

## **EOS (Enhancing Observational Skills) Exercise**

Goals: detailed observation and clear, descriptive writing. Attention given to minute details, nuance in complex forms, and looking to find what may be hidden to others

1. Select a different work of art for each group to examine (e.g., 3 groups, 3 works).
  - a. Richly detailed narrative works of art, with some ambiguity, work best.
  - b. It helps if the work is large enough for the entire group to see when they gather around.
  - c. If using smaller works, consider passing around color reproductions for the full group discussion.
2. Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 students.
3. Ask students to do 15 minutes of silent observation, sketching, and note taking.
  - a. Sit or stand 9 feet from the work (tape on the floor) (5 minutes)
  - b. Sit or stand between 6 inches and 3 feet from the work (10 minutes close inspection)
4. In small groups, share observations and add more. (10 minutes)
5. Each small group presents their work of art to the whole group. (10 minutes/group)
  - a. Remind students to use “I see” and descriptive language, and not to point. Discourage use of “I think” or “I feel”
6. Follow with a writing reflection assignment that focuses on clear, descriptive writing to propose an interpretation of the work of art based on details observed.

Notes: It can be helpful to have a museum staff member or the professor demonstrate close looking before beginning the assignment.

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