HOW TO … work with cartoons and pictures

STEP 1:   INTRODUCTION

Your introduction should answer the following questions:

- What type of image is it (cartoon / photo / painting / etc.)?
- Who is the artist (painter / cartoonist / photographer / etc.)?
- Does it have a title? If yes – make sure to include the title.
- Where is the image from? (newspaper / internet / art gallery / etc. …)?
- What is the picture (photo / painting / cartoon / etc.) about?
- What is your first impression of the image? (serious / humorous / ironic / exaggerated / eye-catching / realistic / abstract / alienated / etc.)

Language help:

a) The cartoon (include the title if the cartoon has a title)
     * was drawn by [name of cartoonist] / was published in / appeared in [newspaper] on [date] / was created as a response to [event, item in the news]
     * It shows/ presents / depicts / deals with / alludes to / refers to / criticises /[an event, problem, trend]
     * is directed at / comments on / targets [an attitude, policy, way of thinking]

b) The photo (include the title if the photo has a title)
     * was taken by / made by [name of photographer]/ was published in / appeared in [newspaper] on [date] / is / was used to illustrate [event, item in the news]

c) The painting / drawing / sketch – or name of the painting
     * is a watercolour painting / an oil painting / pen and ink drawing / a pencil sketch / etc. / * it was painted / drawn / created / made by [name of artist] /
     * It was created in [date] and is on display / on exhibition in / can be seen in…
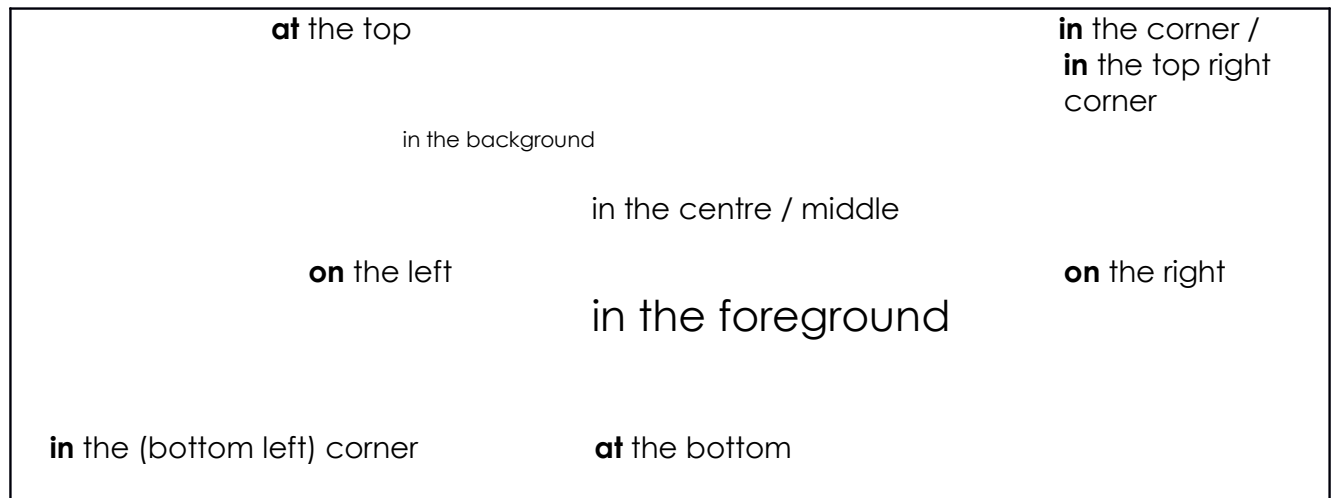
STEP 2:   DESCRIPTION

Look at the image carefully, then describe it systematically, e.g. from the centre to the corners, from the foreground to the background, from left to right or from top to bottom. → Describe what you can **see in** the picture – don't analyse the elements.

Use the **simple present** to describe the scenery and the **present progressive** for activities / movement.

Pay attention to the details:
- the setting (place/time)
- the striking features of the objects
- the characters and their appearances, their body language and their facial expressions.

Language help:

at the top		**in** the corner / **in** the top right corner
	in the background	
	in the centre / middle	
on the left	**in the foreground**	**on** the right
in the (bottom left) corner	**at** the bottom	

- *The photo / cartoon / painting describes / shows / illustrates….*
- *The photo / the cartoon / the painting / etc. is divided into…*
- ***In** the picture / photo / painting / cartoon / …*
- *In the centre / foreground / background of the photo / cartoon /….*
- *On the right / left side of the cartoon / painting / …*
- *The speech bubble / caption / sign / etc. reads ….*
- *There is a contrast between …*
- *The eye is drawn to …*

STEP 3: ANALYSIS

Now it is time to analyse the cartoon – the following questions might help to decipher the message:
- Who are the characters in the image? Are the people well-known? How did you find out who they are (→ see description / facial features / appearance etc.)? What is their role in this image / their connection to topic?
- Are there any symbols / eye-catching elements in the cartoon / painting / etc.? What do they stand for and what is their connection to the content?
- Does the artist make use of irony / exaggeration / a certain perspective (especially in photographs) – explain!
- How do the different elements interact?
- Which pictorial elements are used to get the message across / to produce the effect?
- What is the atmosphere like in the image? Are the pictorial elements shown in a positive or negative light? How is it done? What is the effect of it?

Language help:

- *The topic addressed by the cartoon is…*
- *The figures / elements stand for / represent / symbolize…*
- *The title / caption / speech bubble suggests / implies / underlines / points out…*
- *The cartoon / photo / painting is meant to show / expresses sth / points out that / illustrates….*
- *An element in the picture / cartoon / painting / photo… represents / stands for / symbolises / … is stressed / is exaggerated …*
- *The character… is a caricature of … /… the stereotypical … / …is ridiculed / …is caricatured*
- *The … is a caricature of …*
- *The humour lies in the difference / misunderstanding / discrepancy / contrast parallels between…*
- *… is very eye-catching because of its use of…*
- *The artist draws attention to / ridicules / stresses /*

STEP 4: EVALUATION

Do you think that the image is effective in getting the message to the target group? What effect does the image have on you?

Language help:

- *The effect of the picture is… because..*

- *The picture reminds me of …*

- *The cartoon achieves its aim of [doing sth]. It skilfully / effectively shows…*

- *The point / message of the cartoon is lost on me / fails to work for me because…*

- *The cartoon / painting / etc. appeals/ does not appeal to me.*

- *In my opinion it is… detailed/well-made/very-clever/ effective/ of high quality / convincing / confusing / exaggerated / unfair / …*