

Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Arts Teaching and Learning in Action

Strategies that Increase Student Engagement and Achievement





STRATEGY: VISUAL THINKING

This strategy is part of a larger publication entitled *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Arts Teaching and Learning in Action: Strategies that Increase Student Engagement and Achievement*.

This publication is the result of a yearlong process undertaken by the CCSESA Arts Initiative and the CISC Regional Arts Leads who serve on the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee/Visual and Performing Arts Subcommittee. CCSESA's Creativity at the Core Initiative recognizes the transformative power of the arts in the lives of our students as they develop critical thinking skills and capacities that ensure success in our complex, multifaceted, globalized world. To download the entire publication, go to downloads in this module.

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IMPROVING LIFE OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH EDUCATION

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“ *I believe it is impossible to make sense of life in this world except through art.* **”**

- Daniel Pinkwater

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AUDIENCE

This handbook is designed with two primary users in mind.

Administrators/Other Leaders

Administrators and other arts and educational leaders can use this handbook to help them in designing professional development services, especially as those are focused on expanding teacher's repertoire of culturally and linguistically responsive, interactive instructional strategies. Not only will the information in this handbook provide administrators and teacher leaders with a concise overview of key aspects of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, but it will also provide an approach or template for thinking about how to select specific instructional strategies that translate that culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy into classroom practice. By providing arts-specific examples of these strategies in action, teachers will be able to identify those that are most appropriate for their own settings. What's more, the strategies and examples are likely to prompt leaders to recall other strategies already in their repertoires that they can revive, and to create new strategies of their own design.

Classroom Teachers/Teaching Artists/Arts Specialists

Classroom teachers, teaching artists, and arts specialists can use this handbook to help them design learning experiences for their students. The organization of each instructional strategy allows for teachers to understand the objectives and processes, and to adapt them to their own settings and students by customizing the content of the activities. As teachers make decisions about which strategies to incorporate into their learning plans, they will be able to construct sophisticated learning sequences designed to engage students actively in the learning, to build new learning opportunities that take full advantage of students' languages, cultures, and prior experiences/ knowledge, and to invite students into reflection and metacognitive activities that can spiral their learning to new levels.

STRATEGY TEMPLATE *(See Figure 1)*

Each strategy featured in this handbook is organized according to a format that includes the following:

Introductory Information

- Strategy Name
- Strategy Source
- Targeted Objectives
- Applicable Grade(s)
- Time Required
- Materials Required
- Grouping Recommendations

VAPA Connection

- Rationale for Use of the CLRP Strategy in VAPA Classroom Settings

Implementation Process

- Steps for Using the Strategy with Students
- Synthesis, Reflection/Debriefing Suggestions



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STRATEGIES IN ACTION

(See Figure 2)

This handbook also provides examples of each strategy as it might be used in one of the arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre arts, visual arts, media arts, or integrated arts). These examples are organized according to a consistent format. This format includes:

Introductory Information

- Strategy Name
- VAPA Discipline Targeted
- Creativity at the Core Module Alignment
- Applicable Grade(s)
- Time Required
- Materials Required
- Grouping Recommendations
- Required Student Prior Preparation

Planning Information

- Theme/Big Idea
- Performance-Based Assessment
- Teacher Resources
- Learning about the Students

Implementation Process

- Assessing & Building Background Knowledge
- Engaging in the Activity
- Synthesis, Reflection, & Debriefing
- Applying Learning in New Contexts

Pedagogical Principles & Specific CLRP Practices

- Targeted Principles and Practices & How Addressed
 - Language & Culture
 - Learning Community
 - Student Agency, Voice, and Mindset
 - Stretching & Bridging

USING THE STRATEGIES

Teachers can make the best use of these strategies by thinking of them as instructional planning resources. Once a teacher has identified the big rational (the actual work to be accomplished) and experiential (the experience we want students to have as they work) outcomes, s/he can review the available strategies and determine which is most likely to address those outcomes. The teacher

can then select from that subset of strategies the one that is the best fit for the target students (age, grade, language proficiency, background knowledge) and the content.

