



Elemore Morgan, oil on canvas

Lesson Plan: Literacy & Landscapes  
Developed by the Education Department  
Ogden Museum of Southern Art

## OVERVIEW

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This lesson plan is intended for students in grades 6—12. Students will become familiar with landscape painting, different methods of creative writing, and the collection of the Ogden Museum of Southern Art.

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

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1. What is a landscape?
2. How can we discuss and explore landscapes using creative writing techniques?

## STANDARDS

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Louisiana English Language Arts Content Standards that pertain to “reading” and writing about pieces of art from Core Curriculum: (source)

**ELA 6.19** - Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include the following:

- word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose
- vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone
- information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader
- clear voice (individual personality)
- variety in sentence structure

**ELA 6.21** - Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multi-paragraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition

**ELA 6.22** - Use the various modes to write compositions, including: • comparison/contrast • essays based on a stated opinion

**ELA 6.23** - Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery

**ELA 6.25** - Use standard English punctuation, including:

- hyphens to separate syllables of words and compound adjectives
- commas and coordinating conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences
- colons after salutation in business letters

**ELA 7.15** - Write multi-paragraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with the following:

- organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic •
- elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details)
- established central idea
- transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points •
- overall structure including an introduction, a body/middle, and a concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details

**ELA 7.17** - Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include the following:

- word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose
- vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone
- information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader
- clear voice (individual personality)
- variety in sentence structure

**ELA 7.20** - Use the various modes to write compositions, including essays based on a stated opinion and fictional narratives.

**ELA 7.22** - Write for various purposes, including:

- letters of complaint supported with complete and accurate information and reasons
- evaluations of media, such as television, radio, and the arts
- text-supported interpretations of elements of grade-appropriate stories, poems, plays, and novels
- applications, such as memberships and library cards

**ELA 7.24** - Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including varied sentence structures, including complex sentences, antecedents that agree with pronouns in number, person, and gender, and sentences without double negatives.

**ELA 8.15** - Write complex, multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with the following:

- a clearly stated focus or central idea
- important ideas or events stated in a selected order
- organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic
- elaboration (anecdotes, relevant facts, examples, and/or specific details)
- transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points
- an overall structure (e.g., introduction, body/middle, and concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details)
- clear voice (individual personality)
- variety in sentence structure

**ELA 8.17** - Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include the following:

- word choices (diction) appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose
- vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone
- information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader
- clear voice (individual personality)
- variety in sentence structure

**ELA 8.18** - Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes such as the following:

- selecting topic and form
- prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers)
- drafting
- conferencing (e.g., peer and teacher)
- revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP21 Writer's Checklist, rubrics)
- proofreading/editing
- publishing using technology

**ELA 8.19** - Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multi-paragraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition.

**ELA 8.20** - Use the various modes to write compositions, including:

- short stories developed with literary devices
- problem/solution essays
- essays defending a stated position

**ELA 9.4** - Draw conclusions and make inferences in oral and written responses about ideas and information in texts, including:

- nonfiction works
- short stories/novels
- five-act plays
- poetry/epics
- film/visual texts
- consumer/instructional materials
- public documents

**ELA 9.7** - Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including:

- summarizing and paraphrasing information and story elements
- comparing and contrasting information in texts, including televised news, news magazines, documentaries, and online information
- comparing and contrasting complex literary elements, devices, and ideas within and across texts
- examining the sequence of information and procedures in order to critique the logic or development of ideas in texts
- making inferences and drawing conclusions
- making predictions and generalizations

**ELA 9.15** - Develop organized, coherent paragraphs that include the following:

- topic sentences
- logical sequence
- transitional words and phrases
- appropriate closing sentences
- parallel construction where appropriate

**ELA 9.16** - Develop multi-paragraph compositions organized with the following:

- a clearly stated central idea or thesis statement
- a clear, overall structure that includes an introduction, a body, and an appropriate conclusion
- supporting paragraphs appropriate to the topic organized in a logical sequence (e.g., spatial order, order of importance, ascending/descending order, chronological order, parallel construction)
- transitional words and phrases that unify throughout (ELA-2-H1)

