

Thematically Linked Integrated Item Set Theatre

Task Administrator Information

Overview of Assessment Task

Perhaps no interconnections between a fine arts discipline and a core content area are stronger than those between theatre and English language arts (ELA). There has been a recent shift in the perspectives of ELA teachers as they have come to recognize the impact that theatre skills and understandings can have on the teaching of reading and writing. This example task capitalizes on that recent insight.

In the course of this example assessment task, students will be asked to apply and extend their learning in theatre as they explore a centuries-old concept of the relationship between painting and poetry through the dramatic technique of “tableaux,” or “frozen” dramatic scenes, which may come to life to convey ideas and emotions.

In this assessment task, students will be asked to:

- Examine the relationship between a visual-verbal pairing (i.e., Pieter Brueghel the Elder’s “The Hunters in the Snow” and William Carlos Williams’s poem on that work);
- Apply some of the ideas and understandings to formulate a depiction of the same scene in a dramatic tableau;
- Present a theatrical enactment of an image of their choice; and
- Analyze their own contributions to the project in a tableau journal.

Recommended Instructional Context

This integrated, thematically linked item set may be used as either a formative or summative assessment. Depending on the class or course in which the task is introduced, one or more preliminary activities may be treated as instructional, rather than assessment, activities, leading up to the final, scorable project. Other related instructional resources that teachers may wish to employ include references to other “enactments,” the most familiar of which is probably the play, *Sunday in the Park With George*, based on the famous painting by Georges Seurat.

English language arts teachers may be interested in accessing and sharing other poems based on the same painting referred to in the pre-assessment activity:

- John Berryman, “Winter Landscape”



- Walter de la Mare, “Brueghel’s Winter”
- Joseph Langlands, “The Hunters in the Snow: Brueghel”

(If administered through English language arts, task administrators may elect to use other poems, rather than visual images, as the stimulus items for students’ enactments.)

As an adjunct to this assessment task, teachers may be interested in implementing any number of engaging instructional ideas presented in several excellent, published books that deal with integration of visual arts (and in some instances, other arts disciplines) and English language arts (ELA).

Two of these are:

- *Looking to Write: Students Writing Through the Visual Arts*, by Mary Ehrenworth (Heinemann, 2003)
- *Weaving Through Words: Using the Arts to Teach Reading Comprehension Strategies*, by Roberta D. Mantione and Sabine Smead (International Reading Association, 2002)

This task was intended to be administered within the timeframe and setting of a theatre arts class. However, other viable alternatives include the option to:

- Administer the assessment to students enrolled in a grade 8 theatre course at any point after they have addressed the theatre objectives identified as relevant for this task;
- Administer the assessment in the context of an English language arts classroom at any time after the ELA objectives identified have been addressed and a unit on drama is ongoing or has been completed; or
- Team with one or more ELA teachers to administer parts of the assessment task most relevant to their areas.

Voluntary State Curricula Objectives Addressed (By Content Area)

Grade 8 Theatre

- Objective 1.2.a: Apply vocabulary from, dance, music, and visual arts to discuss the visual, aural, or kinesthetic elements of a theatre production
- Objective 2.1.e: Describe four traditional audience/performer configurations in theatre and identify conventions of architecture and performance
- Objective 3.1.a: *Manipulate dramatic narrative conventions to write and perform monologues or scenes that are based on personal experiences or historical events**
- Objective 3.1.c: Use formal elements of performance to create improvisational scenes using original ideas that illustrate characters, settings, conflicts, and resolutions and a specific dramatic form
- Objective 3.2.a: *Use appropriate behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and movement to enact characters drawn from the dramatic literature of a variety of cultures and historical periods**
- Objective 4.1.a: Use given and self-generated criteria to assess personal theatrical performances and the performances of others
- Objective 4.1.b: Use given and self-generated criteria to interpret and evaluate artistic choices observed in theatrical performances

Grade 7 Theatre

- Objective 1.2.b: Explain ways in which scenery, costumes, lighting and sound communicate mood, setting, meaning, and theme in productions
- Objective 3.1.b: Identify and *use dramatic narrative conventions to adapt scenes from prose and other forms of literature**

*Partial alignment with italicized words or phrases.

Grade 8 English Language Arts (ELA): Reading, Writing

Note: Supplementary reading activities also address the following standards:

- Standard: Comprehension of Literary Text
Indicator: Analyze and evaluate the author's purposeful use of language
Objective 3.7.a: Analyze and evaluate how specific language choices contribute to meaning and create style
- Standard: Comprehension of Literary Text
Indicator: Analyze and evaluate the author's purposeful use of language
Objective 3.7.b: Analyze and evaluate language choices that create tone

- Standard: Comprehension of Literary Text
 Indicator: Analyze and evaluate elements of narrative texts to facilitate understanding and interpretation
 Objective 3.3.b: Analyze the conflict and its role in advancing the plot
- Standard: Comprehension of Literary Text
 Indicator: Analyze and evaluate elements of narrative texts to facilitate understanding and interpretation
 Objective 3.3.c: Analyze details that provide information about the setting, the mood created by the setting, and the role the setting plays in the text
- Standard: Comprehension of Literary Text
 Indicator: Analyze and evaluate elements of narrative texts to facilitate understanding and interpretation
 Objective 3.3.e: Analyze relationships between and among characters and events
- Standard: Comprehension of Literary Text
 Indicator: Analyze and evaluate elements of narrative texts to facilitate understanding and interpretation
 Objective 3.3.f: Analyze the actions of characters that serve to advance the plot
- Standard: Comprehension of Literary Text
 Indicator: Analyze important ideas and messages in literary texts
 Objective 3.6.c: Summarize or paraphrase the text
- Standard: Writing
 Indicator: Write to inform
 Objective: Produce effective informational writing
 Objective 4.3.a: Produce a variety of informational writing

