

I Spy: An Alphabet in Art

selected by Lucy Micklethwait

Twenty-six famous paintings set the stage for an I Spy game using the letters of the alphabet.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *Can anyone tell me about a painting they've seen in a museum or store?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder what letter of the alphabet this picture represents?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *I Spy: An Alphabet in Art*

- spy: to discover something by looking closely
- inkwell: a small container for pen ink
- quills: a writing pen made from the shaft of a feather
- yacht: a small sailing vessel
- magpie: a kind of bird

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What are some of the other things you spied in the pictures?
- Which picture was your favorite and why?

Do

Classroom I Spy Alphabet book

Explain that the class is going to work together to create an *I Spy: An Alphabet in Art* book for the classroom library. Assign each student a different letter of the alphabet and provide them with blank sheets of white paper. Each child should think of an object that begins or ends with the letter they were assigned, and then incorporate that object into a picture on the sheet of paper they were given. When a picture has been drawn for all the letters of the alphabet, put them in order and punch three holes in the left edge of all the pages of the book. Bind the book by tying small pieces of yarn through each hole.

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