VTS supports South Dakota Learning Goals

**Reading:**
Analyzing, Interpreting, Synthesizing

**Communications:**
Listening and Observation Skills, Communication Skills & Strategies

**Math & Science:**
Problem Solving, Logical Reasoning, Inquiry

**Social Studies:**
Critical Thinking and Group Process Skills, Inquiry and Information Skills

**Visual Arts:**
Understanding and Applying Arts Knowledge and Skills, Responding to Art: Describing, Analyzing, Interpreting, Evaluating

See articles at www.vue.org

SOUTH DAKOTA MUSEUM

Visual Thinking Strategies

Encouraging learners to discover facts and relationships for themselves

All Kids Can Grow.

“I think discussing topics prompts ideas to be more fully developed and also triggers things that I might not have noticed or thought of myself. It also encourages looking at things from another point of view.”

Kathy DeKraai

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The PREMISE

Kids learn 90% of what they know from looking.
Give them the chance to talk about what they see, and their language skills improve.
Ask them to probe and to back up ideas with evidence, and their thinking skills improve.

It’s SIMPLE. To help someone learn, start with what they are good at. Then ask them to get even better at that. Provide the right challenges. Their success breeds confidence. Their skills transfer. The tests show it.

Teachers use VTS to:

- Facilitate language development with thinking skills that apply to all subjects and tests.
- Expand experience and comfort with art from many cultures and time, and integrate it into classroom practice naturally and usefully.
- Build morale while enjoying the pleasure and rigor of mining art for its meanings.
- Discover what students know and what concerns them.
- Help students develop and express their ideas, engage in discussion, and debate observations and opinions in a respectful manner.
- Nurture students of all ability levels and challenges; empower students striving to communicate, including those learning in a second language.
- Open up discussions of any image—art, maps, charts, diagrams, and ads, or even text—that engage more students than traditional methods.
- Assess both thinking and language skills and observe growth in all students, even those who struggle.

What local teachers are saying:

“I think the biggest change that I have seen over time is that the more hesitant kids become my aggressive ones. They are eager to share. This is very exciting to see.”
Melissa Anderson

“I do use VTS to introduce the reading selections in our textbook. It works quite well. After we are done, they read to see if they were right.”
Larry Ayres

“My kids seemed to do a lot of building on others’ thoughts and ideas. I see a lot of growth from the beginning of the year.”
Peggy Balsiger

[ About the research ]

VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies) is the product of a fifteen-year collaboration between cognitive psychologist Abigail Housen, veteran museum educator Philip Yenewine, and their colleagues. Based on Housen’s twenty years of empirical research into how novice and experienced viewers think when looking at art objects, VTS has been field-tested for fifteen years in urban and rural settings, and across languages and cultures. Major controlled studies in Byron, MN, San Antonio, TX, and Vilnius, Lithuania have shown comparable growth in all participants. See articles at www.vue.org

All Kids Can Grow.
All Schools Can Succeed.