Grade 8 Visual Arts

The context and stimulus materials for this thematically linked integrated item set also provide opportunities for integration with visual arts. If interested in doing so, teachers may include one or more of the activities identified in the task as “Optional,” in order to address one or more of the following grade 8 visual arts objectives:

- Objective 1.1.a: Describe how artists represent visual qualities such as spatial relationships, detail, and specific features of subject matter
- Objective 1.2.a: Compare how artists use narrative conventions in selected artworks
- Objective 2.4.a: Compare ways in which themes, ideas and issues in human experience are translated and expressed through the arts, humanities, and sciences

Administration Of Assessment Task

Task Title: Bringing Other Arts to Life

Overarching Idea: The creative disciplines of the fine arts and literature share many ways of expressing themes and ideas about human experience.

Topic/Theme: Bringing Poems or Pictures to Life Through Theatre

Materials/Equipment Needed:

For each student:

- Resource/response packet

For class:

- Video camera
- VCR and monitor
- Slide, electronic image, or print of Pieter Brueghel the Elder's painting of "The Hunters in the Snow"
- Other slides or prints of a variety of artworks; suggested options include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Other works by Brueghel
- Paintings depicting particular historical, social, or cultural events or conditions
- American artworks (e.g., representations of conflicts in American history and/conditions in American society)
- Any other thematically-based set of images appropriate to middle school (and aligned with one or more curricular content areas)

Task Administrator Script

Directions

[NOTE: INSTRUCTIONS TO THE TASK ADMINISTRATOR APPEAR IN BOLD AND/OR CAPITAL LETTERS AND SHOULD NOT BE READ TO STUDENTS.]

PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS AND SAY:

Please follow along as I read aloud.

Pre-Assessment Activity

Over the course of the next few [HOURS, DAYS, WEEKS AS DETERMINED BY THE TASK ADMINISTRATOR], you and your classmates will be exploring a concept that in the 18th century was given the Latin name, “Ut Pictura Poesis.” According to this concept, paintings were like poems frozen in time. From that initial idea, over time writers experimented with a complementary concept—that poems could create paintings in a reader’s mind. Theatre, as a fine arts content area that uses visual, auditory, and kinesthetic means as a way of communicating ideas, is ideal for considering “pictorial poems” and “poetic pictures.” Through the dramatic technique of “tableaux,” a series of frozen scenes that capture ideas and emotions, these arts can interconnect for powerful expressive purposes.¹

Throughout recorded history, writers have been inspired by other works of art to create a counterpart response in words. One writer, 20th century American poet William Carlos Williams, found inspiration in a series of paintings by Flemish artist Pieter Brueghel the Elder. That series led Williams to write a series of poems called “Pictures from Brueghel,”² including one poem that he titled, “The Hunters in the Snow.”²

The poem may be found online at: www.americanpoems.com/poets/williams

Look now at a copy of the painting by Brueghel that prompted Williams to write his poem. Then, read “The Hunters in the Snow” and complete the activity that follows.

¹ While tableaux have long been familiar as a dramatic form, they have very recently received attention as a reading comprehension strategy that helps students identify key details and determine their relationship to the main ideas of a text, and to better understand text structure. An excellent resource for teachers who wish to learn more about the relationship between tableaux and reading is Jeffrey Wilhelm’s *Action Strategies for Deepening Comprehension* (Scholastic, Inc., 2002).

² Williams, William Carlos. *Pictures from Brueghel: And Other Poems (Collected Poems 1950-62)*. New York: New Directions, 1967. Williams posthumously won the Pulitzer Prize for this volume of poetry.

Pre-assessment activities A and B address the following grade 8 VSC ELA objective:

Objective 3.4.b: Analyze language and structural features to determine meaning

ADMINISTERED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A THEATRE ASSESSMENT TASK, AS IT IS HERE, THE PRE-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES ARE CONSIDERED AS A NON-SCORABLE ACTIVITY.

A. On the lines below, identify images of the painting that Williams has captured.

B. Share and compare your ideas and observations with a partner.

AFTER ALLOWING STUDENTS A FEW MINUTES TO DISCUSS THEIR IDEAS WITH A PARTNER, LEAD A DISCUSSION OF STUDENTS' OBSERVATIONS. KEY IMAGES THAT STUDENTS SHOULD IDENTIFY INCLUDE:

- MOUNTAINS
- HUNTERS
- INN SIGN
- BONFIRE
- CLUSTER OF WOMEN
- PEOPLE SKATING
- BUSH IN FOREGROUND

BE SURE TO NOTE THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BRUEGHEL PAINTING AND WILLIAMS' POEM IS THAT THE POET IS CLEARLY DESCRIBING A SCENE VIEWED IN A PAINTING. THIS WORK RELATES TO A BODY OF ARTWORKS SOMETIMES DESCRIBED AS "SELF-REFERENT"

IN ADDITION, THE TEACHER MAY WISH TO PROVIDE SOME ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ABOUT WILLIAMS AT THIS POINT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

- WILLIAMS IS CONSIDERED AN "IMAGIST" POET
- WILLIAMS' MOTTO WAS "SHOW, DON'T TELL"

CONTINUE READING THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS ALOUD. THEN, INSTRUCT STUDENTS TO COMPLETE ACTIVITIES 1 AND 2 ON THEIR OWN:

Now, on your own, you will have a chance to reread the poem, and respond to several questions. Stop and wait for further instructions after you have completed Activities 1–2.

