

Beauty and Truth

A routine for exploring the complex interaction between beauty and truth.

1. Can you find beauty in this [image, story]?
2. Can you find truth in this [image, story]?
3. How might beauty reveal truth?
4. How might beauty conceal truth?

Purpose: What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine invites students to explore the complex interaction between beauty and truth and consider how journalists and artists comment on and communicate ideas about the world. This routine also helps students navigate the overwhelming quantities of information accessible in an increasingly visually-informed world.

Application: When and where can I use it?

In art and journalism, the routine aims to slow students' thinking down and invite them to reflect about how quality work uses beauty to engage us to learn more about an issue and seek truth. The routine also invites a critical analysis of the ways in which beauty can mislead.

Launch: What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

Think of this routine as one that invites you and your students to a broad and deep conversation about a photograph or work of art. Allow time for individual students to share ideas of beauty and truth – constructs unlikely to have been explored explicitly in the past. In their discussion, students may reveal the misconception that photographs by their very nature reveal truth. In questions three and four, the terms “beauty” and “truth” can be inverted.

Share your experience with this thinking routine on social media using the hashtags #PZThinkingRoutines and #BeautyAndTruth.



This thinking routine was developed as part of the ID Global and PZ Connect projects at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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