

Yes, and...

Summary:

This improv-inspired game is a way to get students to share observations about a painting while building on what others are saying. Students will be looking closely, collaborating, listening, and connecting to each other's ideas.

Time:

30–40 minutes

Preparation:

Put students at ease by reminding them that there are no wrong answers when sharing their opinions about art.

Materials:

- Select artworks for students to examine
- Choose from [Clyfford Still Online](#)

Choose a selection of artworks that you know will create a robust discussion—you know your students best!

Materials:

1. This activity can be done in pairs, small groups, or a large group. You might do a round as a large group, then pair students up for additional discussions.
2. Invite students to examine an artwork. Give students a few minutes to silently look while taking note of all the things they are noticing. Students may want to write down their observations to help them remember.
3. Explain that students are going to take turns describing the painting, but that each comment must first acknowledge and then build upon the comment before it. For example, a conversation may go:
 - a. Participant 1: "I see a burned tree trunk."
 - b. Participant 2: "Yes, and I see the lightning bolt that started the fire."
 - c. Participant 3: "Yes, and I see the the fire spreading."
 - d. Participant 4: " Yes, and I see the smoke rising from the flames."
4. If doing this as a group activity, students could popcorn out ideas while the teacher or a designated student keeps track of the group's thinking. In pairs, students should take turns adding to each other's ideas.
5. Repeat the activity with another artwork or have students switch groups.

Variations:

- After doing this activity in pairs, students could team up with another pair of students to teach them about the painting they examined.
- Challenge students to do this activity with the same painting multiple times, with different students starting the conversation. Did you notice new or different things?
- Invite students to tell a story about a painting one sentence at a time. Students must listen and connect to the sentence that came before, while continuing to move the story forward.



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