

The Art of Teaching Languages

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Four Main Questions

1. What do you see?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more do you see?
4. What's happening?

Activity Ideas

1. Free association activity
 - Students write down what they see when looking at an object. Then they circle the word that best describes the object and share it with the group.
2. Annotated drawing
 - Have each student sketch a section of the object and label each part. They can include nouns and adjectives (color, shape, tone) to practice their vocabulary.
3. Generative word game
 - Students find an artwork in the assigned gallery and write down words or phrases that come to mind as they look at the artwork. When finished, students trade papers with someone else in the room and try to locate the artwork based on the list they have. They then discuss which words helped them identify the object.
4. "I" narrative
 - Students pretend that they are a character in the artwork and then write sentences that start with "I."
 - Optional: students in small or large groups have students act out a part of the scene as a role-playing exercise to practice their oral communication.
5. Thought bubbles or conversation between figures depicted in the image
 - Students think about dialogues and internal states of characters in an artwork and add thought bubbles or conversation appropriate to their interpretation.
6. Before, During, After
 - Students write a narrative based on what has happened just before, during, or immediately after a scene depicted in an artwork.
7. Letter to a pen pal in another country where the language is spoken
 - Students choose a character in an artwork and write a letter to their pen pal describing what is going on.
8. Headlines
 - Students imagine the artwork is the front page picture of a newspaper article. Then they title the object and write the article.
9. Write your own label
 - Students write an explanatory label that would hang next to the work of art.