

- **Increase visual literacy**—active seeing, observing, describing, analyzing and interpreting, recognizing patterns, comparing and contrasting, identifying details.
 - Strategy: Consider the aesthetics of color, shape, line, texture, etc. by looking formally at art. Apply those sensibilities to your own images:
 - *What do I notice first?*
 - *Where does my eye travel? In what directions?*
 - *Am I looking at individual parts of an image or at the whole?*
 - *What do particular colors connote?*
 - *What has been omitted?*
 - *What story or message is most prominent?*
- **Illuminate cultural context and recognize various perspectives**
 - Strategy: Use an image or work of art to step into another's shoes and consider others' values and ways of looking or compare ideas cross-culturally.

- **Develop conceptual frameworks** to understand ideas or themes in literature or writing, such as character types across genres or the “sublime” in multiple texts
- **Examine objects as primary documents** to establish political, social, economic or cultural context
 - Strategy: Mark up (a copy!), critique, or analyze other content (like the Brodsky piece).



Marcelo Brodsky, Prague 1968, from the series "1968, Fire of Ideas," 2015.

- **Practice craft elements** like brevity, dialogue, voice, sequence, clarity of ideas, question writing, revising and summarizing, understand and use metaphors, similes, and symbolism
 - Strategy: Use art to practice asking and honing questions. Choose a complicated work of art and generate a list of all the questions you have about it. Narrow down the list to some really meaty ones and try to answer them using visual evidence in the work or do some additional digging to find contextual evidence. Think about which types of questions yield more substantive discussions or lines of thinking.
- As a way to **engage students around difficult conversations** or controversial topics
- **Identify emotional components and feelings evoked in work of art**—translate to writing or literary analysis

- **Present visual representations of data.** Use images to tell a more complete story of qualitative/quantitative data or connect emotionally with an audience by presenting data pictorially (i.e. Becker images below).



Olaf Otto Becker, Örfajökull glacier tongue, Iceland 07/1999 (left); Örfajökull glacier tongue, Iceland 07/2011.

- **Find visual evidence to form and support an opinion, make a claim, or craft an argument**
 - **Strategy:** Use [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) or [Artful Thinking Routines](#):
 - *What do you see?*
 - *What makes you say that?*
- **As a creative inspiration for writing**—develop a narrative, poetry, descriptive analysis
 - **Strategy:** Go to a museum or look at art as a way to get out of a rut or think creatively about something:
 - *How would this artist have presented the content at hand?*
 - *What information was known about a topic at the time this artist was working? How has it evolved?*
 - *What could be different in this work of art? This situation?*
 - Pushing into the realm of imagination, beyond what you know and see, may be enough to break through a box you have put up around the scope of your work.
 - Sketch or draw as a way of coming to understand or know the material in a different way.



Barbara Hepworth, *High Tide*, 1973.

- **Practice another language in an authentic way.** Conversational discussion or interview style Q & A are very different than traditional, scripted dialogue presented in many language textbooks. Working in the gallery or with art provides an opportunity to share content, practice new vocabulary, and hone aural and oral language skills in a way that feels real while affording students the freedom to make mistakes.

Recent Course Examples:

- In a Spanish 22 class focused on the Spanish Civil War, students listened to a podcast about Picasso's *Guernica* that included survivors' voices. In the Gallery, we looked at several photographs of Slovakian Holocaust survivors that were part of [Last Folio](#) and had a conversation about how art reflects historical and cultural memory. *What does it mean to be a survivor? How do the historic events depicted in this exhibition or Guernica resonate today?* A follow up assignment included written reflections in Spanish.
- In a Spanish 22 class focused on climate and justice we used work by Latinx artists in [A Decolonial Atlas: Strategies in Contemporary Art of the Americas](#) to have an authentic Spanish language conversation about communicating environmental issues through art. Students had an opportunity to build visual literacy skills and targeted vocabulary and grammar using small group discussion and written prompts.
- In conjunction with [Mortal Things: Portraits Look Back and Forth](#), we held an Artist Talk with Rania Matar in Arabic. Her [L'Enfant Femme](#) series deals with the artist navigating her bi-cultural identity and girlhood across cultures. We partnered with several Arabic language instructors to determine the focus: her personal experience, her life and how she became a photographer, and a bit about some of the photographs. Through this interactive talk, students practiced using adjectives and prepared appropriate questions. The artist provided 10-15 vocabulary words that would be in the talk so instructors could preview them with students.
- Chinese language classes used newspaper and magazine articles from Chinese periodicals to learn about a Chinese artist's work. This provided context and reading practice prior to an Artist Talk in Chinese with [Yuan Yunsheng](#) at which students had a chance to practice their aural and oral skills by asking the artist questions.



Rania Matar, *Juliet 11, Beirut, Lebanon*, 2012.