

How To Analyze A Picture

STEP 1

INTRODUCE the picture (genre, origin, topic / theme, etc.).

STEP 2

DESCRIBE the picture (general impression, parts, etc.).

STEP 3

ANALYZE and INTERPRET the picture (context, reactions, etc.).

STEP 4

CONCLUDE / GIVE YOUR OPINION about the picture.

STEP 1: Introduce the picture

- Genre

The document is a painting / a cartoon / a comic strip / a poster / an ad (advert, advertisement) / a mural / a drawing / a photo(graph) / a black and white picture / a map / the cover of a magazine / a website homepage / etc.

- Title

This painting is entitled ...

- Origin

The document comes from ...

The document is taken from a magazine ...

It was published in ...

It was drawn / painted / taken by ...

The photographer / cartoonist / artist is ...

- Topic / theme

The document represents ...

It is about ... / It deals with ...

It features ... / It shows ...

STEP 2: Describe the picture

- General Impression(s)

We can see / notice ...

The scene takes place in a city / suburb / in the countryside ...

The scene is set in a wealthy / poor neighbourhood.

The main characters are ...

There are many dark / light colours.

The painting is very realistic.

- **Parts**

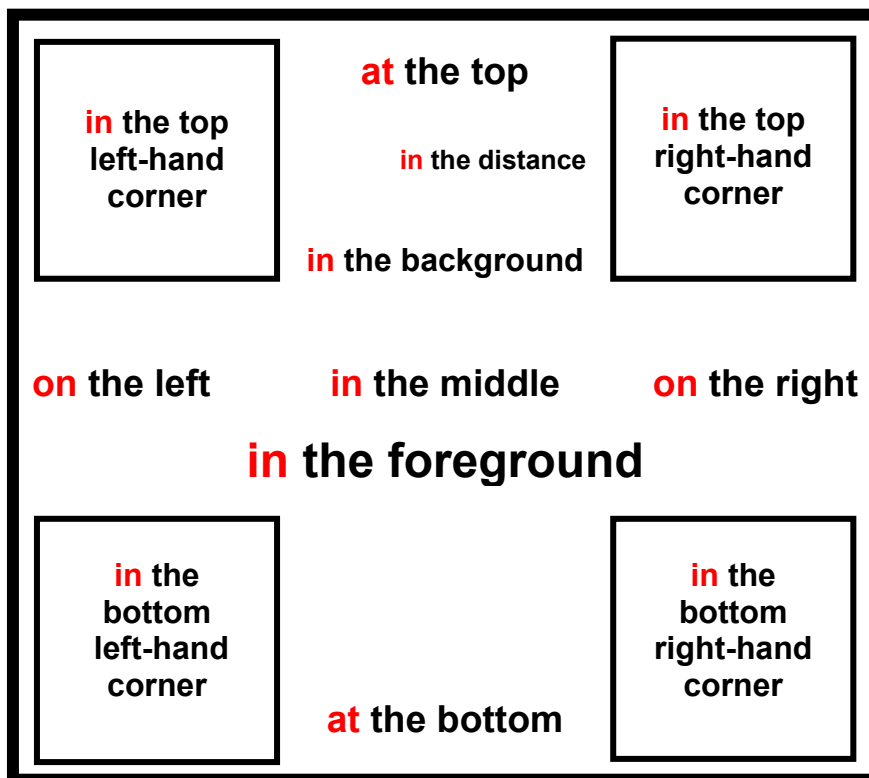
This image / picture / painting is divided into two / three parts.

This element takes up two-thirds of the space.

Use the **present continuous (BE + V-ing)** to describe a picture!

The man in the foreground is + V-ing ...

There is an old woman who is walking a dog in the background.



- **Focus**

The focus of the picture is ...

The viewer's attention is drawn to ...

STEP 3: Analyze and Interpret

- **Feelings**

We can easily imagine that ... because ...

As we can see ..., we can deduce that ...

We can notice that ... so we can suppose that ...

We can see ..., so the woman must be ...

- **What happened before / what has just happened**

- Use the past simple + *ago* / a date / *when* ...

- Use the present perfect with *just*.

- Use a modal with **HAVE** + past participle.

- **What is going to happen afterwards**

- Use BE GOING TO + V.
- Use BE LIKELY TO + V.
- **What are the artist's intentions?**
The photographer / cartoonist / artist criticizes ...
The artist wants to make us aware of [+ noun]...
The cartoonist's goal is probably to highlight ...
The aim of the cartoonist is probably to highlight ...
I think the painter wanted to show that ...
Perhaps the artist wanted to convey an impression of ...
This picture portrays ... in a negative light because ...
The artist certainly wants to raise the controversial issue of ...

STEP 4: Give your opinion

- **Give your opinion**
I think this picture is quite (+ ADJ.) because ...
I think this cartoon brilliantly illustrates ...
I think the photographer is very talented because
What strikes / shocks / surprises me in this picture is ...
As far as I am concerned, ... / Personally, ... / To me, ...
- **Some useful adjectives**
shocking - funny / humorous - ironic - witty - original - stereotyped - conformist - straightforward - moving - dull / flat / boring - poignant - scary / frightening - provocative - challenging - convincing - unconvincing - exaggerated - etc.