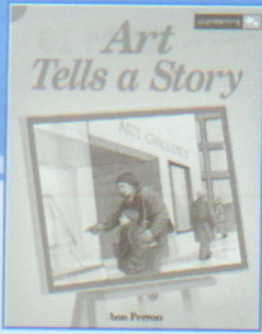


ART TELLS A STORY



Text Synopsis

Art Tells a Story uses a framework of fiction to explore a number of real paintings, by artists such as Pablo Picasso, Emily Carr, Lawren Harris, and Mary Pratt. The text follows Paul and his Uncle Leon as they enter an art gallery to warm up after skating. They play a game in which they make up stories about different paintings, asking each other questions and engaging with the art. *Art Tells a Story* showcases a wonderful range of paintings, and also provides an approach for looking at and appreciating art.

LITERACY ELEMENTS

couplet:

Open your eyes and
count to three.

Now tell a story about
what you see.

analogy: triangles and sails
on a boat

boldface type for emphasis

compound words: bonfire,
bedroom, afternoon,
sailboat, himself

CONNECTIONS

MUSIC

communicate a response
to music

DRAMA

move and control body
movements

WORDS TO DISCOVER

art gallery

triangles

fancy

special

bonfire

marshmallows

Inuit

positional words: first,
next, under

ESL CONSIDERATIONS

Helping the children to understand the direct connection between the titles of the various pieces of art and the content of the pictures will stimulate thought and discussion.

Overall Learning Opportunities



Students will:

- examine a broad range of artworks through time and cultures
- bring personal meaning to artwork and communicate their discoveries
- use correctly the vocabulary and art terminology associated with the specific expectations for this grade



Students will:

- communicate ideas (thoughts, feelings, experiences) for specific purposes
- use some materials from other media to enhance their writing
- select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts

ACTIVITY MENU

Shared Reading, pages 31–32

Exploration: Adjectives and Elements, page 33

Guided Reading, pages 34–35

As a Group, pages 36–37



- *My Own Story*: telling a story through artwork
- *Self-Portrait in My Favourite Place*: using artwork to express ideas and feelings
- *Riddle Words*: using vocabulary and sentence structure to help understanding
- *Make Your Picture Tell a Story*: using words and pictures to create a story

Independent Work, pages 38–41



- *BLM 14*: using adjectives and design elements in artwork
- *BLM 15*: identifying and explaining artistic choices
- *BLM 16*: demonstrating an understanding of text elements
- *BLM 17*: reinforcing vocabulary



Shared Reading



LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- use a variety of reading strategies to understand a piece of writing
- restate information in a text in their own words
- use and interpret some conventions of formal texts

YOU WILL NEED

- chart paper and marker

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- participate in conversation?
- follow the print as you read the book aloud?
- join in the reading with enthusiasm and interest?

Getting Ready to Read

Select a few samples of the children's pictures (with an emphasis on using paints, crayons, cut-and-paste, construction paper), and invite the picture makers to share their work with the class. Encourage the children to tell what their pictures are about — the stories they tell — and prompt them to share the “story behind the story” by asking questions such as:

- What gave you the idea for your picture?
- How did you go about making the picture? What did you draw/paint/cut and paste/colour first?
- If your picture came from something that happened to you in your real life, how are the stories the same? How are they different?

Show the children the cover of the Big Book. Ask:

- Who can read the title of the book for us? That's right, the title is “Art Tells A Story.” I know that an author tells a story by writing words on paper. But who tells a story through art? Is it really a “story”? Tell us about that.
- How is an author's story the same as an artist's story? How is it different?
- What does the cover picture tell us about what we're going to be finding out in this book? Yes, this is a book with two characters — Uncle Leon and his nephew, Paul. One day, they happen to pass by a building that shows lots of pieces of art. Do you know what such a place is called? Yes, it's an art gallery.

- What are Uncle Leon and Paul doing? Yes, they saw a picture in the window of the art gallery and they stopped to talk about it. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's go back to find out how they happened to be at the entrance to an art gallery.

