

HOW TO INTRODUCE CHILDREN TO WORKS OF ART

1. **Familiarize yourself** with the work of art, the artist, and the cultural and social history that may surround the work.

2. **Plan your discussion.**
 - a. Pick a theme for your work.
 - b. Have the children name objects they see in the piece.
 - c. What clues are given about the: time of year, time of day, history, and location.
 - d. Ask questions to lead the students into the work, instead of volunteering answers in a lecture format.
 - e. If age-appropriate, discuss the formal elements of the piece.
 - f. If the discussion seems to be going in a direction for which you were *not* prepared, try to stay flexible and wing it. Otherwise gently direct the lesson back to the plan, saving questions which lead in other directions to the end.

3. **Formal Qualities**

Shape: What large and small shapes can you identify? How do connected shapes create objects? How do these relate to the chosen theme?

Color: What primary colors are used? What colors are repeated? How do these colors make you feel as they are used in this painting?

Texture: What texture do you see in the piece?

Line: What types of lines do you see? Do the lines create a mood or a type of action?

Repetition: What colors, shapes, textures, and lines are repeated in the piece? Does the repetition create a unity or rhythm in the piece?

Focal Point: What is the focal point? Is that what the piece is all about?

4. **Cultural - Social History**

- a. What **cultural characteristics** do you see? Is this piece representative of a specific culture?
- b. **Social:** Do you see objects which tell you something about the social life of the people who lived during this time period? What are they doing?
- c. **Symbolism:** Is there a hidden meaning in the work?
- d. **Artist:** Who is the artist? Where is he/she from? What are some facts about the artist's life? What other interests did the artist pursue?