



## PICTURING THE STORY: NARRATIVE ARTS AND THE STORIES THEY TELL

### INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS:

*Picturing the Story: Narrative Arts and the Stories They Tell* focuses on selected works of world art from the permanent collection of the Memorial Art Gallery. Each work of art has a story to tell, either visually through imagery and symbol, or indirectly through custom and ritual. The stories might reflect sacred beliefs, folk traditions, common human experiences, or unique cultural practices.

#### This multimedia unit is designed to celebrate each story:

- as written text, American Sign Language interpretation, and spoken word
- through illustration, representation, and symbolic reference
- reflecting on historical, cultural, social, and geographical perspectives
- via interdisciplinary approaches for teachers of
  - ✓ Social Studies / Global Studies
  - ✓ Art / Art History
  - ✓ English Language Arts / Literature
  - ✓ Science

#### Approach each work of art from three different perspectives:

- 1. Picturing the Story: *Viewing a work of art while reading/hearing/seeing its associated story***  
*The story is available as on-screen text, as an audio file voiced by a professional storyteller, in ASL video interpretation, or printable pdf version. In addition, an audio “guided-looking tour” of the work of art by a museum educator helps focus attention on important details and promote visual and verbal looking skills.*
- 2. Reading the Art: *Understanding the symbolism and references used in this work of narrative art***  
*High-quality images of works of art, with zoom-able details, comparison or supporting images, and interpretive information connect elements of the work of art to its associated story.*
- 3. Connecting the Culture: *Exploring the cultural and functional context of this work of art***  
*Historical and cultural context information, including maps, supporting photos, and other images, connect the work of art and the story to the cultural background, promoting document-based and inquiry-based learning. Information addressing purpose or function of work, biographical information on artist (as available), geographical and environmental issues, and process and tools of creation allows the objects’ significance to extend into a variety of curriculum areas.*

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### ESPECIALLY FOR EDUCATORS - specially-designed teacher materials for each work of art:

**Classroom Copy:** *Printable, condensed version of online materials, copy-ready for classroom use.*

**Curriculum Connections:** *Lesson plans and suggestions based on learning skills*

- *Children's book recommendations*
- *Organized by subject area: Social Studies, ELA, Science, Art/Art History*

**Learning Skill-based Activity Sheets:**

- *Guide to Activity Sheets, organized by learning skill*
- *Printable, copy-ready activities and lesson extensions*

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & BIBLIOGRAPHY

Recommendations for further reading and research, both online and in print.

#### Learning Skills Standards:

**This unit promotes active student inquiry, allowing for increasing development of visual learning skills:**

- define, recognize, label
- describe, discuss, explain, identify, review, translate
- demonstrate, dramatize, illustrate, interpret, use
- analyze, categorize, compare, examine, question

#### Academic Standards:

**This unit addresses the New York State Learning Standards in Social Studies, English Language Arts, Art, and Science, using works of art as the starting point for**

- discussion of various sacred and secular traditions, beliefs, and practices
  - Why do people make works of art? For what purpose?
  - How do people use their environment and resources to express their culture?
  - What is the connection between the oral/written story and the visual interpretation?
  - How has this culture changed over time? Is the story still valid? Has the art changed?
- examination of the cultural understandings, traditions and values of another society
  - Why was this particular work of art made in this particular interpretation?
  - How does the work of art give the viewer a window into a particular culture?
  - What is the story told by the symbols, gestures, etc incorporated into the work of art?
  - What is the purpose of the story? Why is it important?
- comparison of similarities and differences among traditions, resources, and technologies
  - How was this particular work of art made?
  - What tools, materials, knowledge, etc. did the artist possess?
  - How did another culture-story explain a similar situation/event/character?