Activity 1

Activity 1 addresses the following grade 8 VSC ELA objectives:

Objective 3.4.b: Analyze language and structural features to determine meaning

Objective 3.6.a: Analyze main ideas and universal themes

Objective 3.7.e: Analyze imagery that contributes to meaning and/or creates style

How does Williams convey that he is describing a painting in this poem? Support your answer with details from the poem.

Activity 2A

Activity 2A addresses the following grade 8 VSC ELA objective:

Objective 3.4.b: Analyze language and structural features to determine meaning

Williams uses no punctuation within the poem, but does use a pattern of stanzas.

What effect is created for the reader by having no internal punctuation throughout the whole poem? Why do you think Williams used this technique? Use what you know about poetry and your reading of this poem to support your answer.

Activity 2B

Activity 2B addresses the following grade 8 VSC ELA objective:

Objective 3.4.b: Analyze language and structural features to determine meaning

What effect is created for the reader by breaking the poem up into three-line stanzas? Why do you think Williams did this? Use what you know about poetry and your reading of this poem to support your answer.

Activity 3

Activity 3 addresses the following grade 8 VSC theatre objectives:

Objective 3.1.c: Use formal elements of performance to create improvisational scenes using original ideas that illustrate characters, settings, conflicts, and resolutions and a specific dramatic form

Objective 3.2.a: Use appropriate behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and movement to enact characters drawn from the dramatic literature of a variety of cultures and historical periods

In the poem, we see the Brueghel painting through Williams' eyes. To help someone see what he saw, we might refer him back to the painting. Another way to do so, however, is to create a tableau, a composition that uses human forms as its medium, and the wide array of postures and gestures they are capable of making.

A tableau does not have to be limited to a still image. A tableau may come to life through movement and words. People, and even things, in a tableau can make sounds or speak to support the making of meaning.

If you were to present this scene in a tableau, which details and characteristics do you think are most important to communicate to an audience? Explain which are most important and how you would use formal elements of performance to convey the idea of your scene.

Activity 4

Activity 4 addresses the following VSC theatre objectives:

Grade 8

Objective 1.2.a: Apply vocabulary from dance, music, and visual arts to discuss the visual, aural, or kinesthetic elements of a theatre production

Grade 7

Objective 1.2.b: Explain ways in which scenery, costumes, lighting and sound communicate mood, setting, meaning, and theme in productions

Scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound are elements that may be used to enhance the communication of mood and meaning in a theatrical enactment. Select two of these theatrical elements and explain how you might use each to enhance the communication of mood and meaning in your tableau when it is brought to life through movement and words. Support your response by using the vocabulary of the arts content area that best applies to your tableau.

The element of _____:

The element of _____:

Activity 5

Instructions for Administering Activity 5

FOR ACTIVITY 5, TASK ADMINISTRATORS MAY GIVE STUDENTS THEIR CHOICE OF FORMAT OR MAY ASSIGN ONE OF THE TWO BELOW:

OPTION 1

- STUDENTS WILL RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONS IN ACTIVITY 5 IN A NOTEBOOK OR JOURNAL, TABBED WITH A SECTION FOR EACH QUESTION ALLOWING FOR MULTIPLE ENTRIES OVER TIME. THIS OPTION IS BEST SUITED TO A LONGER TIMEFRAME IN WHICH STUDENTS WILL BE GIVEN MORE THAN ONE CLASS PERIOD TO PREPARE THEIR ENACTMENT.

OPTION 2

- PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A RESPONSE BOOKLET THAT INCLUDES AT LEAST EACH OF THE THREE DESIGNATED QUESTIONS (SEE QUESTION A, B, AND C, IN ACTIVITY 5) WITH SUFFICIENT RESPONSE SPACE FOR EACH. EACH RESPONSE PAGE SHOULD IDENTIFY A PLACE WHERE STUDENTS RECORD THE DATE OF THE PARTICULAR ENTRY. THIS OPTION IS BEST SUITED TO A SHORTER TIMEFRAME WHERE STUDENTS WILL ONLY HAVE ONE CLASS PERIOD IN WHICH TO PREPARE THEIR ENACTMENT.

FOR EITHER OPTION, STUDENTS MAY RECORD THEIR RESPONSES AS HOMEWORK OR DURING SCHOOL HOURS, BUT OUTSIDE OF CLASS.

STUDENTS SHOULD BE APPRISED AHEAD OF TIME OF THE CRITERIA BY WHICH THEIR JOURNAL ENTRIES AND/OR RESPONSES TO THIS ACTIVITY WILL BE SCORED.

FOR THE ENACTMENT, TASK ADMINISTRATORS MAY PRE-SELECT A SET OF IMAGES FROM WHICH STUDENTS MAY CHOOSE, OR GIVE THEM THE FREEDOM TO SELECT THEIR OWN. ALL IMAGES, HOWEVER, SHOULD BEAR SOME THEMATIC RELATIONSHIP TO EACH OTHER (SEE MATERIALS LIST).

FOR MORE RIGOROUS THEATRE/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS INTEGRATION, TASK ADMINISTRATORS MAY CHOOSE TO CHANGE THE STIMULUS MATERIALS FROM IMAGES TO POEMS. (AGAIN, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT STIMULI BEAR SOME THEMATIC RELATIONSHIP TO EACH OTHER.)

YOU MAY WISH TO HAVE STUDENTS RESPOND TO ONE OR MORE BRIEF CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE QUESTIONS TO ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE BEFORE THEY BEGIN PREPARATIONS FOR THEIR ENACTMENT. EXAMPLES OF THESE QUESTIONS MAY BE FOUND IN THE APPENDIX AS OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES.