**ELA 9.17** - Develop complex compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that are suited to an identified audience and purpose and that include the following:

- word choices appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose
- vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone
- information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader
- clear voice (individual personality)

**ELA 9.37** - Locate, analyze, and synthesize information from a variety of grade-appropriate resources, including:

- multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs,
- specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias, and periodicals)
- electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases)
- other media sources (e.g., community and government data, television and
- radio resources, and other audio and visual materials)

**ELA 10.4** - Draw conclusions and make inferences about ideas and information in grade-appropriate texts in oral and written responses, including:

- short stories/novels
- nonfiction works
- five-act plays
- poetry/epics
- film/visual texts
- consumer/instructional materials
- public documents

**ELA 10.9** - Analyze, in oral and written responses, distinctive elements, including theme and structure, of literary forms and types, including:

- essays by early and modern writers
- lyric, narrative, and dramatic poetry
- drama, including ancient, Renaissance, and modern
- short stories, novellas, and novels
- biographies and autobiographies
- speeches

**ELA 10.16** - Develop organized, coherent paragraphs that include the following:

- topic sentences
- logical sequence
- transitional words and phrases
- appropriate closing sentences
- parallel construction where appropriate

**ELA 10.17** - Develop multi-paragraph compositions organized with the following:

- a clearly stated central idea/thesis statement
- a clear, overall structure that includes an introduction, a body, and an appropriate conclusion
- supporting paragraphs appropriate to the topic organized in a logical sequence (e.g., spatial order, order of importance, ascending/descending order, chronological order, parallel construction)
- transitional words and phrases that unify throughout

**ELA 10.18** - Develop complex compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that are suited to an identified audience and purpose and that include the following:

- word choices appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose
- vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone
- information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader
- clear voice (individual personality)

**ELA 10.40** - Locate, analyze, and synthesize information from grade-appropriate resources, including:

- multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias, and periodicals)
- electronic sources (e.g., Web sites and databases)
- other media sources (e.g., community and government data, television and radio resources, and other audio and visual materials)

**ELA 11/12.1** - Draw conclusions and make inferences about ideas and information in complex texts in oral and written responses, including:

- fiction/nonfiction
- drama/poetry
- public documents
- film/visual texts
- debates/speeches (ELA-1-H3)

**ELA 11/12.14** – Develop complex compositions, essays, and reports that include the following:

- a clearly stated central idea/thesis statement
- a clear, overall structure (e.g., introduction, body, appropriate conclusion)
- supporting paragraphs organized in a logical sequence (e.g., spatial order, order of importance, ascending/descending order, chronological order, parallel construction)
- transitional words, phrases, and devices that unify throughout

**ELA 11/12.15** - Develop complex compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that are suited to an identified audience and purpose and that include the following:

- word choices appropriate to the identified audience and/or purpose
- vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone
- information/ideas selected to engage the interest of the reader
- clear voice (individual personality)

**ELA 11/12.35** - Locate, analyze, and synthesize information from a variety of complex resources, including:

- multiple print texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias, and periodicals)
- electronic sources (e.g., Web sites or databases)
- other media (e.g., community and government data, television and radio resources, and audio and visual materials)

## VOCABULARY & TERMS

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**Acrostic**—a poem where the beginning letter of each line, when read downward, spells out a name, phrase, or clause

**Blues**—a poem usually written in tercets (3 line stanzas). The first two lines of the tercet traditionally are similar and set up the effect while the third line rhymes with the first two and states the cause. It is derived from African-American slave call and response or hollers and can be either poem or song. W.C. Handy popularized the song form and Langston Hughes adapted it by dividing each line into two shorter lines and creating Blues sestets (6 line stanzas) instead of tercets.

**Haiku**—a Japanese form with seventeen syllables in three lines. The first line generally has five syllables the second seven, and the third five. Haiku can vary from the line and syllable count. Elements of the haiku include imagery, juxtaposition of images, economy of words, immediacy, and flash of illumination.