Educators can either select a particular strategy to use as part of a larger learning sequence, or they can create an extended learning sequence (unit of study, for example), by ordering/sequencing and integrating a series of strategies.

One recommendation we make to educators is that the first time they introduce a strategy to students, they do so with low-demand content so that students don't have to manage both learning the strategy and addressing cognitively demanding content at the same time. Over time, if a teacher recycles a strategy with different content, students will become expert at the strategy and will be able to carry it out more smoothly. In fact, students can become so expert at the strategies that as new students come into the classroom, students themselves can induct new students into how the strategies work. The fact that the strategies are LEARNABLE by students supports the development of autonomous, self-confident, and efficacious learners.

CONNECTION TO THE CREATIVITY AT THE CORE MODULES

Each strategy in action is tied to a particular *Creativity at the Core* module housed on the CCSESA Arts website at www.ccsesaarts.org. This connection is indicated in the introductory information provided for each strategy in action. A particular strategy can be used in the context of a *Creativity at the Core* module but also used independently as it's integrated it into other curricula. As teachers become more familiar with the strategies, not only will they find new ways of using the strategies in their own arts disciplines, but they will also find themselves creating new versions of the "strategy in action".

In the strategies in action, the arts learning has been integrated in each strategy to create a classroom interaction that will not only provide learning in the arts, but present that learning in a way the enhances students' confidence and academic mindset.

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FIGURE 1: STRATEGY TEMPLATE

NAME OF STRATEGY			
A CLRP STRATEGY			
Brief Introduction to Strategy and Its CLRP Connections			
OBJECTIVES		MATERIALS	
GRADE(S)	GROUPING	SOURCE	TIME NEEDED
PROCESS			
Using the Strategy			
Synthesis, Reflection/Debriefing			

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FIGURE 2: ACTIVITY TEMPLATE

(This is directly tied to a specific STRATEGY, and should explain how to use a particular STRATEGY in an actual classroom with real arts content.)

NAME OF STRATEGY A CLRP STRATEGY CONNECTED TO DANCE			
<i>Brief Introduction to the Arts Activity</i>			
VAPA DISCIPLINE	CONTRIBUTING REGION/ ARTS LEAD	SOURCE	MODULE ALIGNMENT
TARGET GRADE(S)	GROUPING	TIME NEEDED	MATERIALS
THEME/BIG IDEA		ARTS DISCIPLINE OBJECTIVE	
LEARNING ABOUT THE STUDENTS		TEACHER RESOURCES	
STUDENT PRIOR PREPARATION OR REQUISITE SKILLS/ KNOWLEDGE		PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT	
ASSESSING & BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE			
PROCESS			
SYNTHESIS, REFLECTION/DEBRIEFING		APPLYING LEARNING IN NEW CONTEXTS	

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FIGURE 2: ACTIVITY TEMPLATE *(continued)*

PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES ADDRESSED BY THE STRATEGY		
 Check if addressed in the strategy.	SPECIFIC PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES <i>These essential pedagogical principles should inform our specific classroom practice. (Adopted by Creativity at the Core from Jackson's Pedagogy of Confidence)</i>	HOW ADDRESSED BY STRATEGY? <i>This strategy addresses and enacts these essential pedagogical principles, which operationalize our values around cultural and linguistic responsiveness.</i>
	Identifying and building on student strengths.	
	Establishing powerful relationships that nurture success.	
	Eliciting high intellectual performance.	
	Engaging students actively in the learning process.	
	Creating environments of enrichment rather than remediation.	
	Situating learning in the lives of students.	
	Addressing the prerequisites for learning.	
 Check if addressed in the strategy.	SPECIFIC CLRP PRACTICES <i>How will this strategy contribute to creating a culturally and linguistically responsive learning environment?</i>	HOW ADDRESSED BY STRATEGY? <i>How does this strategy addresses, contributes to, and/or enacts one or more of these features of culturally and linguistically responsive learning environments?</i>
LANGUAGE/CULTURE		
	Asserting the legitimacy of students' languages and dialects and using students' languages, cultures, experiences, and skills to create new successes.	
	Building a broad array of language/literacy, crosscultural, and multimedia communication skills.	
	Celebrating, respecting, and appreciating our language and cultural diversity.	
	Taking advantage of cultural traditions to help students process information more efficiently and effectively.	
	Being responsive to the lives of our students and families.	