First Reading

As you're opening the Big Book, mention that it was written by Ann Perron and illustrated by Karen Reczuch.

Read the book from beginning to end, sweeping your hand under each line of text as you read it. Stop to focus the children's attention on the art pieces so that they'll connect the written text to the visual.

When you get to page 6, stop briefly after reading “Uncle Leon said” to prepare the children for the couplet that follows, and to anchor the words in their minds. As you read what the characters say about the paintings, point to those details in the pictures, e.g., page 7 “I see two sisters reading a book,” said Paul.

Returning to the Text

Encourage the children to talk about the book by asking open-ended questions, such as:

- Have you ever been to an art gallery? Does this book make you want to go to one? Why or why not?
- Where do you think the author got the idea for the book?
- Which do you think came first — the title, or the storyline? Why do you think so?
- What did you learn from this book?



TEACHING tip

Before inviting the children to identify their favourite paintings, you could take them on a "Picture Walk" so they can look at each of the paintings one more time. As they are looking, record the painting's name on chart paper and develop a frequency tally to determine the class favourites.

TEACHING tip

To prepare the children for the various punctuation marks they'll meet, select an example of each and have the children read the sentences chorally.

Have the children recall and talk about details by asking questions, such as:

- Which painting was your favourite? Why?
- Who remembers the rhyme that Uncle Leon or Paul recited each time they stood in front of a painting? Yes, that's right, "Open your eyes and count to three. Now tell a story about what you see."

Second Reading

To prepare the children for the second reading, show them the inside cover of the Big Book and talk about the information that is housed there: date of publication, the publishing company, people who helped the author and the illustrator to make the book, the support of the Governments of Canada and of Ontario, and the ISBN. Then look again at the title of the book. Ask:

- Does anyone know why the words "art", "tells", and "story" begin with capital letters and "a" is lower case?

Read the book again, inviting the children to read along with you if they wish. Particularly encourage them to join in the reading of the couplet each time it appears in the text.

Extending the Reading Experience

To encourage their participation and to give them practice in oral reading, invite half the class to read the part of Paul and half the class to read the part of Uncle Leon. You can be the Narrator.

Remind the children to watch the punctuation carefully so they are sure to stop at the end of a sentence when they see a period, pause when they see a comma, raise their voices when they see a question mark, and add excitement to their voices when they see an exclamation mark.



Adjectives and Elements

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- share thoughts and ideas about artworks
- use various materials and processes exploring possibilities and limitations
- use the elements of design in ways appropriate for this grade

YOU WILL NEED

- drawing materials (crayons, chalk, markers) and paper
- chart paper or chalkboard

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- use correct vocabulary?
- use the elements of design to express personal ideas?

TEACHING TIP

Talking about how artists use the elements and principles of art and design helps children develop their critical thinking skills and models correct use of art vocabulary.

Reading the Text

As you read *Art Tells a Story* with the children, discuss some of the elements of design (colour, line, shape, form, value, space, and texture) and how they're described by the characters. Look at page 4 and say:

- What word does Uncle Leon use to describe the colours? (bright) the lines? (fat) What do we call describing words? (adjectives) What other adjectives does he use? (happy, messy)
- Let's make two lists showing the design elements and some adjectives. Who would like to print adjectives on the chart? elements?

Begin the chart.

- Let's choose another painting from the book. Can you use an adjective to describe one of the elements? (flickering colours, thin lines, soft shapes, cold forms, scratchy textures, etc.)

Add any new adjectives, and any elements not already listed. Encourage the children to look around the classroom for more examples to add to the lists.

Starting the Exploration

When the lists are long enough, play a game of *Let's Pretend* with the words on the list. Model the game by pointing to an adjective from one list, and an element from the other:

- Let's pretend you were drawing a picture with ... *fuzzy* ... *lines*. What would it be?
- Let's pretend you were drawing a picture with ... *shiny* ... *shapes*. What would it be?

