CLOSE UP AND FAR AWAY

Purpose

In Big History, you're asked to look at history from close up and far away—something we call *scale switching*. Experiment with scale switching by analyzing images.

Process

Part 1: Image analysis

Each of the images below is a snippet from the same painting. Answer the questions that follow each image. If you can, discuss your answers with a partner or friend.

Image 1:

1. What do you see in Image 1? Be as specific as you can.

2. What do you think is happening in the rest of this painting?

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Image 2:

3. In Image 2, we've zoomed out a bit. What do you see in this image? Be as specific as you can.

4. Now that you have a slightly expanded view of the painting, what do you think is happening?

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Image 3:

5. Image 3 shows the whole painting. What do you think this painting is about?

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Part 2: Reflection questions

After you've viewed all three images, answer the reflection questions below.

1. How did your thoughts about the painting change as you zoomed out?

2. Why is it important to look at the most *zoomed-in* image?

3. Why is it important to look at the most *zoomed-out* image?

Source: Pieter Bruegel the Elder, "The Dutch Proverbs," 1559. National Museums of Berlin, Picture Gallery / Christoph Schmidt, Public Domain Mark 1.0.