

The Write Stuff

GALLERY/GALLERIES OF YOUR CHOICE

Grades 9–12

Let works of art inspire you.

Creative writing is like painting with words—imaginative, descriptive, and original.

Writing forms a story or picture in your mind. Look at works of art and respond with similes, sensory inventories, and cinquains. This teacher-directed gallery activity is designed to inspire your students to unleash their creativity by responding to works of art in writing.



Get Ready!

Please make sure you visit the VMFA Teacher-Directed Activities (link when available) page for directions on using these guides and booking your visit.

Get Set!

Produce complete copies of this packet for all teachers and chaperones. Students only need copies of pages 3–6. Here are directions:

- These writing activities may be done in the VMFA permanent galleries of your choice. Using the Gallery Map, find the galleries your group will visit first.
- Once in your chosen gallery, break the students into pairs or groups of 3–4 to work together on the activities. When breaking into smaller groups, please consider the time as each pair/group will want to present out loud.
- Lead the students through each of the writing activities in different galleries, or ask them to choose different works for each of the activities. An introduction is provided for either the teacher or student to read at the beginning of the activity.
- Consider sharing your student's writings with us! Submit writings to our tumblr page <http://vmfaeducation.tumblr.com/> Also, feel free to continue on the writing journey by encouraging students to write more poems, short stories, etc.

Go!

We hope you enjoy your experience at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts!

The Write Stuff

Writing Packet



Name

Grades 9–12

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Simile & Metaphor

A simile is a straightforward comparison between two similar things using **like** or **as**.
For example: *Her shawl is like night*

A *metaphor* is a writing device that makes an *implied* comparison that is a more expressive and complex image. Metaphors enliven poetry, stories, and conversations by creating a visual picture to describe something.

For instance, the simile mentioned above, "Her shawl is like night," could be turned into a metaphor by saying:

Her shawl is night, concealing her vulnerability in darkness.

Here are some other examples of metaphors:

Her shawl is the night sky, expanses of black scattered with light.

Her shawl is smoke, rising warmly from the fire at her feet.

Her blouse is a pastry, with cotton candy sleeves and cuffs of swirling taffy.

Now you try! Select a work.

Title _____

Artist _____

Date _____

Write a simile describing the work's subject, its medium, or even the elements of art used to create it:

Now turn your simile into a metaphor or write another simile:

Sensory Inventory

Simply describing what a work of art looks like tells only part of the story. Try incorporating **all** of your senses. Put yourself into the art; think about what you might see, feel, hear, taste, or smell.

Explore the gallery and choose a work of art.

Title _____

Artist _____

Date _____

Use the format below to describe the work of art using your senses.

I can almost...

taste the _____ and

feel the _____ ; it's as if I

hear the sound of _____ , and I am

reminded of the smell of _____ .

Strangely enough I think of _____

when I see _____ .

Cinquain Poetry

A cinquain is a five-line poem, each line formed by a pattern using parts of speech. Here's an example of a cinquain inspired by a work of art.

Bird
Still, Speckled
Waiting, watching, pondering
On his perch, he sits.
Pigeon

Explore the gallery and choose a work of art:

Title _____

Artist _____

Date _____

Now, try writing a cinquain about this work of art, using the modern format below.

Noun (the subject; you may use the title of the work)

_____, _____

Two adjectives (words that describe the noun)

_____, _____, _____

Three verbs (action words that activate the noun)

Phrase (feeling or complete sentence about the noun)

Repeat the noun or use a synonym* of the noun

**Synonym: 1. A word having a meaning similar to another word. 2. A word or expression accepted as a figurative or symbolic substitute for another word or expression.*



VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

200 N. Boulevard | Richmond, VA 23220 | www.VMFA.museum