Let the children take turns doing this for a few minutes.

Working on Adjectives and Elements

Ask children to plan and then draw a picture that shows adjective + element combinations. They can use

BLM 14, choosing combinations from the posted lists (or create their own) to prepare their plan. Some adjective + element combinations are fun and silly!

Remind the children that artists use design elements in all kinds of art: abstract, portraits, landscapes, etc. They can choose which style they like best.

Sharing

Children can share their finished work with the class, a small group, or a partner. Other children can try to guess what combinations of adjectives and elements were used. Post children's completed pictures. Ask them to make labels with a short description of the elements. (*I used soft lines and cool colours.*)

Extension

Play several different pieces of instrumental music (see [Grade 2 Audio CD Tracks 11, 15, 19, and 23](#) for example). For each piece, brainstorm appropriate adjectives. Next, have the children create a work that captures the mood of one of the pieces of music. They can use an appropriate adjective from the list as a title for their work.

This Exploration works well with Stand-Alone Activity 30: "Art Appreciation" on page 158.



Page 38

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- use a variety of reading strategies to understand a piece of writing, e.g., reread
- express their thoughts and feelings about ideas in a piece of writing
- use their knowledge of word endings to recognize the same word in different forms, e.g., skates, skating, skated; open, opened; close, closed

TEACHING tip

Be sure to include places that are of interest to the children in your class, as well as places in your community, in your list of "Where do you like to go?"

Setting the Scene

Engage the children in conversation about places they like to go, leading up to the idea of visiting an art gallery. Say:

- When I name a place where you like to go, raise your hand: to a park ... to a movie (birthday party, ice rink, museum, shopping mall, bowling alley, restaurant, swimming pool, sports arena) ... to an art gallery.

Ask:

- What is an art gallery? How many of you have been to an art gallery? Who can tell us what you see at an art gallery?

Give out copies of the book and say:

- Look at the cover picture. One of these people is Uncle Leon, the other is his nephew, Paul. Put your finger on Uncle Leon. How did you know which one to point to?
- Where are they? How do you know? What are they doing?
- Look very closely at the picture and you'll know where they've been. That's right, they've been skating.

Say:

- One winter afternoon, Paul and his Uncle Leon went skating in the park. They skated for a long time.

Reading the Text

Ask the children to open their books to page 2. Say:

- Look at the picture of Paul and Uncle Leon skating. How do you know it's cold outside? Yes, they're wearing very heavy clothing and the rink is frozen.

Continue reading aloud to the end of the page: "When they were tired ... started to walk home". Say:

- Now you can read that page to yourselves.

Point to the picture on page 3. Say:

- This is the picture we saw on the cover of the book — Uncle Leon and Paul are looking at a picture in the art gallery window. What do you think might have made them stop to look?

Encourage the children to think about the possibility of colour, subject matter, the nature of the art, and so on. Read the page aloud to the children and then ask:

- Turn the page to see what they were looking at. What do you think caught their attention?
- If you were asked about this picture, what would you say? What do you think it's about? Read to find out what Uncle Leon and Paul said about it.

Point to the picture on page 5. Ask:

- Can you see that Paul has his eyes closed and Uncle Leon is leading him around? That's because they're playing a game. Read this page to find out what the game was about.

Turn to page 6. Say:

- This is the picture that Paul saw when Uncle Leon told him to open his eyes. What's the story that this picture tells?

Encourage the children to tell what they see in the picture — the subjects and the activity. Then say:

- Read pages 6 and 7 to find out what Paul and Uncle Leon thought the picture was about.

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- appear interested in searching for answers to your questions?
- indicate an interest in responding to your questions without being prompted to do so?
- settle into the reading and stick to the task until complete?
- manage the text with little or no assistance?