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FIGURE 2: ACTIVITY TEMPLATE *(continued)*

 Check if addressed in the strategy.	SPECIFIC CLRP PRACTICES <i>How will this strategy contribute to creating a culturally and linguistically responsive learning environment?</i>	HOW ADDRESSED BY STRATEGY? <i>How does this strategy address, contribute to, and/or enact one or more of these features of culturally and linguistically responsive learning environments?</i>
LEARNING COMMUNITY		
	Developing a sense of community, self-determination, trust, and democracy.	
	Providing affirmation, mutual respect, and validation.	
	Minimizing social threats, and maximizing opportunities to connect with others in community.	
	Creating a safe learning environment and modeling high expectations for learning.	
	Promoting assets-based rather than deficit-focused perspectives and behaviors.	
	Explicitly addressing the impact of the context in which students of color live and helping them develop counter-narratives to the resulting negative portrayals of them and their families.	
STUDENT AGENCY, VOICE, & MINDSET		
	Honoring students' voices and creating environments where student voice permeates the classroom instruction.	
	Helping students create a counter-narrative about their identity as learners.	
	Providing students with the language to talk about their learning and thinking (metacognition) and to mark/assess their progress.	
	Supporting students in using their learning to create new knowledge, art, and understanding.	
	Activating students' ability to direct their attention to their own learning.	
	Providing a clear process for reflecting and acting on teacher/peer feedback.	
STRETCHING & BRIDGING		
	Intentionally connecting new learning to students' background knowledge and experiences. Helping students bridge from prior knowledge/learning to new learning.	
	Challenging students and providing opportunities for them to "stretch," expanding their potential to do more complex thinking and learning.	



Featured CLRP Strategies

“The arts are an essential part of American culture as a whole. It is very important that every young person come into direct contact with the arts — not only as a passive observer, but also as an active participant.”

**- Derek E. Gordon, Executive Director,
Lincoln Center**



Featured Strategy Descriptions

VISUAL THINKING

A CLRP STRATEGY

Visual Thinking is based on Housen's Theory of Aesthetic Development, which identifies five patterns of thinking that correlate to the amount of art the subjects have observed. The strategy was originally developed to help students further develop observational and literacy through viewing artwork and helping students by providing scaffolding for discovering context clues, inferring, and observing when reading.

Visual Thinking is a powerful strategy because it draws on students' cultural, linguistic, and experiential knowledge to facilitate their growth both in visual skills AND another subject. The strategy can be used in any subject area as long as the teacher can find a related image. For example, the image could be a photograph of a volcano, a classical painting of ballerina, or a graphic about water conservation. In every instance, when the instructor utilizes Visual Thinking, s/he enables the students to deeply develop visual skills, language skills, and skills relating to another subject.

OBJECTIVES

- Use communication and listening skills
- Facilitate rigorous classroom discussion
- Increase student engagement, performance, and enjoyment of learning
- Help students develop a growth mindset about learning
- Increase student observational and inferring skills

MATERIALS

- Images the Whole Class Can View

GRADE(S)

K-Adult

GROUPING

Group or Whole Class

SOURCE

Abigail Housen, Philip Yenawine, and Museum of Modern Art, New York

TIME NEEDED

10-45 Minutes

PROCESS

Using the Strategy

- Group students into small groups or use the whole class. It helps students to understand the strategy to perform the task as a whole class, first.
- Show students an image; the whole class must be able to easily view the same image. It can be an artwork, a photograph, or a graphic.
- Ask students, "What is going on in this picture?"
 - » Provide students with at least ten seconds to consider the question.
 - » Ask and/or solicit for responses from students.
 - » Repeat what the students say, but do not confirm or deny their statements.
- Ask students, "What do you see that makes you say that?"
 - » Ask and/or solicit for responses from students.
 - » Repeat what the students say, but do not confirm or deny their statements.
- Ask students, "What more can we find?"
 - » Repeat the process from the first ask.
 - » Repeat the process until you feel students have some answers about the image.

