

Preparing the 8-Minute Talk

The goal of the eight minute talk is to practice developing a theme by discussing two works of art. Your assignment will be to present two objects, linking them with a transition, and making some key comparisons. You will use all the principles learned in the three-minute talk.

Begin by preparing the Object Worksheet for each of the works you select. Pay particular attention to visual analysis, as this will form the basis for your comparisons.

Making Comparisons

Comparing art objects is one of the very best tools for engaging audiences in active looking, and illustrating new concepts.

Comparing and/or contrasting requires viewers to look at two or more works or objects carefully. A few possible subjects for comparison include:

- How the same subject matter is presented by different artists, in different media, or in different time periods
- How different cultures represent landscapes, portraits, gods, women, still-lives, etc.
- How the artist creates mood in two paintings
- Realism vs. idealism in two works

Of course, this approach works extremely well if your objects are next to each other, allowing visitors to look back and forth between them. More often, docents discuss one work first and transition to a second work across the room or in another gallery. This is also very effective, if the docent does a good job of leading the viewers in looking at each work. You can ask visitors to remember certain visual elements for later comparison; this holds the image in their mind's eye, and creates anticipation.

8-Minute Talk Guidelines

Introduce yourself

This will not be included in timed 8 minutes

Delivery:

- Stand next to work and do not obstruct it
- Face the audience

- Maintain eye contact
- Do not use notes
- Maintain a distance of 12" from object
- Make sure your voice is clearly audible
- Use correct pronunciation
- Dress professionally
- Smile and engage your audience!

Content:

- Always say:
 - Title
 - Artist
 - Date (use BCE/CE)
 - Origin (country)
 - Medium
- Be accurate, check and re-check your facts
- Focus on comparing and contrasting two pieces of art:
 - How the same subject matter is presented differently/similarly by two artists
 - How the same materials and techniques are used differently/similarly by two artists
 - How color is used differently/similarly by two artists
 - How the two artists are different/similar in their use of the other "elements of art"
- Make sure your visual analysis and comparisons are clear
- Use good art vocabulary and explain/define any art terms that might be new to your audience, e.g., *contrapposto*, *impasto*, *mudra*
- Include variety of information: balance aesthetic, historical, anecdotal and technical

Transition to another object:

- Provide hook to keep interest of audience by creating anticipation, be enticing (Not: "Now we're going to another gallery...")
- Keep it simple – 1 -2 sentences only
- Deliver before walking

**PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE WITH
YOUR MENTORS, CLASSMATES AND TRAINERS**