TEACHING tip

Read the names of the various paintings and the artists to the children as you make your way through the book. Invite the children to talk about what they think the stories are in each of the pictures and to share their opinions of the paintings. When appropriate, invite the children to explain how the title relates to the painting, e.g., *Lake and Mountains*. For the other paintings, explain the titles to the children, e.g., for *Skaters on the Amstel*, tell children that the Amstel is a river in the Netherlands.

Continue the routine where the children:

- look at the painting on the page and share their ideas
- read the text to find out what story Uncle Leon and Paul thought the painting told
- respond to the characters' ideas to the end of page 21. Ask:

- What do you think Paul's response will be?

Affirm that, in fact, they do go to the poster shop and then say:

- Uncle Leon buys Paul a poster. Do you have any idea what the poster would be about?

Encourage the children's guesses and then have the children turn the page to find out. Say:

- Read this page to find out where Paul wants to put the poster.

Turn the page to show the poster that Uncle Leon bought for himself, and say:

- The title is "Ladder to the Moon" by Georgia O'Keeffe. What's unusual about the ladder? Why do you think the artist painted it that way?
- On the next page, you're going to see a gift that Uncle Leon gives to Paul. What do you think it is?

After the children respond, have them turn the page to look at the illustration to find out. Say:

- Yes, Uncle Leon gave Paul some paints. Read this page to find out what he wants Paul to do with them.

Independent Reading

Invite the children to read the book on their own.

After Reading

Ask the children:

- What do you think Paul's first painting will be about? What story do you think he'll tell to go with it?

Revisit the Text

Discuss the story using open-ended prompts, such as:

- Paul said that he learned a lot about paintings. What did you learn?
- Do you think *Art Tells a Story* is a good title for this book? Why? Why not?
- Would you like to go to an art gallery to look at paintings? Why? Why not?
- Of all the people you know, who would you most like to take you to an art gallery? Why would you choose that person?

Reinforce the Text

Invite the children to work in pairs to go through the book, look at all the paintings, then decide which is their favourite. They can share with each other the reasons for their selection.

The children can complete **BLM 16** to reinforce their knowledge of the content of the various paintings and/or **BLM 17** to reinforce vocabulary meanings.



Page 40



Page 41



As a Group

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- produce two- and three-dimensional works of art
- express through art-making personal feelings, ideas, and understandings

YOU WILL NEED

- paint, large and small brushes, water containers
- smocks and newspaper
- medium and large paper

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- clearly express ideas through artwork?
- explain connections between artwork and their own understandings?

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- describe the relationship between an artwork and their own experiences
- recognize art as a way of expressing ideas and points of view

YOU WILL NEED

- drawing and painting materials
- various sizes and colours of paper

Activity: My Own Story

Review the paintings in *Art Tells a Story* with the children. Encourage them to think about their own interpretations of the pictures. Ask questions, such as:

- What do *you* think is the story in this picture?
- What do you think happened just before the moment in the picture? What do you think might happen next?
- How do the lines and colours in the painting make you feel? What might the artist have been thinking of?

Explain to the children that today they will be painting their own pictures. Ask them to close their eyes and imagine a picture that tells a story. Say:

- Think of your picture. Are there people in it? Is it an abstract picture?
- What will the lines look like? jagged? smooth? Will the colours make you feel happy? sad? calm? excited?

- Is there something that can be heard in your story? Something to taste? to touch?

Encourage the children to make a rough sketch first, to fill their paper space, and to include interesting details that support the story.

When the paintings are complete, the children can play the game from the book: "Open your eyes and count to three. Now tell a story about what you see." Model with the class, then let the children work in small groups so everyone has a chance to share ideas.

Extension

Have children work in groups to create a skit based on one of their own paintings. The skit should begin or end in a tableau modelled on the scene in the painting.

Activity: Self-Portrait in My Favourite Place

Show children the portrait by Jan Albertsz Rotius on page 10 of *Art Tells a Story*. Ask:

- Why do you think this artist made this picture? (to tell a story, to express a feeling, etc.)
- What do we call a picture that shows what a person looks like? (a portrait)

Explain that portrait can show just the head or some of the body as well, or the whole body.