STUDENTS MAY BE ASSIGNED TO GROUPS OR BE PERMITTED TO FORM GROUPS ON THEIR OWN. EACH MEMBER OF THE GROUP MUST HAVE A ROLE IN THE ENACTMENT. A ROLE MAY INVOLVE THE REPRESENTATION OF AN INANIMATE OBJECT OR PHENOMENON, RATHER THAN A HUMAN “ACTOR” IN THE SCENE.

REMINDE STUDENTS THAT EACH GROUP WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THEIR TABLEAU TO THE CLASS AS A WHOLE AND THAT THE GOAL OF EACH GROUP WILL BE TO ENSURE THAT THE TABLEAU INCLUDES EXPOSITION, CONFLICT, CLIMAX, AND RESOLUTION. ALSO BE SURE TO INSTRUCT STUDENTS THAT THEIR TABLEAUX WILL BE JUDGED ON THE EFFECTIVENESS WITH WHICH THE GROUP HAS USED THESE CONVENTIONS TO CREATE THEIR SCENE.

TASK ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD DETERMINE AN APPROPRIATE TIMEFRAME FOR ACTIVITY 5. TYPICALLY, IN ELA CLASSES STUDENTS ARE GIVEN AS LITTLE AS 20-30 MINUTES TO PREPARE A TABLEAU. HOWEVER, THEATRE ARTS TEACHERS MAY WISH TO EXPAND THIS TIMEFRAME TO ALLOW FOR THE PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION OF THE TABLEAU.

Activity 5 addresses the following VSC theatre objectives:**Grade 8**

- Objective 3.1.a: Manipulate dramatic narrative conventions to write and perform monologues or scenes that are based on personal experiences or historical events
- Objective 3.1.c: Use formal elements of performance to create improvisational scenes using original ideas that illustrate characters, settings, conflicts, resolutions, and a specific dramatic form
- Objective 3.2.a: Use appropriate behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and movement to enact characters drawn from dramatic literature of a variety of cultures and historical periods

READ THE FOLLOWING ALOUD TO STUDENTS:

It is clear that tableaux can go well beyond representing literal images or scenes from art, literature, or our imaginations. These enactments can serve as explorations, analyses, or interpretations of those images. They can convey character, setting, problem and solution in dramatic form, and convey complex ideas and themes.

Over the next few [MINUTES, HOURS, DAYS, AS DETERMINED BY THE TASK ADMINISTRATOR], you and your classmates will work in small groups to prepare and present a visual, vocal, and kinetic enactment of a scene or image from art or literature (as assigned). During this process, you will be asked to record responses to the following questions:

- A. What dramatic narrative conventions will you (did you) need to apply to adapt the scene from the image you selected? Explain why.
- B. What formal elements of performance will you (or did you) need to apply to create an improvisational scene using an original idea that illustrates character, setting, conflict, and resolution? Explain why.
- C. What behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and movement will you (or did you) need to apply to enact your character? Explain why.

Activity 6

Activity 6 addresses the following grade 8 theatre objectives:

Objective 3.1.a: Manipulate dramatic narrative conventions to write and perform monologues or scenes that are based on personal experience or historical events

Objective 3.2.b: Select a theatre genre and style and use collaborative theatre processes to create, perform, and revise short plays

Your group will have an opportunity to present its tableau to the class. Your goal, as a member of the group, is to contribute to the creation of the scene you have chosen, which features exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution. Your tableau will be judged on the effectiveness with which the group has created the chosen scene. Your performance will be recorded.

TASK ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD ENSURE THAT EACH PERFORMANCE IS VIDEOTAPED. FURTHERMORE, AFTER EACH ENACTMENT, BUT BEFORE RESPONDING TO ACTIVITY 7, EACH GROUP SHOULD BE SHOWN A PLAYBACK OF THEIR PERFORMANCE.

Activity 7

Activity 7 addresses the following grade 8 theatre objectives:

Objective 4.1.a: *Use given and self-generated criteria to assess personal theatrical performances and performances of others**

Objective 4.1.b: *Use given and self-generated criteria to interpret and evaluate artistic choices observed in theatrical performances**

*Partial alignment with italicized words or phrases.

READ THE FOLLOWING ALOUD TO STUDENTS:

Following your performance, you will have an opportunity to view your performance as well as the performances of other classmates. You will be asked to conduct both self- and peer evaluations of evidence of your own and other group members' performances based on criteria of the formal elements of performance and those of ensemble development.

IN ORDER TO SCORE RESPONSES, THE TASK ADMINISTRATOR MUST COMPLETE A FORM FOR EACH STUDENT TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR THE EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' JUDGMENTS OF SELF AND PEERS; SEE SCORING INFORMATION/ACTIVITY 7.

Evaluation Form: Enacted Tableaux

Evaluator's Name: _____

Tableau Title: _____

Tableau is based on: _____

Group Members

**Score Assigned
(based on criteria below)**

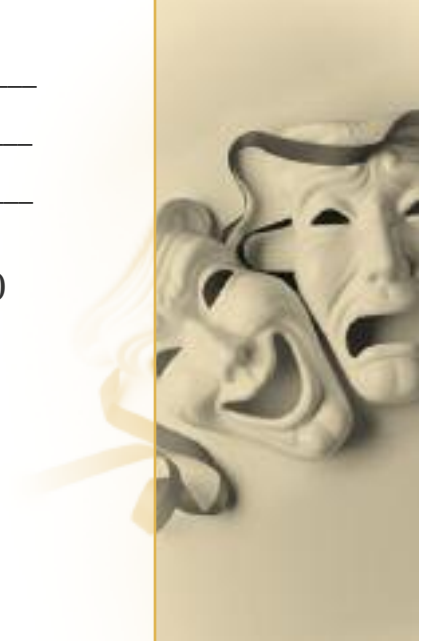
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Directions:

Identify the person or group being evaluated by circling one choice below. Then, place a check in the box that best describes the degree of evidence of each social concept you observed during the preparation for and performance of that person or group's tableau. Check NA if you cannot make a judgment regarding one or more social concepts based on what you personally observed.

