

LOOKING GUIDE

There are many ways to interpret a work of art. This four-step guide is offered as one way to help viewers look closely and think critically.

1. LOOK & DESCRIBE

What do you see?

Before reading the label, pause in front of any work of art and spend time looking closely at it. List and describe everything you see.

- What forms and/or figures do you notice?
- How would you describe the use of color? light? space? perspective?
- What materials and techniques do you think the artist used to make this work?

2. ANALYZE

What is going on?

Before reading the label, build an initial analysis based on your observations and personal response.

- What seems to be the focus?
- Do you recognize the subject matter?
- Do you have an emotional response to the work?
- How might your analysis be informed by your personal experience or background?

3. RESEARCH

What information is available?

Learn more about the work or artist by reading the label, asking others, or even researching online.

- Does this information reinforce or change your analysis?
- Is there anything in this information that you did not see or think about previously?

4. INTERPRET

What does it mean?

This final step combines your observations and preliminary analysis with the additional information you gathered through research.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Pick a work of art on view in the galleries and use this guide to think about its meaning. You can use this space for your notes.