- What do the details in the background and foreground tell us about this girl?

Tell the children that they are going to paint a *self-portrait*, set in their favourite place. Spend a moment discussing choices.

Say:

- Artists make choices when they work. You decide the size and colour of your paper, whether you will paint or draw, and what you would like to have beside you in the picture. You should be able to tell us why you made those choices.

When the pictures are finished, children can complete **BLM 15** and display it with their work.

Discuss the choices that the children made.



Page 39

Extension

Use an instant camera to take a photo of each child, then make photocopies. Each child can colour the photocopy and incorporate it into a collage depicting a favourite place.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- understand the vocabulary in written materials
- use their knowledge of sentence structure in oral language to determine the meaning of a sentence

Activity: Riddle Words

Reread *Art Tells a Story*, and have the children recall answers to oral word riddles such as:

- This is a person's name that has four letters and starts with a capital P.
- This is what Paul and Uncle Leon did in the park before they walked by the art gallery.
- This is the first place in the art gallery where Paul and Uncle Leon saw a poster.
- These are what Paul and Uncle Leon closed to play the game.
- This is a number word that is more than two and less than four.

- This is what Uncle Leon bought for Paul.
- These are something you can roast over a fire.

Extension

Have the children make up riddles about words they find in the story.

Examples:

- On page 6, I see two words that rhyme.
- On page 19, I see a word that means the opposite of south.
- On page 15, I see a word that means "frozen water."

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- communicate ideas for different purposes
- use words and pictures to create a message

Activity: Make Your Picture Tell a Story

Invite the children to select from a variety of art materials, and make a picture that tells a story. Or, use the pictures that children made in the activity "My Own Story" (see previous page).

Then:

- Have the children pair and share their pictures and stories.
- Have them find a second partner with whom to share their pictures and stories.
- Have them find a third partner with whom to share their pictures and stories.

Afterward, have the children write a draft of the story they've practised telling. Stories can vary in length from one sentence to an entire paragraph.

Extension

Invite the children to read their draft stories to a partner, make revisions, and then come together to share both their pictures and their stories with the whole group. Some children may like to perform their stories as a role play, while the partner holds up the picture for the audience.

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- invent a story that interprets the picture well?
- revise the story and improve it?

Name _____ Date _____

My Picture Plan

I plan to use:

| Adjective | Element |
|-----------|---------|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Sketch

and then come together to share both their pictures and their stories with the whole group. Some children may like to perform their stories as a role play, while the partner holds up the picture for the audience.

- Have the children pair and share their pictures and stories.
- Have them find a second partner with whom to share their pictures and stories.
- Have them find a third partner with whom to share their pictures and stories.

Afterward, have the children write a draft of the story they've practiced telling. Stories can vary in length from one sentence to an entire paragraph.

Name _____ Date _____

My Self-Portrait

One good choice that I made was _____

I like this about my picture: _____

My favourite place is _____

I talked about my picture with _____

Name _____ Date _____

Find the Page.

1. The painting is of a girl with a boat. page _____
2. There's a lake and mountains in
this painting. page _____
3. The man is playing hockey. page _____
4. The ladder is going up to the moon. page _____
5. Two girls are reading a book. page _____
6. There are skaters, boats, and a
bridge in this painting. page _____
7. The young girl has a flower. page _____
8. There is a fire by a river. page _____
9. This is the painting I like best. page _____

Name _____ Date _____

Find the Words.

Find the words that mean:

1. a shape with three sides (page 4) _____
2. something you can read (page 7) _____
3. what you use to see (page 7) _____
4. big, big hills (page 14) _____
5. something you can climb up or
down on (page 23) _____
6. a game you can play on ice
(page 9) _____
7. a place to go to see paintings
(page 3) _____
8. the name of a flower (page 10) _____
9. the number that comes after one
and two (page 6) _____