In our ensemble performance of a tableau enactment, I/our group/ was:

- 4 Consistently effective choice and use of formal elements of performance (character, environment, language, action, and the use of time and space to communicate ideas, intentions, and meaning).
- 3 Generally effective choice and use of formal elements of performance (character, environment, language, action, and the use of time and space to communicate ideas, intentions, and meaning).
- 2 Somewhat/sometimes effective choice and use of formal elements of performance (character, environment, language, action, and the use of time and space to communicate ideas, intentions, and meaning).
- 1 Minimally effective choice and use of formal elements of performance (character, environment, language, action, and the use of time and space to communicate ideas, intentions, and meaning).
- 0 Other



Activity 8

Activity 8 addresses grade 8 theatre VSC objective

Objective 2.1.e: *Describe four traditional audience/performer configurations in theatre and identify conventions of architecture and performance**

*Partial alignment with italicized words or phrases.

Using optional scoring tool for sequential scoring, Activity 8 also addresses the following grade 8 English language arts objective:

Objective 4.3.a: Produce a variety of informational writing

Because of the success of the enactments, your class is considering presenting them to an audience of other middle school students. Of the four traditional audience/performer configurations, to which do you think the enactments would be best suited? Write a note to your theatre teacher to persuade him or her of your choice. Justify your choice with references to characteristics of each of those configurations.

Dear _____:

Thematically Linked Integrated Item Set Theatre

Student Instructions

Pre-Assessment Activity

Over the course of the next few [HOURS, DAYS, WEEKS AS DETERMINED BY THE TASK ADMINISTRATOR], you and your classmates will be exploring a concept that in the 18th century was given the Latin name, “Ut Pictura Poesis.” According to this concept, paintings were like poems frozen in time. From that initial idea, over time writers experimented with a complementary concept—that poems could create paintings in a reader’s mind. Theatre, as a fine arts content area that uses visual, auditory, and kinesthetic means as a way of communicating ideas, is ideal for considering “pictorial poems” and “poetic pictures.” Through the dramatic technique of “tableaux,” a series of frozen scenes that capture ideas and emotions, these arts can interconnect for powerful expressive purposes.³

Throughout recorded history, writers have been inspired by other works of art to create a counterpart response in words. One writer, 20th century American poet William Carlos Williams, found inspiration in a series of paintings by Flemish artist Pieter Brueghel the Elder. That series led Williams to write a series of poems called “Pictures from Brueghel,”² including one poem that he titled, “The Hunters in the Snow.”

The poem may be found online at: www.americanpoems.com/poets/williams

Look now at a copy of the painting by Breughel that prompted Williams to write his poem. Then, read “The Hunters in the Snow” and complete the activity that follows.

- A. On the lines below, identify images of the painting that Williams has captured.

- B. Share and compare your ideas and observations with a partner.

¹ While tableaux have long been familiar as a dramatic form, they have very recently received attention as a reading comprehension strategy that helps students identify key details and determine their relationship to the main ideas of a text, and to better understand text structure. An excellent resource for teachers who wish to learn more about the relationship between tableaux and reading is Jeffrey Wilhelm’s *Action Strategies for Deepening Comprehension* (Scholastic, Inc., 2002).

² Williams, William Carlos. *Pictures from Brueghel: And Other Poems (Collected Poems 1950-62)*. New York: New Directions, 1967. Williams posthumously won the Pulitzer Prize for this volume of poetry.



Now, on your own, you will have a chance to reread the poem, and respond to several questions. Stop and wait for further instructions after you have completed Activities 1–2.

Activity 1

How does Williams convey that he is describing a painting in this poem? Support your answer with details from the poem.

Activity 2A

Williams uses no punctuation within the poem, but does use a pattern of stanzas.

What effect is created for the reader by having no internal punctuation throughout the whole poem? Why do you think Williams used this technique? Use what you know about poetry and your reading of this poem to support your answer.

Activity 2B

What effect is created for the reader by breaking the poem up into three-line stanzas? Why do you think Williams did this? Use what you know about poetry and your reading of this poem to support your answer.

Activity 3

In the poem, we see the Brueghel painting through Williams' eyes. To help someone see what he saw, we might refer him back to the painting. Another way to do so, however, is to create a tableau, a composition that uses human forms as its medium, and the wide array of postures and gestures they are capable of making.

A tableau does not have to be limited to a still image. A tableau may come to life through movement and words. People, and even things, in a tableau can make sounds or speak to support the making of meaning.

If you were to present this scene in a tableau, which details and characteristics do you think are most important to communicate to an audience? Explain which are most important and how you would use formal elements of performance to convey the idea of your scene.

Activity 4

Scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound are elements that may be used to enhance the communication of mood and meaning in a theatrical enactment. Select two of these theatrical elements and explain how you might use each to enhance the communication of mood and meaning in your tableau when it is brought to life through movement and words. Support your response by using the vocabulary of the arts content area that best applies to your tableau.

The element of _____:

The element of _____:

Activity 5

It is clear that tableaux can go well beyond representing literal images or scenes from art, literature, or our imaginations. These enactments can serve as explorations, analyses, or interpretations of those images. They can convey character, setting, problem and solution in dramatic form, and convey complex ideas and themes.