**Landscape**—a work of art that features the natural world

**Narrative Poem**— a poem that tells a story, introduces a character or characters and follows a plot

**Ode**—a poem that praises the subject

## **PRE-MUSEUM TOUR ACTIVITIES**

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Before making a trip to the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, students can examine landscapes through the lens of creative writing to prepare for more in-depth learning during the tour itself. These pre-tour activities are designed to get the eye used to looking at landscapes, hone students' powers of observation, and familiarize them with connecting the visual arts and creative writing.

Introduce an image to the classroom using a printed copy for each student, or a large image projected on a screen or whiteboard. Ask students to raise their hands and tell you elements that they see in the work (mountains, trees, water, birds). Rephrase elements they mentioned and explain that they are looking at a *landscape*, which is a work of art that features nature and our natural environment. Mountains, trees, water, and oceans are all parts of a landscape. Sometimes landscapes can also have houses or other buildings, but are mostly made up of nature.

Ask students to look again at the painting and write down what they observe and feel. You can ask questions to serve as prompts for their brainstorming, such as, "What is the season? Time of Day? Weather? Setting? Mood? Things that are part of nature? Things that humans built? People?". Let students look and write quietly for 5—10 minutes. Now that they have created a "landscape vocabulary", they can use it in your choice of a creative writing activity. Choose one or more of the following activities (more images to follow):

### **1. Journalism/Blog Post**

Students may take 15 to 20 minutes to write a journalistic article or blog post about the landscape, using describing words from their brainstorming list (ask them to try to use every one in the article). Students may take turns sharing their writing at the end of class.

### **2. Correspondence**

Students may take 15 to 20 minutes to write their friend/family member/imaginary person a letter. Students can either describing a particular landscape, as if they were writing a letter from a vacation "inside the landscape", or tell the other person about their experience of looking at a landscape in the classroom. Ask students to write using all of the words on their brainstorm list. Students may take turns sharing their writing at the end of class.

### **3. Haiku**

Students may take 15-20 minutes write a poem that follows the strict haiku structure (1st line = 5 syllables, 2nd line = 7 syllables, 3rd line = 5 syllables) and style (imagery, juxtaposition of images, economy of words, immediacy, and flash of illumination). Ask students to construct their haiku using only words or phrases from their brainstorm list. Students may take turns to share their writing at the end of class.

IMAGES FOR PRE-MUSEUM TOUR ACTIVITIES

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Robert Julian Onderdonk, *Blue Bonnet Scene with Girl*, 1920. Oil on canvas

<http://www.ogdenmuseum.org/collections/collection-detail?cid=2003.1.684>



Alexander John Drysdale,  
*Bayou Teche Country 1*, 1927.  
Oil on canvas

<http://www.ogdenmuseum.org/collections/collection-detail.html?cid=2003.1.242>

## IN-MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

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During their trip to the Ogden, students will get an opportunity to spend time the museum's Landscape Gallery. This gallery provides a unique environment for learning about art as well as practicing writing skills. Museum Education Staff and Museum Docents will provide instruction and materials.

### 1. Comparison

Students will choose two landscapes from the gallery and compare and contrast. Making a list of elements and observations/feelings for each painting is a great way to start. That way, students can compare lists and construct paragraphs on differences and similarities. Students may choose works that are very similar (like Woodward's *Pines* images), or rather different (Drysdale v. Millet).

