Lesson Overview:
Students will enhance their visual literacy skills by drawing inferences from permanent collection images and adding elements from their imaginations to create new stories.

Learning Objectives:

Essential Questions
- How might I interpret a work of art?
- In what ways do works of art tell stories?
- How can I create an imagined narrative based on visual cues and imagery?
- How might I develop a narrative based on personal experiences, imagination, or observation?

Students will be able to ...
- Imagine a setting or narrative for a story
- Apply visual literacy skills to draw inferences from artworks
- Identify connections between visual arts and literature

Performance Tasks:
- Close looking, making inferences, cutting, gluing, drawing, collage, writing

Mini Glossary
- Visual Literacy: The ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image
- Setting: The place or type of surrounding where something is positioned or where an event takes place

- Plot: The main events of a story presented as an interrelated sequence
- Character: A person, creature, or personified object portrayed in a novel, short story, or play
- Inference: A conclusion reached when you use clues in a text or an image, along with knowledge you already have, to better understand the meaning of a text or artwork
- Embellishment: A decorative feature used to make something more attractive

Materials:
- 11x17 or 12x18 tag board (to be cut in half and folded accordion style)
- permanent collection thumbnails to be cut in strips – see Museum Images document
- collage materials (patterned paper, doilies, cupcake liners, straws, etc.)
- art stix
- colored pencils
- glue sticks
- scissors
- pencils

Additional Needs per Classroom:
- large permanent collection images to be arranged into an impromptu narrative
- samples
- visual timer
- visual schedule
Instructions:

1. **Introduction (2 minutes):** Introduce the idea of “reading” an artwork like a text – Art can tell a story!

Ask students about books they’re reading in class or for fun! Explain that today they’re all going to be making their very own art book, but first are going to do a warmup exercise!

2. **Warm-up (5 minutes):** Invite students to fold their paper in half, and half again, to create 4 sections.

Next, invite students to randomly select 4-8 tiny artworks from the center of the table to glue onto their art books (1-2 per section). Explain that white space is ok – they’ll fill that in later!

Assure students that random selection is ok! If you feel the group may be up for it, invite them to choose images for their table partner.

3. **Lesson Prompt (5 minutes):** Introduce the lesson prompt: Select three random permanent collection works to hang on the wall at the front of the classroom. Invite students to look closely and imagine that these three works tell us a story. *Don’t shy away from more abstract artworks. Younger students, especially, will be very creative in finding settings and even characters in highly abstracted artworks.

Begin by using Visual Thinking Strategies with the first image – What’s going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that?

Emphasize elements of a story: character, setting, plot. For more challenge, discuss conflict or problem.

Are there characters in any of these artworks? What about a setting? Could these three works all be part of the same story? Encourage students to draw inferences, use their imaginations, and make connections!

4. **Write a Story (15 minutes):** Invite students back to their seats. Now, it’s your task to create a narrative with the 4-8 images you selected! Take a few moments to think and talk with your seat partners! While students brainstorm, pass out pencils, colored pencils, and art stix.

Encourage students to use pencils or colored pencils to write sentences to describe their story.

For a challenge: encourage use of colorful details and adjectives!
For support: invite students to write in a native language other than English, fill in more visual details to help tell the story, or to just title their artwork, name characters, or name places.

Invite students to fill in needed details with art stix, colored pencils, or more thumbnail images.

5. **Embellish (15 minutes):** While students continue working on their story, introduce collage materials, which students can use to fill in white space. Students may use collage materials as embellishments or to add meaning or content to their narrative. Discuss texture, sculptural elements, and embellishments as artistic devices.

6. **Conclusion (5 minutes):** Invite volunteers to share out their art book with the whole group. Invite the whole class to discuss using the following questions:
   - How is visual art like stories or literature? How is it different?
   - Is it possible for different people to have different interpretations of a story? Of a work of visual art?
   - Does making your story into an art book change how you might ‘read’ the story? How so?

7. **Clean up (5 minutes):** At the end of the workshop, students will return supplies to the bins on the tables and discard scrap material that cannot be reused.