Looking at Art

Four steps to use when looking at art

1) Describe 2) Analyze 3) Interpret 4) Evaluate

Describe

- Describe art much in the way you would a piece of furniture.
- What is the first thing you noticed?
- What else caught your eye
- What do you see in it?
 - List the objects, lines, and shapes that you see
- What is going on in this work of art?
- Does anything you have noticed in this work of art so far remind you of something in your own life?
- What makes this work of art look "real" to you? What makes it look "unreal"?
- Is the subject color, form or shape, or feeling, instead of a specific story?

Analyze

- To analyze art means looking at the way the artist used the elements of design (color, line, shape form, texture, space) and the principles of design (rhythm, balance, contrast, movement, center of interest, repetition, variety).
- Why did you choose this piece?
- How did the artist use line? Does line define forms? or are the forms separated by light and shadow?
- Is there an all-over composition, or is there a central focus? If there is a center of interest, how has the artist achieved this?
- What unifies the space? How does your eye travel across the surface? Where are shapes or ideas repeated?

Interpret

Interpretation is discovering the meaning or the story behind a work of art.

- Does this work of art express an idea or an emotion? How do the colors, lines, shapes, and movement help make that happen?
- What does this piece of art make you think about? Does it remind you of another object or experience?
- Have you taken into account the historical or cultural context?
- Do you have a sense of how the artist might have felt when he or she made this work of art?
- Does it make you feel one way or another?
- Take a look at the other works displayed around this one. What is similar about the way they look? What is different?

Evaluate

Evaluation is forming your own opinions and explaining why you have them

- Think back on your previous observations. What have you discovered from looking at this work of art?
- Have you learned anything about yourself or others?
- Based on your interpretation, what do you think the artist is trying to convey?

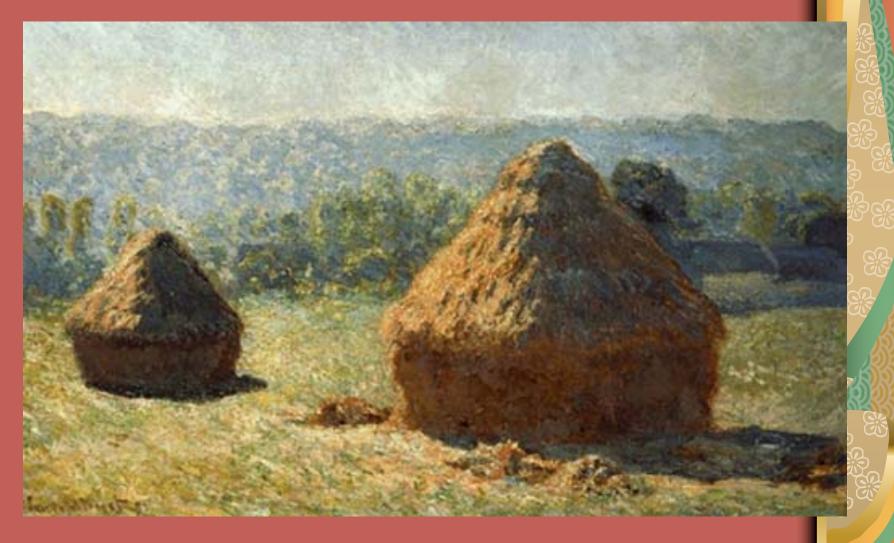
Salvador Dali - Persistence of Memory



Jackson Pollock – Number 1, 1950



Claude Monet – Haystacks at the End of Summer



Constantin Brancusi (1907) Suffering



Pablo Picasso Still Life With Composite and Glass 1914-1915

