

ARTFUL THINKING: *BEGINNING/MIDDLE/END AND PERCEIVE/KNOW/CARE ABOUT*

The Artful Thinking approach, designed by Project Zero at Harvard University, teaches students how to think critically through the use of simple routines that guide them to develop processes for observing and analyzing art. The art is a force for developing thinking skills and thinking dispositions that students can then apply across the curriculum. Artful thinking involves several thinking strategies. In this lesson, students will practice two critical thinking approaches: Beginning/Middle/End and Perceive/Know/Care About.



My Friends, 1887
Viggo Johansen, Danish
Oil on canvas
42 7/8 x 54 7/8 inches (108.9 x 139.4 cm)
John G. Johnson Collection, 1917
Cat. 1014

Grade Level

Adaptable for all grades

Common Core Academic Standards

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1](#)
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1](#)
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1](#)
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9](#)

PA Academic Standards for Art

- Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work
- Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work

Art Images Required

Click on the titles below to view high-resolution photographs on the Philadelphia Museum of Art website. Images that are also available in the Artstor Digital Library are indicated by an ID number or search phrase. Entering that number or phrase into the Artstor search bar will direct you to the corresponding image in that database.

- [My Friends](#), 1887, by Viggo Johansen
Artstor search: Not available
- [The World Upside Down](#) print series, 1952, by Antonio Frasconi
Artstor search: Not available
- [Figures in a Landscape](#), 1972–73, by Sidney Goodman
Artstor search: 1974-112-1

Lesson Process

BEGINNING/MIDDLE/END

1. Direct students to spend a minute observing *My Friends* by Viggo Johansen and to consider, on their own, what might be going on in the picture.
2. Have students share their ideas with a partner and then open the discussion to the entire group. Each time a student shares an interpretation, ask that student what he/she saw in the picture that supports the idea.
3. Once key details and a few different interpretations have been shared, distribute the Beginning, Middle, or End handout (attached at the end of this lesson). Instruct students to consider whether this scene belongs at the beginning, middle, or end of a story and follow the instructions on the handout to expand upon what they see. Depending on your time limit, students could use the three boxes for quick notes, a detailed story, or even a cartoon.

PERCEIVE/KNOW/CARE ABOUT

1. Direct students to spend a minute observing selections from the *World Upside Down* print series. Have each student select an image that attracts his/her attention, and ask them what in that image is unexpected or surprising.
2. Select one work from the series to model the thinking routine. Ask a volunteer to select a person, animal, or thing in the image and ask the group to imagine themselves inside that point of view.
 - a. Start by asking, "What can the person or thing perceive?" You may want to define 'perceive' by telling students that it covers everything the person or thing might be aware of through their senses, including sight, sound, smell, etc. For example, students could note what direction the character is facing and what that character might be focusing upon.
 - b. As a group, consider, "What might the chosen person or thing know or believe?" (This asks students to interpret context clues and develop a more complete story. They should use visual clues such as expression, body language, props, and setting to support their ideas.)
 - c. Finally, ask the group, "What might the chosen person or thing care about?" (This asks them to empathize with the character and consider the emotional impact of the scene and the relationships between different people, animals, or objects.)
3. Once you have modeled the routine, divide students into pairs and distribute the Perceive/Know/Care About handout. Each pair of students should try to select characters with opposing viewpoints from the *World Upside Down* print series. The pairs should work on their own to fill in the handout, but will collaborate later in the lesson. (NOTE: Alternate version: Ask students to write monologues from the point of view of their chosen character and have the other students guess who they are writing about from the context clues provided in the monologue.)

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Assessment

1. Through individual journals, encourage students to consider what they have learned about art and about critical thinking by responding to the following prompts:
 “I used to think . . . now I think . . . about art.”
 “I used to think . . . now I think . . . about how art connects to things we study in school.”
Discuss journal responses.
2. Present to the class Sidney Goodman’s 1972–73 painting *Figures in a Landscape*. Ask them to respond in writing to the prompt, “What’s going on in this picture?” Have students choose one of the two thinking routines described above and respond to the painting using that routine.

BEGINNING, MIDDLE, or END

A ROUTINE FOR OBSERVING AND IMAGINING

Choose one of these questions:

- If this artwork is the beginning of a story, what might happen next?
- If it this artwork is the middle of a story, what might have happened before? What might be about to happen?
- If this artwork is the end of a story, what might the story be?

Use your imagination to tell a story in words or a cartoon in the boxes below. One box should cover what you think is going on in the artwork itself and the other two help expand on the story.

BEGINNING	MIDDLE	END

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PERCEIVE, KNOW, CARE ABOUT

A ROUTINE FOR GETTING INSIDE VIEWPOINTS

Choose a person, animal, or thing from a work of art.

What can the person or thing perceive?

What might the person or thing know about or believe?

What might the person or thing care about?

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What would your character be thinking or saying? Choose one bubble and write from their point of view. Use your notes about what they perceive, know, or care about to enrich your writing.