Synthesis, Reflection/Debriefing

- [Repeat back to students what they discovered about the image. Discuss the image at length. Help students identify key points about the image.]
- How does what you identified about the image tie into the key points about the image?
- What do you think about how much information you discovered just by looking?
- How will you look at an image next time, based on what you have just learned? [Explain to students that reading is similar to looking; we are always trying to find information that helps us understand the "story".]
- What was the most challenging or rewarding part of this task?
- How did this activity help you improve your own work?
- What helped you succeed at the task? What kept you from being as successful as you would have liked?
- Did you feel that you and your classmates cooperated and listened well and communicated effectively?



Using the Featured CLRP Strategies with Arts Content



“ Creativity is now as important
in education as literacy. **”**

– Sir Ken Robinson

Strategy in Action with Arts Content

VISUAL THINKING			
A CLRP STRATEGY CONNECTED TO VISUAL ARTS			
This strategy provides a protocol to help students further develop observational and literacy skills through viewing visual texts or graphics. It provides scaffolding for discovering context clues, inferring, and observing when reading.			
VAPA DISCIPLINE Visual Arts	CONTRIBUTING REGION/ARTS LEAD 6 – Amy Zschaber	SOURCE Amy Zschaber	MODULE ALIGNMENT 6 – Lesson Study
TARGET GRADE(S) K	GROUPING Whole Class	TIME NEEDED 20 Minutes	MATERIALS - Image of a Chambered Nautilus Shell - Image of a Chambered Nautilus in the Ocean - Image of a Mathematical Rendering of the Fibonacci Sequence - Other Images of the Fibonacci Sequence in Nature
THEME/BIG IDEA Patterns are present in science, art, math, and language. Sometimes, the same words mean something similar, but different.		VISUAL ARTS OBJECTIVE Recognize and describe patterns found in the environment and in works of art.	
LEARNING ABOUT THE STUDENTS Know the level of language proficiency of all students; know which students to simply cold-call and which ones might need to be able to volunteer.		TEACHER RESOURCES - Visual Thinking Strategy Website http://vtshome.org/ - Visual Thinking Strategy Cheat Sheet: https://www.slideshare.net/ksumatarted/visual-thinking-strategies	
STUDENT PRIOR PREPARATION OR REQUISITE SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE Visual Arts: Students have been learning about the elements and principles of art. Specifically, students have been studying pattern, and repetition. Language/Literacy: Students have been studying how the same words can have different meanings depending on the context. Pattern and repetition have different meanings in Visual Art, Math, and Music. Math: Students have been studying pattern and repetition. Science: Students have been identifying patterns they observe in nature. English Learners: The English Learners are somewhat fluent, but sometimes have difficulty understanding the nuances of contextual English use.		PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT Students will use English language to describe an image. Students will use English language to define what the image is about.	
ASSESSING & BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE - Students work as a whole class group. - Before beginning, find an image of a chambered nautilus; prepare it to either display on a projector and/or for each student to have his/her own copy of the image			

Strategy in Action with Arts Content

VISUAL THINKING *(continued)* A CLRP STRATEGY CONNECTED TO VISUAL ARTS

PROCESS

- Display the image of a chambered nautilus.
- Ask students to silently look at the image for 30 seconds.
- Ask students, "What is going on in this picture?"
 - » Provide students with at least 10 seconds to consider the question.
 - » Ask and/or solicit for responses from students.
 - » Repeat what the students say, but do not confirm or deny their statements.
- Ask students, "What do you see that makes you say that?"
 - » Ask for and/or solicit responses from students.
 - » Repeat what the students say, but do not confirm or deny their statements.
- Ask students, "What more can we find?"
 - » Repeat the process from the first ask.
 - » Repeat the process until you feel students have some answers about the image.