### 2. Short Story

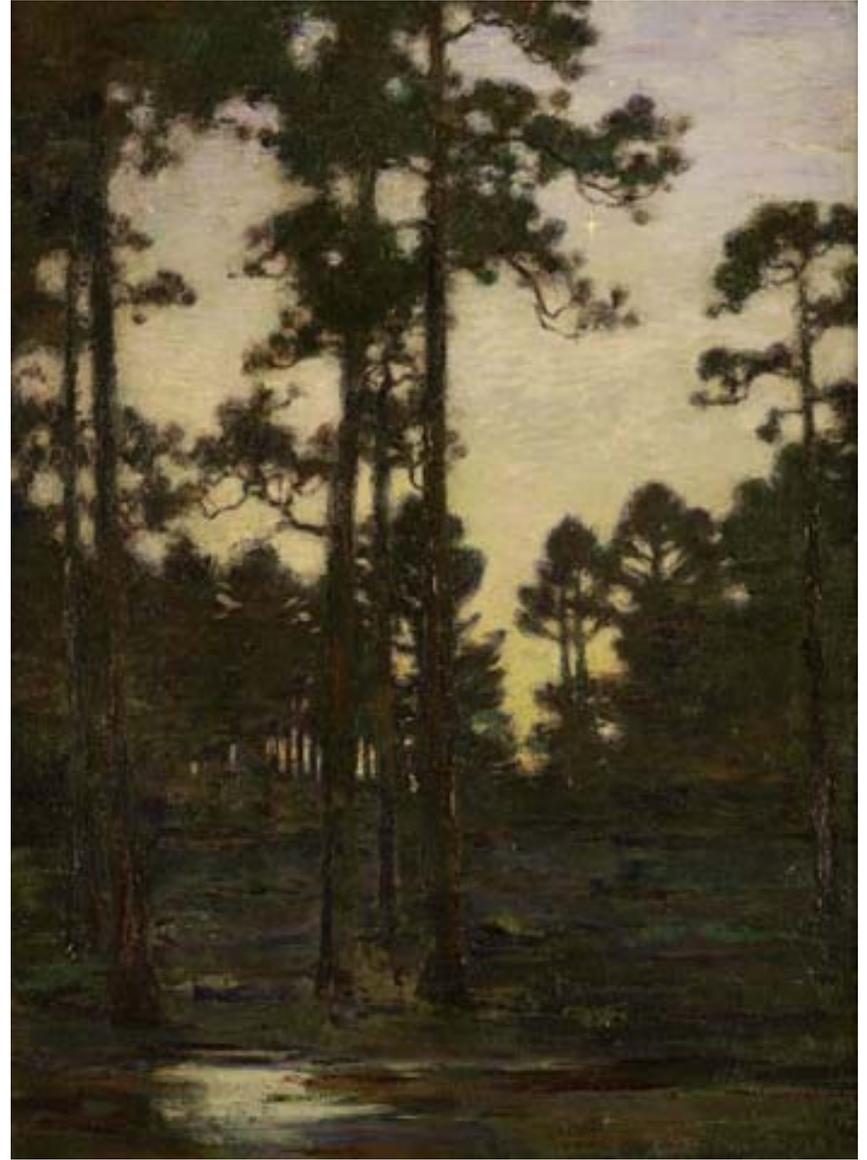
Students will create a short story that takes place in or is about the landscape they have chosen.

### 3. Narrative Poem

Students will create a narrative poem that communicates a story that takes place in, or is about, the landscape they have chosen. Narrative poems can follow any rhyme scheme, but have one or more defined characters and follow a plot.



Ellsworth Woodward, *First Light in the Pines*, 1913.  
Oil on canvas.



Ellsworth Woodward, *First Star Over the Pines*, 1910.  
Oil on canvas



Alexander John Drysdale, *Afternoon Shower*, 1920. Oil on canvas



Clarence Millet, *Batteur Shanty at River-bend*, 1956. Oil on canvas

## IN-MUSEUM ART ACTIVITY

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Students whose teachers make arrangements ahead of time may participate in an art activity. Museum Education Staff and Docents will lead the students in creating their own landscapes, using a variety of media (based on age and visual arts experience) including:

- Watercolor
- Oil pastels
- Collage/assemblage materials
- Colored pencils
- Markers

Students will use their knowledge of the elements of a landscape (natural forms, buildings, sometimes people, sky, weather, season) to create their own piece.

The art activity will take approximately 30 minutes. All materials will be supplied by the museum, and students will get to take their artwork back to the school.

## POST-MUSEUM TOUR ACTIVITIES

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Once students return from the field trip and have time to reflect on their experience, a follow-up activity will help ensure that what they have learned is retained. These activities were designed to build upon the concepts and exercises students have learned before and during the museum visit, and to stretch the imagination and further develop skills in the classroom in seven different modes of creative writing.

