SHOULD ARTWORKS BE VALUED AT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS?

**This activity should take about 90 minutes. If learners are able to review media prior to the lesson, activity time should be 45 to 60 minutes.**

**Investigate**

Read, watch, and listen to the three media resources on the Thinkalong module. Learners can use the Investigate graphic organizer to summarize each piece of media and record new information. Below are summaries of the three pieces of media curated in the Thinkalong module.

**Why China’s Art Market is Evolving from Knockoffs to New Works**

*PBS NewsHour | October 3, 2019 | Video*<br>6:44 minutes

In the village of Dafen, China, artists make a living by creating new works of art, but also by hand duplicating some of Europe's most well-known masterpieces.

- Chinese artist Zeng Muquan has made a living copying some of the most famous European artists in history.  
  - Muquan claims he has painted between 3,000-5,000 duplicates of Van Gogh’s “Starry Night” every year, sometimes painting as many as five per day, each of which earned him $5.  
  - The artist believes he has become a better artist from copying others, and is now selling original works that fuse Western and Chinese styles. His transition to original work reflects the growing market for contemporary Chinese art in the country.  
  - In previous decades, Chinese collectors focused on European works or traditional Chinese art. Now, young collectors are more interested in works by contemporary Chinese artists.

**Baltimore Museum Says Goodbye Warhol, Hello Younger, More Diverse Collection**

*NPR | May 19, 2018 | Audio*<br>3:56 minutes

The Baltimore Museum of Art is deaccessioning, or selling off, some of its work by famous white, male artists and purchasing works by women artists and artists of color.

- Deaccessioning a work of art is not necessarily a straightforward process. Ethically, museums are held to their mission of benefitting and educating the public when they purchase an artwork. If a museum irresponsibly sells a work of art, it could compromise the inherent pact between museums and the public.  
  - The Berkshire Museum in MA found itself in trouble when it tried to sell some works in its collection. The museum’s actions were condemned by the American Alliance of Museums and the Association of Art Museum Directors.  
  - Some professional associations supported the Baltimore Museum’s sales because they were sold with the intent of using the proceeds to help the museum’s collection better reflect the local community, which is roughly 60% Black.  
  - The museum’s director, Christopher Bedford, says acquiring a more diverse collection can help the museum more accurately represent the history of art to the museum-going public.
Using public media — video, audio and digital reports — about newsworthy topics, these classroom-based exercises help learners to think critically about media messages, develop informed opinions, and practice how to take a stand.