Over the next few [MINUTES, HOURS, DAYS, AS DETERMINED BY THE TASK ADMINISTRATOR], you and your classmates will work in small groups to prepare and present a visual, vocal, and kinetic enactment of a scene or image from art or literature [AS ASSIGNED]. During this process, you will be asked to record responses to the following questions:

- A. What dramatic narrative conventions will you (did you) need to apply to adapt the scene from the image you selected? Explain why.
- B. What formal elements of performance will you (or did you) need to apply to create an improvisational scene using an original idea that illustrates character, setting, conflict, and resolution? Explain why.
- C. What behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and movement will you (or did you) need to apply to enact your character? Explain why.

Activity 6

Your group will have an opportunity to present its tableau to the class. Your goal, as a member of the group, is to contribute to the creation of the scene you have chosen, which features exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution. Your tableau will be judged on the effectiveness with which the group has created the chosen scene. Your performance will be recorded.

Activity 7

Following your performance, you will have an opportunity to view your performance as well as the performances of other classmates. You will be asked to conduct both self- and peer evaluations of evidence of your own and other group members' performances based on criteria of the formal elements of performance and those of ensemble development.

Evaluation Form: Enacted Tableaux

Evaluator's Name: _____

Tableau Title: _____

Tableau is based on: _____

Group Members	Score Assigned (based on criteria below)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Directions:

Identify the person or group being evaluated by circling one choice below. Then, place a check in the box that best describes the degree of evidence of each social concept you observed during the preparation for and performance of that person or group's tableau. Check NA if you cannot make a judgment regarding one or more social concepts based on what you personally observed.

In our ensemble performance of a tableau enactment, I/our group/ was:

- 4 Consistently effective choice and use of formal elements of performance (character, environment, language, action, and the use of time and space to communicate ideas, intentions, and meaning)
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- 2 Somewhat/sometimes effective choice and use of formal elements of performance (character, environment, language, action, and the use of time and space to communicate ideas, intentions, and meaning)
- 1 Minimally effective choice and use of formal elements of performance (character, environment, language, action, and the use of time and space to communicate ideas, intentions, and meaning)
- 0 Other



Theatre, Visual Arts, and English Language Arts Scoring Information

Activity 1 (Reading)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student’s ability to analyze main ideas and universal themes in a poem, and to analyze language and structural features to determine meaning (including specific language choices that contribute to meaning and style).

- 2 An accurate and well-developed explanation of how Williams conveys that he is describing a painting; the response includes several specific examples from the poem as support
- 1 A partial (partially complete or partially correct) or overly general explanation of how Williams conveys that he is describing a painting; the response includes only one specific example or multiple general, ambiguous, or redundant examples
- 0 Other

Answer Cues

- Mentions “picture” twice (at beginning and end of poem)
- Uses words to describe visual composition like background and foreground
- Refers to painter (Brueghel)
- Uses orientation words (left, to the right of...)
- Notices “pattern”
- Any other plausible response based on poem

Activity 2A (Reading)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student’s ability to analyze language and structural features to determine meaning in a poem.

- 2 A plausible description of the effect of there being no internal punctuation in the poem, with a plausible and well-developed explanation of why this technique was probably used by Williams
- 1 An only somewhat plausible description of the effect of there being no internal punctuation in the poem, and/or a plausible but only partial (partially complete or partially correct) explanation of why this technique was probably used by Williams
- 0 Other



Answer Cues

- Creates flow through poem
- Encourages reader to make own judgments about pausing for emphasis
- Engages readers
- Less formal (free verse)
- Modern, experimental form
- Any other plausible idea, based on poem and prior knowledge about poetry

Sample response

The lack of standard pauses, through punctuation marks like commas, colons, or periods, creates a flowing effect. Readers have to decide for themselves where to break up lines into logical chunks, based on key images. This effect seems to mirror the way the eye of an observer sweeps or flows across a canvas, to identify what is visually most significant.

Activity 2B (Reading)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to analyze language and structural features to determine meaning in a poem.

- 2 A plausible description of the effect of breaking the poem up into three-line stanzas, with a plausible and well-developed explanation of why this technique was probably used by Williams
- 1 An only somewhat plausible description of the effect of breaking the poem up into three-line stanzas, and/or a plausible but only partial (partially complete or partially correct) explanation of why this technique was probably used by Williams
- 0 Other

Answer Cues

- Alternative to free verse
- Experimental (non-traditional) stanzaic form
- Response to typical four-line stanza or other more traditional forms (like sonnet)
- Three line stanza is unusual—suggests this is an unusual poem
- Or any other plausible idea, based on poem and prior knowledge of poetry

Sample response

Williams may have organized the poem into stanzas to show that there is some order or plan, even without the structure imposed by a set rhyme scheme. Each of his stanzas has three lines, and in each stanza there is at least one vivid image conveyed.

Activity 3 (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to apply vocabulary from visual arts, dance, and music to discuss the visual, aural, or kinesthetic elements of a theatre production and to apply dramatic narrative conventions to adapt a scene from literature.

- 2 A plausible and thorough explanation of the most essential details to transpose from the poem and/or painting to the tableau; response well supported with specific details about dramatic narrative conventions
- 1 A somewhat plausible and/or only partial or overly general explanation of the most essential details to transpose from the poem and/or painting to the tableau; response is only somewhat supported, and some details may be general, redundant, or indefensible
- 0 Other

Activity 4 (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to explain ways in which scenery, costumes, lighting, and/or sound communicate mood, locale, meaning, and theme in productions and to apply vocabulary from dance, music, and/or visual arts to discuss the visual, aural, or kinesthetic elements of a theatre production.

