Looking: Ten Times Two

A routine for making careful observations about images, visual art, or objects.

1. Look at the image quietly for at least 30 seconds. Let your eyes wander.

2. List 10 words or phrases about any aspect of the picture.

3. Repeat steps 1 & 2: Look at the image again and try to add 10 more words or phrases to your list.

Purpose: What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?
The routine helps students slow down and make careful, detailed observations by encouraging them to push beyond first impressions and obvious features.

Application: When and where can I use it?
The routine can be used with any kind visual art. You can also use non-art images or objects. The routine can be used on its own, or to deepen the observation step of another routine. It is especially useful before a writing activity because it helps students develop descriptive language.

Launch: What are some tips for starting and using this routine?
You can invite students to do a first look with little guidance and encourage them to simply make a broad inventory of what they see. You might invite some guided looking during one of the opportunities by borrowing some prompts from the Thinking Routine: Color | Shape | Line, and ask students to notice colors or shapes... You can have pairs of students share their lists after both looking sessions to notice what their partners saw. If a list of ten observations seems too long to start with, shorten the ask so students list or draw just 3-5 things they notice each time.

PZ PROJECT ZERO
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ARTFUL THINKING

This thinking routine was developed as part of the Artful Thinking project at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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