Using the vocabulary lists, previous writings, and the landscapes students created, teachers can lead classes to create more complex creative writing pieces from the following choices. Creative writing exercises may be done in stages or all at once. Poetry terms can be found on page nine; examples of poetry can be found on pages 22-23.

### **1. Description: Describe one of the landscapes in great detail. What do you notice most about the landscape? How can you best describe the color, shapes, lines, light, movement, etc. of the landscape?**

**1.a. Correspondence:** You could write a letter to someone who has never seen the landscape.

**1.b. Essay:** You could write a paragraph or multi-paragraph essay describing the painting. For a multi-paragraph essay, have each paragraph focus on a separate aspect of the landscape.

**1.c. Journal or diary entry:** You could write an entry, or a series of entries, describing your experience viewing the landscape gallery or the experience of viewing a particular landscape.

**1.d. Journalism:** You could write a newspaper article or a blog post describing the landscape.

**1.e. Playwriting:** You could write your description by creating characters to speak the different descriptions.

**1.f. Poetry:** You could write a poem that describes the elements and the mood of the landscape.

### **2. Personification: If a tree, grass, sunlight, flower, bird, or cloud could talk, what would it say about the landscape?**

**2.a. Correspondence:** You could write a letter talking in the voice of a tree, bird, cloud, etc.

**2.b. Essay:** You could write a first person essay in the voice of a tree, bird, cloud, grass, sign, house, etc.

**2.c. Journal or diary entry:** You could write a journal or diary entry, or a series of entries, in the voice of something that appears in the landscape.

**2.d. Journalism:** You could write a newspaper article or blog posting in the voice of something that appears in the land

**2.e. Playwriting:** You could write a play where each part of the painting was personified as a character and talked with the other parts of the painting. Or you could personify the landscape being painted and the painting of the landscape as part of your play.

**2.f. Poetry:** You could write a poem talking in the voice of tree, bird, cloud, grass, etc.

**2.g. Short Story:** You could write a story about the painting from the point of view of whichever element of the landscape you have chosen (grass, tree, sky, bird, etc).

**2.h. Speech:** You could write a speech in the voice of something that appears in the landscape, or your speech could include quotes from one or more of the inanimate objects in the landscape.

**III. Narrative: If this landscape is the setting of a story, what type of story would be set here? Who will the characters be? What will the story be about—will it be a story about making a choice? Or a story about a search for something, overcoming or dealing with difficult circumstances, or a story about friendship?**

**3.a. Correspondence:** You could write a narrative in the form of a letter.

**3.b. Essay:** You could write a narrative essay that explores some aspect of one or more landscapes.

**3.c. Journal or diary entry:** You could write a journal or diary entry, or a series of entries, that explores some element of one or more landscapes.

**3.d. Journalism:** You could write a newspaper article or blog posting as part of a larger narrative story. The article or blog posting could be about the museum, the landscape gallery, a particular artist, or a particular painting.

**3.e. Playwriting:** You could write a narrative in the form of a play by creating characters who speak the story through dialogue.

**3.f. Poetry:** You could write a narrative in the form of a poem.

**3.g. Short Story:** You could write a narrative in the form of a story.

**3.h. Speech:** You could write your narrative as a speech.

**4. Personal Response: What do you think about the landscape you have chosen? How does it make you feel (emotion and mood)?**

**4.a. Correspondence:** You could write your personal response in the form of a letter.

**4.b. Essay:** You could write a paragraph or multi-paragraph essay that details your personal response to one or more of the landscapes in the landscape gallery.

**4.c. Journal or diary entry:** You could write your personal response in a journal or diary entry, or a series of entries.

**4.d. Journalism:** You could write an editorial or blog posting that gives your personal response to one or more of the landscape paintings.

**4.e. Playwriting:** You could write a play where one or more characters talk about one or more of the landscapes at the museum.

**4.f. Poetry:** You could write your personal response in the form of a poem.

**4.g. Short Story:** You could write a story where one or more characters give their personal response to a particular landscape.