- 3 A consistently plausible and thorough explanation of how the use of two elements (from among scenery, costumes, lighting and sound) helps communicate in a theatre production; both elements are linked to mood, locale, meaning, and/or theme, and the explanation consistently utilizes vocabulary from other arts disciplines (one or more) accurately and meaningfully
- 2 A generally plausible and adequate explanation of how the use of two elements (from among scenery, costumes, lighting and sound) helps communicate in a theatre production; only one element may be clearly linked to mood, locale, meaning, and/or theme, and the explanation utilizes vocabulary from other arts disciplines somewhat accurately and meaningfully

- 1 A partial (incomplete and/or partly plausible) or overly general explanation of how the use of at least one element (from among scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound) helps communicate in a theatre production; the attempt to link to mood, locale, meaning, and/or theme may be general, redundant, or indefensible, and while attempted, there is little evidence of vocabulary from other arts disciplines used accurately and/or meaningfully
- 0 Other

Activity 5A (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to apply dramatic narrative conventions to adapt a scene from a narrative painting (story painting).

- 2 A plausible and well-developed explanation of the dramatic narrative conventions the student applied (needs to apply) to adapt a scene from the assigned/selected image (or text)
- 1 A somewhat plausible and/or only partial or overly general explanation of the dramatic narrative conventions the student applied (needs to apply) to adapt a scene from the assigned/selected image (or text); and some details may be general, redundant, or indefensible
- 0 Other

SCORING NOTES:

1. If students record multiple entries over time, those entries should be treated collectively in assigning a score for Activity 5A.
2. The scoring criteria allow for adaptation from either pictorial or text stimulus item.

Activity 5B (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to apply formal elements of performance to create an improvisational scene using an original idea that illustrates character, setting, conflict, and resolution.

- 2 A plausible and well-developed explanation of the formal elements of performance the student applied (needs to apply) to create an improvisational scene using an original idea from the assigned/selected image (or text)
- 1 A somewhat plausible and/or only partial or overly general explanation of the formal elements of performance the student applied (needs to apply) to create an improvisational scene using an original idea from the assigned/selected image (or text); and some details may be general, redundant, or indefensible.
- 0 Other

SCORING NOTES:

1. If students record multiple entries over time, those entries should be treated collectively in assigning a score for Activity 5B.
2. The scoring criteria allow for adaptation from either pictorial or text stimulus item.

Activity 5C (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to apply appropriate behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and movement to enact a character.

- 2 A plausible and well-developed explanation of the behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and movement the student applied (needs to apply) to enact a character from the assigned/selected image (or text)
- 1 A somewhat plausible and/or only partial or overly general explanation of the behaviors, vocal skills, posture, and/or movement the student applied (needs to apply) to enact a character from the assigned/selected image (or text); and some details may be general, redundant, or indefensible
- 0 Other

SCORING NOTES:

1. If students record multiple entries over time, those entries should be treated collectively in assigning a score for Activity 5C.
2. The scoring criteria allow for adaptation from either pictorial or text stimulus item.

Activity 6 (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to collaborate with peers to create a scene, based on imagination, personal experience, history, or heritage, featuring exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution (GROUP SCORE ONLY; see note below).

- 4 Group members all fully and consistently engaged in preparation for, and presentation of, a scene based on assigned/chosen stimulus (image or text); clear evidence of communication and compromise (as advisable) among group members, leading to scene that clearly demonstrates exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution
- 3 Group members generally engaged in preparation for, and presentation of, a scene based on assigned/chosen stimulus (image or text); some evidence of communication and compromise (as advisable) among group members, leading to scene that adequately demonstrates exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution
- 2 Group members only somewhat engaged in preparation for, and presentation of, a scene based on assigned/chosen stimulus (image or text); little evidence of communication and compromise (as advisable) among group members, leading to scene that somewhat demonstrates exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution
- 1 Group members minimally engaged/unengaged in preparation for, and presentation of, a scene based on assigned/chosen stimulus (image or text); little or no evidence of communication and compromise (as advisable) among group members, leading to scene that minimally demonstrates exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution
- 0 Group members engage in no collaboration and/or fail to create a scene that even minimally demonstrates exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution

SCORING NOTE: Because collaboration, by its very nature, requires more than one person, evidence of that skill cannot be assessed on an individual level. For formative assessment purposes only, however, teachers may wish to obtain evidence through periodic observation (which may be supplemented with interviews) to determine a score for groups. It is recommended that this

scoring tool be distributed to, and discussed with, students at the time this activity is assigned, so that they have a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of collaboration in the context of theatre activities.

Activity 7 (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to use given and self-generated criteria to assess personal theatrical performances and performances of others and to interpret and evaluate artistic choices observed in theatrical performances.

- 4 Student's self- and/or peer evaluation is highly consistent with teacher judgment using same criteria (exact agreement with teacher score 80-100 % of the time (based on number of students—self and others—that have been evaluated)
- 3 Student's self- and/or peer evaluation is generally consistent with teacher judgment using same criteria (exact agreement at least 50 % of the time and adjacent agreement the rest of the time)
- 2 Student's self- and/or peer evaluation is only somewhat consistent with teacher judgment using same criteria (adjacent agreement at least 50 % of the time)
- 1 Student's self- and/or peer evaluation is only minimally consistent with teacher judgment using same criteria (adjacent agreement less than 50 % of the time and/or discrepant agreement on self-evaluation)
- 0 Other

Terminology

Exact agreement: Student assigned same score point as did teacher

Adjacent agreement: Student assigned a score that was higher or lower (by only one point) than score assigned by teacher

Discrepant agreement: Student assigned a score that was two or more points higher or lower than score assigned by teacher

Activity 8: Sequentially scored (Theatre)

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to describe four traditional audience/performer configurations in theatre, and to analyze language and structural features to determine meaning in a poem.