SYNTHESIS, REFLECTION/DEBRIEFING

The teacher repeats back to students some of what they discovered about the image. [Emphasize language about pattern, repetition, shape, and nature.] Then the teacher engages the students in a conversation about the following:

- What was the most challenging or rewarding part of this task?
- How did this activity help you remember what you already knew about pattern and repetition in art and in nature? How did this activity help you learn new things about this?
- How can we use this same strategy (visual thinking) to help us learn/teach other things we are studying?
- Did you feel that you and your classmates cooperated and listened well and communicated effectively?

APPLYING LEARNING IN NEW CONTEXTS

- Identify the image as the shell of a chambered nautilus as well as the image of a living chambered nautilus.
- Display the original image of a chambered nautilus. Ask students to identify pattern and repetition.
- Display mathematical rendering of the Fibonacci sequence. Identify the term, and display other nature examples of the Fibonacci sequence.
- Have the students think about other examples of the Fibonacci sequence they have seen around them.
- Ask students to think of how they might apply what they have learned about pattern and repetition in future learning.

PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES ADDRESSED BY THE STRATEGY

 Check if addressed in the strategy.	SPECIFIC PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES <i>These essential pedagogical principles should inform our specific classroom practice. (Adopted by Creativity at the Core from Jackson's Pedagogy of Confidence)</i>	HOW ADDRESSED BY STRATEGY? <i>This strategy addresses and enacts these essential pedagogical principles, which operationalize our values around cultural and linguistic responsiveness.</i>
	Identifying and building on student strengths.	Students use language that is accessible and makes the most sense to them. Students are able to move at their own pace, and bring their own experiences to the learning environment.
	Establishing powerful relationships that nurture success.	
	Eliciting high intellectual performance.	Students are asked to make decisions about what they are did and to infer based on their drawings; this requires deeper critical thinking skills. And, this occurs in a natural and logical manner.
	Engaging students actively in the learning process.	Students are eager to share what they observe in an image. Since students frequently view images for entertainment, this strategy feeds into the everyday experiences of students.
	Creating environments of enrichment rather than remediation.	Students have finished making artwork and are sharing about what they did. Students are enriching their art experience by reflecting on their actions.

Strategy in Action with Arts Content

VISUAL THINKING *(continued)*

A CLRP STRATEGY CONNECTED TO VISUAL ARTS

	Situating learning in the lives of students.	
	Addressing the prerequisites for learning.	
✓ <i>Check if addressed in the strategy.</i>	SPECIFIC CLRP PRACTICES <i>How will this strategy contribute to creating a culturally and linguistically responsive learning environment?</i>	HOW ADDRESSED BY STRATEGY? <i>How does this strategy addresses, contributes to, and/or enacts one or more of these features of culturally and linguistically responsive learning environments?</i>
LANGUAGE/CULTURE		
✓	Asserting the legitimacy of students' languages and dialects and using students' languages, cultures, experiences, and skills to create new successes.	There are multiple entry points for utilizing Visual Thinking. Students are encouraged to use the language they have to describe what they see. It is a strategy that "meets students where they are."
	Building a broad array of language/literacy, crosscultural, and multimedia communication skills.	
	Celebrating, respecting, and appreciating our language and cultural diversity.	
	Taking advantage of cultural traditions to help students process information more efficiently and effectively.	
	Being responsive to the lives of our students and families.	
LEARNING COMMUNITY		
✓	Developing a sense of community, self-determination, trust, and democracy.	All students are encouraged to contribute to a small discussion about their artworks.
✓	Providing affirmation, mutual respect, and validation.	Students are validated by the teacher repeating their statement, and this lends itself to developing respect among peers for the value and information shared.
	Minimizing social threats and maximizing opportunities to connect with others in community.	
✓	Creating a safe learning environment and modeling high expectations for learning.	High expectations for learning are set by encouraging students to engage in rigorous pair discussions.
✓	Promoting assets-based rather than deficit-focused perspectives and behaviors.	Students are encouraged to "bring what they have" to the discussion. There are multiple entry points that lend the strategy to being inclusive of all learners.
	Explicitly addressing the impact of the context in which students of color live and helping them develop counter-narratives to the resulting negative portrayals of them and their families.	