**4.h. Speech:** You could write your personal response as a speech.

**5. Eyewitness Account: Interview one of your classmates and take down his or her eyewitness account of seeing a particular landscape or group of landscapes. You could also write a first person eyewitness account of your own experience. Pay attention to the reactions of your classmates and your own reactions. Does any landscape surprise you? puzzle you? What questions do you have about a particular landscape? Which landscapes draw you in for a closer look? What memories or emotions come to light as you are viewing the landscapes.**

**5.a. Correspondence:** You could write a letter to someone with an eyewitness account of one or more of the landscapes you have seen in the museum.

**5.b. Essay:** You could write a paragraph or multi-paragraph essay with your own eyewitness account of the landscape, or interview your classmates for their eyewitness accounts, or you could research when the painting was painted and create eyewitness accounts from the time the landscape was painted.

**5.c. Journal or diary entry:** You could write a journal or diary entry, or a series of entries, that have eyewitness accounts of your experience in viewing the landscapes or you could interview your classmates and teachers about their eyewitness experiences in the landscape gallery.

**5.d. Journalism:** You could write a newspaper article or blog posting that is your eyewitness account or eyewitness accounts of your classmates and teachers.

**5.e. Playwriting:** You could write a play that includes eyewitness accounts from an artist, the landscape being painted, the painting of the landscape, and historical events occurring at the time the painting was painted.

**5.f. Poetry:** You could write a poem that includes eyewitness accounts from yourself, your classmates and teachers, the artist, the landscape, etc.

**5.g. Short Story:** You could write a story where one or more characters give an eyewitness account of the landscape being painted, an encounter with the artist, or viewing the painting for the first time.

**5.h. Speech:** You could write your eyewitness account as a speech or series of speeches.

**6. Definition: What is the definition of a landscape? What elements make up a landscape? How does the landscape you have chosen fit the definition of “landscape”?**

**6.a. Correspondence:** You could write a letter to someone defining what a landscape painting is and giving examples from some of the landscapes you have seen in the museum.

**6.b. Essay:** You could write a paragraph or multi-paragraph essay defining what a landscape is and then giving examples of the elements from one or more landscapes.

**6.c. Journal or diary entry:** You could write a journal or diary entry, or a series of entries, that define landscape and give examples of that definition from one or more of the landscapes in the museum.

**6.f. Poetry:** You could write a poem that defines a landscape and gives examples.

**6.g. Short Story:** You could write a story that includes a definition of a landscape.

**6.h. Speech:** You could write a speech that defines a landscape and gives examples.

7.

**7. Comparison: Choose two paintings that fit the definition of landscape. Compare what is similar in both landscapes and show what is different (contrast).**

**7.a. Correspondence:** You could write a letter to someone comparing two or more of the landscapes you have seen in the museum.

**7.b. Essay:** You could write a paragraph or multi-paragraph essay comparing and contrasting two or more landscapes.

**7.c. Journal or diary entry:** You could write a journal or diary entry, or a series of entries, that compares and contrasts two or more of the landscapes in the museum.

**7.d. Journalism:** You could write a newspaper article or blog posting that compares two or more landscapes.

**7.e. Playwriting:** You could write a play where two different landscapes are characters and they compare and contrast themselves, have the characters be two different artists.

**7.f. Poetry:** You could write a poem that compares and contrasts two or more paintings.

**7.g. Short Story:** You could write a story that has a comparison of landscapes as part of the exposition or plot.

**7.h. Speech:** You could write a speech that compares and contrasts two or more landscapes.

## WRAP-UP & REFLECTION

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After students have completed their creative writing pieces, teachers may find a wrap-up session beneficial. During this time period, students may want to share their work. If no one volunteers, the teacher can model being brave and share their experience with landscapes and creative writing first. Sharing time can take up to 30 minutes.

Some prompts for sharing include:

- ◆ What type of writing did you choose to do (Description, Personification, Narrative, Personal Response, Eyewitness Account, Definition, or Comparison)?
- ◆ In what format did you decide to write (Correspondence, Essay, Journal, Journalism, Playwriting, Poetry, Short Story, or Speech)?
- ◆ Describe the landscape(s) that you used as a basis for your writing. What made you choose this (these)?
- ◆ What did you enjoy the most about the museum visit and the creative writing exercises?
- ◆ What did you enjoy the least?