- 3 A plausible and well-developed case is presented for the student's preferred audience/performer configuration; response clearly and accurately refers to characteristics of each of the four configurations to make a convincing case for one of the four
- 2 A generally plausible and somewhat developed case is presented for the student's preferred audience/performer configuration; response accurately refers to characteristics of two to three of the four configurations to make a convincing case for one of the four
- 1 A partial (only partly plausible or incomplete) and/or overly general or minimally developed case is presented for the student's preferred audience/performer configuration; response accurately refers to characteristics of the configuration for which preference is expressed
- 0 Other

Activity 8: Sequentially scored (English Language Arts/Writing)

Responses to this activity may be scored sequentially (once with one scoring tool, and a second time with a different scoring tool) to obtain a measure for writing to persuade. Teachers may wish to use either the "Writing to Persuade" rule or the HSA grade 9 writing rubric. See *Scoring MSPAP: A Teacher's Guide* (MSDE 1992) for the former and www.mdk12.org/ for the latter.

Optional Activity 3 addresses grade 8 visual arts objective 2.4.a

What are some ways in which you could translate themes and ideas expressed in this artwork into dramatic form? Support your answer with specific details from the artwork.

Scoring For Optional Visual Arts Activities**Optional Visual Arts Activity 1**

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability describe and analyze how artists represent visual qualities such as spatial relationships, detail, and specific features of subject matter.

- 2 An accurate and thorough description of how the artist represented spatial relationships, details and specific features of the subject matter of this artwork; response supported with multiple specific details/examples
- 1 A partial (partially complete/partially correct) or overly general description of how the artist represented spatial relationships, details, and/or specific features of the subject matter of this artwork; response supported with only one specific detail/example OR multiple but overly general examples
- 0 Other

Optional Visual Arts Activity 2

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to analyze and describe how artists use narrative conventions to express ideas from observation, memory, and imagination.

- 2 An accurate and thorough description of how the artist used narrative conventions in the artwork to express ideas; response supported with multiple specific details/examples
- 1 A partial (partially complete/partially correct) or overly general description of how the artist used narrative conventions in the artwork to express ideas; response supported with only one specific detail/example OR multiple but overly general examples
- 0 Other

Optional Visual Arts Activity 3

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to identify ways themes and ideas in human experience are translated and expressed through the arts, humanities, and sciences.

- 2 An accurate and thorough explanation of how themes and ideas expressed in the artwork could be translated into dramatic form; response supported with multiple specific details/examples from the artwork
- 1 A partial (partially complete/partially correct) or overly general explanation of how themes and ideas expressed in the artwork could be translated into dramatic form; response supported with only one specific detail/example OR multiple but overly general examples
- 0 Other

Optional Reading Activities *(If stimulus item is the text of a narrative poem)***Optional Activity 1 addresses grade 8 reading objectives 3.7.a and 3.7.b**

Explain how the poet's language choices contribute to the meaning, style, and tone of the poem. Support your explanation with specific words and phrases from the poem.

Optional Activity 2 addresses grade 8 reading objectives 3.3.b; 3.3.c; 3.3.e; and 3.3.f

Identify elements of narrative in this poem, including characters, setting, events, conflict, and resolution. Support your response with specific details from the poem.

Optional Activity 3 addresses grade 8 reading objective 3.6.c

Your group's enactment of a narrative poem should convey key ideas and details from that text. To help prepare for that enactment, on the lines below summarize the poem in your own words, with particular attention to the characters, conflict, climax, and resolution.

Scoring For Optional Reading Activities**Optional Reading Activity 1**

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to analyze and evaluate how specific language choices contribute to meaning and create style and tone.

- 3 A plausible and well-developed explanation of how language choices in the poem assigned to/chosen by student contribute to its meaning, style, and tone; the explanation is supported with multiple words and/or phrases from the poem
- 2 A generally plausible and adequately developed explanation of how language choices in the poem contribute to its meaning, style, and/or tone; the explanation is supported with a few words and/or phrases from the poem, but may not address both meaning and style
- 1 A partial (partly complete or only somewhat plausible) and overly general explanation of how language choices in the poem contribute to its meaning and/or style and tone; the explanation may contain some vague, redundant, or indefensible information
- 0 Other

NOTE: A sample response cannot be provided since choice of text has been left to teacher and/or students.

Optional Reading Activity 2

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to analyze: the conflict and its role in advancing the plot; details that provide information about the setting, the mood created by the setting, and the role the setting plays in the text; relationships between and among characters and events; and the actions of characters that serve to advance the plot.

- 3 An accurate and thorough identification of narrative elements in the poem, including characters, setting, events, conflict, and resolution; the response is supported with specific details from the poem and interconnects between/among various narrative elements are clearly expressed, when appropriate
- 2 A generally accurate and adequate identification of narrative elements in the poem, including characters, setting, events, conflict, and resolution; the response is supported with at least some detail from the poem, but the interconnections between/among various narrative elements may sometimes be implied rather than explicit
- 1 A partial (partly complete or only somewhat plausible) and overly general explanation identification of narrative elements in the poem and their interconnections; the response may contain some vague, redundant, or indefensible information
- 0 Other

NOTE: A sample response cannot be provided since choice of text has been left to teacher and/or students.

Optional Reading Activity 3

This activity is scored using the following rubric.

The response to this activity provides evidence of the student's ability to summarize or paraphrase the text.

- 3 An accurate and thorough summary of the narrative poem that addresses characters, conflict, climax, and resolution
- 2 A generally accurate and adequate summary of the narrative poem that addresses three of four elements (characters, conflict, climax, and resolution)
- 1 A partial (partly complete/partly accurate) or overly general summary of the narrative poem; two of four elements may be missing or unclear and the response may include some indefensible information
- 0 Other

NOTE: A sample response cannot be provided since choice of text has been left to teacher and/or students.