

How to describe a picture: useful words and phrases

adapted from <http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/writing/picture-description>

Kinds of pictures

picture, image	poster
painting	cartoon
photograph / photo	drawing
portrait	cover / front page
landscape painting	comic strip

Artists

artist	cartoonist
photographer	painter

Structure

next to /near	in the lower part / at the bottom
in front of =/behind	on the left handside / on the left
in the foreground	on the right hand side / on the right
in the background	in the central part / in the middle
in the upper part / at the top	

Information on artist and year and origin

... (image title) is a painting/drawing/cartoon by ... (artist), painted in ... (year).
... (artist) painted ... (image) in ... (year).....in (source)
This (image) was published in(year) and extracted from(source)

Describing the scene

The picture was taken in/at/near ... (place). / the scene takes in.....
The photo was taken in/at/during....(time)
The picture depicts/ shows / ... (scene).

What can you see?

The picture is composed of(number) parts.
... (position: on the left/right/...) there is / are ... / we can see....
... is ... (position: on the left/right/...)
In this picture, the character is (Vb)-ing/ the characters are (Vb)-ing ..

Impression

The characters look as if ...
The viewer has the impression that ...
The painting is vivid / happy / expressive.
The picture makes the viewer feel ... (sad/happy)
The picture inspires the viewer to think about ...

Intention

The artist / photographer / painter/ cartoonist uses ... to express ...
He / She (probably) wants to criticise / express / show ...
It is obvious that the artist wants to criticise / express / show ...
What the artist / photographer / painter wants to criticise / express / show is ...
What the artist / photographer / painter wants to point out / focus on is ...
I think / believe / am sure that ...
It seems / appears to me that ...
The problem illustrated here is ... / The issue raised is
... symbolises ...
... is typical of ...

Online activities to do at home: <http://www.franGLISH.fr/icono/index.htm>