



Looking at Art Reproductions: Sculptures

Summary Description: Children observe reproductions of sculpture artwork from the DIA based on their artistic (aesthetic) characteristics.

Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality: Creative Arts – 5. Early Learning Expectation: Aesthetic Appreciation. Children develop rich and rewarding aesthetic lives.

HighScope Curriculum content: KDI 40. Art and KDI 44. Appreciating the Arts. Also: KDI 45. Observing

HighScope COR Advantage items: X. Art. Also: BB. Observing and classifying

Time of day: Small-group time

Materials:

- Examples of sculpture art reproductions from the DIA, enough for each child to have three to five pictures (for links to sculptures from the DIA, please see page 3)

Definition: A SCULPTURE is a 3-Dimensional (3D) piece of artwork.

Vocabulary words/topics to focus on while conversing with children:

sculpture, build, color, size, shape, and texture

Beginning: Talk with the children about the DIA field trip and show them the pictures of sculpture art reproductions. Discuss one of the sculpture artwork pieces with the children, pointing out such things as subject matter, medium, and the use of color, line, and so on. Give each child two to three pictures and say something like “I wonder what you will see in these sculpture art pieces and what similarities and differences you notice.”

Middle: Converse with children about the properties of the artwork in their pictures. Describe and encourage them to describe features of interest to them, and how they include them in their own artwork. For example, you might say, “Sometimes you paint on a flat surface, and sometimes you build things that stand in the air” or “This artist made a sculpture of a tall man walking. You often make people when you play with playdough.” Midway, give children another picture or two to share and compare.

The chart below offers an example, at each developmental level, of what children may say and do, along with ideas for scaffolding (supporting and gently extending) their learning.

Scaffolding Learning at Each Developmental Level		
Earlier	Middle	Later
Children may: Focus primarily on nonartistic features; for example, commenting that it’s a picture of a man and then look for other pictures with people.	Children may: Notice one or two artistic features — for example, the medium or a dominant color.	Children may: Comment on several artistic qualities, for example, whether the picture shows something real (figurative art) or is just “lines, shapes, and colors” (abstract art); whether something is made of metal or wood; or whether there are a lot of lines or broad swaths of color.
Adults can:	Adults can:	Adults can:

Repeat children's observations and help children look for related images.	Ask children what other reproductions feature that medium or have similar (or contrasting) colors.	Encourage children to share their pictures with others, looking for similarities and differences in the qualities they've mentioned, and talk about variations within a medium, for example, how sculptures can be made of wood, metal, or stone.
Gentle Extension: Ask children what else they notice about the picture; for example, the materials used to make it, or types of lines, shapes or colors they see.	Gentle Extension: Encourage children to notice additional artistic features; for example, by commenting on how materials were stacked on top of each other, and encouraging children to find other reproductions that use the same techniques.	Gentle Extension: Ask children about the artists' intentions and choice of technique: "Why do you think the artist chose to stack the materials like that?"

End: Let children know when there are about five minutes left in the activity. Tell the children that the pictures will be in the art area if they want to continue working with them. Invite children to pretend they are a sculpture made of wood (or metal or cloth) as they move to the next activity in the daily routine.

Follow up: Post reproductions of sculpture artwork at children's eye level throughout the room, choosing pieces that reflect the interest area in which they are posted.

Links to sculptures from the Detroit Institute of Arts:

Viewing this as a printed resource? You can find the art pieces listed below by visiting <https://dia.org/collection> and searching for each art piece by name.

- *Coo Wha Zee, 1962*
- *Man Crossing a Square on a Sunny Morning, 1950*
- *Moonmad, 1944*
- *Reclining Figure, 1939*
- *Spirit Box, 2009*