



JUST PUSH PAUSE

Marisa J. Main

Are you having a difficult time incorporating writing in your artroom? Just push pause!

New requirements seem to keep finding their way into our classrooms, with no instructions on when or how to do them. From Lowenfeld, Greer, and DBAE to integrating art and emphasizing writing across the curriculum—often it's overwhelming. A captivating way of increasing art literacy skills and getting your students to write about art is by putting the assignment on their level and in a way that they can relate to.

Shed New Light on Writing

Instead of asking your art students to open their notebooks and get out a pencil, tell them they are going to try something new—they are going to have a day of writing instead of making art. Get out the old overhead projector, dust it off, and choose an art reproduction transparency to cast

at the front of the room. Of course, a digital projector with a DVD or Internet connection will also work.

Writing a Scene

Ask the class to imagine that they have just entered a movie theater or a friend's family room and the television, VCR, or DVD player was on pause. Ask them to ponder the scene and imagine what might have been happening just prior to the image they see or what might happen when the "movie" resumes.

Encourage the class to think about subject, the season, or temperature. What is the mood? What type of sounds would they hear? This slight change from the tradition of asking students to write about what they

see motivates a much more creative response. My students found relevance in the writing and wrote more in-depth thoughts. Instead of asking me how many sentences they had to write, they asked how long they could write.

This activity, which developed

from a last-minute idea, has proven successful in my artroom from second grade through fifth, and also at the college level.

A captivating way of increasing art literacy skills and getting your students to write about art is by putting the assignment on their level and in a way that they can relate to.

You provide the vocabulary and the image and turn your students loose to do the rest. ☺

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