

Family Artful Conversations: Art & Stories

For children age 10 to 14 years old



Here are **three tips** for engaging an art conversation with children at home

- Take some time to look closely with your children and have them talk about their observations about the artwork.
- Follow up their observations with a question such as “What makes you think this way?”
- Look out for some visual elements found in the artwork. What shapes, colours and patterns can you see?

Artwork 1

DBS Singapore Gallery 1



Liu Kang
Life by the River
1975
Oil on canvas, 126 x 203cm
Gift of the artist
Collection of National Gallery Singapore

Looking at art through questions

1. What can you see?
2. Where do you think this is?
3. What do you think is happening in the artwork?
4. Although we cannot see the facial expressions of the people in the painting, we can imagine about how they are feeling through observing their poses and body language. Let us take some time to observe and role-play with your family members!
 - Select a person in the artwork and observe his or her pose and gesture.
 - Strike a pose and have your family members guess who you are imitating.
 - Discuss with your family members how the people in the artwork might be feeling.
5. If you could write a story about the artwork, what would it be about?
6. If you could write a story about your life and environment, what would it be about? How would you start the story? How would you end the story?

Artwork 1

DBS Singapore Gallery 1



Liu Kang

Life by the River

1975

Oil on canvas, 126 x 203cm

Gift of the artist

Collection of National Gallery Singapore

About the artwork

Life by the River draws reference from the way people lived in Singapore, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s. It portrays a typical scene of local village life near the Pasir Panjang, located at the western part of Singapore in the 1970s.

About the artist

Liu Kang was born on 1 April 1911 in Yongchun, Fujian Province, China. Previously known as Liu Kai, his name was mispronounced by the school principal, which led to it being changed to Liu Kang. Liu Kang arrived in Singapore in 1937.

In 1952, Liu Kang made a trip to Bali with three other artists, Chen Chong Swee, Chen Wen Hsi and Cheong Soo Pieng, in search of inspiration. He found inspiration for new approaches to painting, which contributed to the emergence of Nanyang Art.

Artwork 2

DBS Singapore Gallery 2



Koeh Sia Yong
Here They Come!
1965
Oil on canvas, 89 x 122.7cm
Collection of National Gallery Singapore

Looking at art through questions

1. What can you see?
2. The people seemed to be looking in the same direction. What do you think they were looking at?
3. What do you think is happening in the artwork?
4. How do you think the man wearing a white hat is feeling? Can you imitate his pose?
5. How does the artist show connections between the different figures in the artwork?
6. If you were to choose one person in the artwork and add a thought bubble to that figure, what might that person be thinking?
7. If that figure could communicate to another person in the painting, who would it be? What would they say to each other?

Artwork 2

DBS Singapore Gallery 2



Koeh Sia Yong
Here They Come!
1965
Oil on canvas, 89 x 122.7cm
Collection of National Gallery Singapore

About the artwork

This artwork shows a community of illegal hawkers from 1960s Singapore, as well as their customers. Alongside the title of the artwork, their gestures and expressions suggest the painting has captured a moment of alarm, when these hawkers have spotted members of law-enforcement and are packing up their wares to make a hasty exit.

About the artist

Koeh Sia Yong was born in Singapore in 1938 and is considered a 2nd generation Singaporean artist. He became interested in painting at eight years old. He eventually attended the Nanyang Academy of Fine Art (NAFA) and graduated in 1958 from the Western art department. In addition to painting scenes of everyday life in Singapore, he also painted massive canvases based on the Japanese Occupation.



Artists may create artworks to reveal about people and their stories and encounters during a time period. How do artists represent people in their artwork? Artworks can help us to identify with one another and imagine stories of the past. Imagine the stories you can tell to capture social issues such as race, politics, religion. How would you present them in an artwork?