

Ginny Wheeler gave a great tip for working with Jr HS and HS students. Ginny was kind enough to write up her experiences from yesterday afternoon using Pair Sharing. Here is her contribution:

My Highlight Tour theme was The Art of Storytelling

Pair shares can be used to set up a discussion ... ask the question for kids to discuss on the way to the first object. Brainstorming works well, especially for the very first object. It gets them talking before you even begin the tour.

....before arriving at the Ethiopian diptych, my first object, I asked pairs to brainstorm stories told without words. They came up with music, dance, sign language, and picture books. So that was an easy transition to the diptych, what stories do you recognize?

The Chestnut Tree is in the Kunin Collection. G323?

Quote from O'Keeffe: If people were trees, I would like them better.

After we looked at the painting and talked about it as a portrait, I had the students select a type of movie so each pair share story was different. One pair chose a Western, one a comedy, one a murder mystery, one a fantasy, and one a romance. Interestingly enough, the romance pair came up with a biography of Stieglitz and O'Keeffe.

Example for science fiction:

Walking home from school one evening after soccer practice, two 13-year olds noticed that it had become eerily still. They couldn't hear any birds or crickets or cars humming along on a distant highway. No wind. No sound at all. They had been so busy talking, they hadn't noticed the quiet, the stillness at first. Now they just stood still. An old oak tree was silhouetted by a pink glow off in the distance. It grew and grew until half of the sky was a pinkish, radish hue. What could it mean? They couldn't smell fire. They didn't hear sirens. Then suddenly a shadow from some unseen something in the sky moved towards them....

I have also done this activity by having students imagine they have just written a book, and a painting or object is the cover design. They then select a painting and imagine what would be written in the inside front cover as a narrative hook to entice people to read their book. This works well in larger galleries with a lot to choose among.

Press Conference Activity:

This wasn't a pair share, but on the same tour I stopped in front of Hapy. I told the students that Frank Goddio and his team had just discovered this statue, the biggest one ever found in Egypt, at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea. Now I'm Frank and you all are reporters. We are at a press conference. What do you want to know? Ask away.

So we role played. It was sooooo much fun! I would do that again in a heart beat. Some of our pieces in the collection have interesting back stories that would make good press conferences. We could be the artist (Nick Cave) or the curator who discovered the art (the Ponsonelli) as examples. I think it would work well for The Curator's Room or the kitchen. Or you are the mechanic who just restored the Tatra.

I did VTS with the group with Renee Stout's Little Hand Reaching and then tied it in to my theme of Storytelling by showing the kids that the things they discovered told a story through symbols. They then share what symbols they would use to tell their own story with each other. I didn't have them share that one but they were busy talking! It's a good warm up for the Providence Room. When we got there, I told them they could read the signs, the tombstones, touch things, smell things, etc. they were to figure out what was going on.

