

ODI+1: Responding to Art

In this process, students reflect on and respond to the creative choices made by peers as each shares ongoing drama work. The goal is not to seek “right” answers or reward students for their prior knowledge. It is best to avoid empty reactions: “This group did a great job,” or “Guess what this group is doing.” The quality of this interaction is dependent upon **detailed observation, precise language**, and the ability to **infer meaning based on evidence**. Students develop a healthy **curiosity** by questioning and imagining possibilities. Skills embedded in this protocol are valuable in the development of critical literacy.

PROCEDURE

- ONE** The teacher **poses questions** for the audience to consider as they watch.
- TWO** Performers share their art work. The audience **observes** quietly.
- THREE** When finished, audience members **describe** only what they can truly see, not what they imagine. The performers listen quietly.
- FOUR** Audience members **interpret** what they think the performers have created, without trying to guess the performers’ intent. The performers listen quietly.
- FIVE** The performers **reflect** on what the audience said, considering ways to improve their creative work.

Observe

At first, students simply observe an artwork with concentration. Encourage them to look and listen carefully to notice as many details as possible within at least one minute of silence.

SAMPLE/BODY: “What parts of the body is each using most? What shapes can you see each person’s body making?”

Describe

Next, guide students to describe the details they see (not what those details might represent) by using the vocabulary of the arts. Encourage the use of the elements and principles of the arts, as well as academic vocabulary that may connect with core content within the artwork. “My eyes see...” or “My ears hear...”

SAMPLE/BODY: “What shapes can you see each person’s body making? Where are their eyes focused? How might you describe the space they are using?”

Infer

Finally, prompt students to infer multiple possibilities or meanings based on evidence. Avoid a guessing game by keeping the focus on how the students support their ideas rather than accuracy. “I imagine ...” Ask: “What makes you say that?”

SAMPLE/BODY: “What do you imagine they are trying to show or do? What are they doing that suggests that idea?”

+1 (Wonder... or Connect... or Evaluate... or Reflect)

If the level of interest is still high, another layer of questioning and probing may be warranted. Students may generate questions about the artwork (“I wonder...”) or connect it with their lives and prior learning (“This makes me think of...”) or even evaluate the work according to his or her aesthetic values (“I prefer... because...”). In addition, the students who shared work could reflect on their peers’ observations to revise their creative work.