Strategy in Action with Arts Content

VISUAL THINKING *(continued)*

A CLRP STRATEGY CONNECTED TO VISUAL ARTS

STUDENT AGENCY, VOICE, & MINDSET

✓	Honoring students' voices and creating environments where student voice permeates the classroom instruction.	Students are validated by the teacher repeating their statement, and this lends itself to developing respect among peers for the value and information shared.
	Helping students create a counter-narrative about their identity as learners.	
	Providing students with the language to talk about their learning and thinking (metacognition) and to mark/assess their progress.	
	Supporting students in using their learning to create new knowledge, art, and understanding.	
	Activating students' ability to direct their attention to their own learning (awakening the RAS).	
	Providing a clear process for reflecting and acting on teacher/peer feedback.	

STRETCHING & BRIDGING

✓	Intentionally connecting new learning to students' background knowledge and experiences. Helping students bridge from prior knowledge/learning to new learning.	Students are encouraged to "bring what they have" to the discussion. There are multiple entry points that lend the strategy to being inclusive of all learners.
✓	Challenging students and providing opportunities for them to "stretch", expanding their potential to do more complex thinking and learning.	By introducing new vocabulary prior to using the strategy, students are encouraged to use their existing language and new vocabulary.





Student Reflection & Debriefing



“ *The arts are a major area of human cognition, one of the ways in which we know about the world and express our knowledge. Much of what is said in the arts cannot be said in another way.* **”**

– Dr. Howard Gardner, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Student Reflection & Debriefing⁷

We have a responsibility to help our students develop autonomy as learners. That means helping them to develop the sorts of social, cognitive, linguistic, and metacognitive learning strategies that help them figure out how to be better learners.

By providing students with structures that help them reflect and think metacognitively about their learning, we allow them to make meaning and contextualize and synthesize learning. By thinking about HOW they accomplished a cognitive task, students are learning about learning. They learn how to learn by thinking critically and using information creatively. We can also provide them with questioning/reflection strategies and structures that, used regularly, help students not only learn more about their learning processes, but also begin to organize their learning strategies.

One of the issues for many students is that they may not realize that there ARE strategies they can use to help them be more successful. It's critical, therefore, that students have plenty of opportunities to debrief their learning experiences. We can do that by engaging students directly in using reflection and debriefing protocols and prompts.⁸

REFLECTION

Provide questions for students to reflect on their learning through the strategy/activity.

- What was the most challenging or rewarding part of this task?
- How did this activity help you remember what you already knew about the topic? How did this activity help you learn new things about the topic? How did this task help you become a better learner?
- How did this task help you (1) build stronger relationships and connections with others; (2) develop respect for others' perspectives; (3) take responsibility for your/others' learning; and/or (4) connect to learning that is important/interesting to you?
- How will you be able to use what you did/learned in this task to help you in future learning tasks?

PROCESS DEBRIEFING

Identify questions and sentence starters that help students think about their learning and how they accomplished the task.

- Appreciation & Recognition
 - » It helped me when . . .
 - » I appreciated . . .
 - » Thank you for . . .
 - » It felt good when . . .
- What helped you/your group/the class succeed at the task? What kept you/your group/the class from being as successful as you would have liked?
- What might you/your group/the class try next time to be more successful in a similar task?
- Did you feel that the people in your class/group
 - » Cooperated?
 - » Listened well and communicated effectively?
 - » Included all members?
 - » Facilitated learning/growth for all members?

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

As you consider incorporation of specific strategies into your instructional planning, reflect on this key question. How can this strategy or activity facilitate learners' growth in the following areas?

- Academic/Cognitive Development?
- Linguistic Development?
- Social/Affective Development?
- Artistic/Creative Development?
- Metacognitive Development?

When your selection and integration of specific interactive strategies facilitates students' development simultaneously in all of these areas, you dramatically magnify the power of your instructional approach.