How do we look at a picture?

Below are questions you can ask about any picture, whether it is a POU card, a photograph in an album, or any other picture that you choose:
Three basic questions may suffice:

1. What do I see in the picture? Facts.
2. What do I know about the picture? Place, time, people, situation.
3. What do I feel when I look at the picture?

If the basic questions do not provide the depth we are looking for, or if we hope to achieve nuances - below is a set of questions divided into different levels. Beyond this, there are questions that help the observer to go deeper into the picture and its nuances:

1. **The informative part** - based on facts and knowledge
   - What do I see in the picture?
   - What do I know about the picture?
   - Place
   - Period / time
   - People
   - Situation

2. **The plot** – based on observation and knowledge
   - What does the picture depict?
   - What is the situation described in the picture?
   - What is the picture’s message?
   - What memory comes with this picture, if any?
   - What story does this picture tell me? It can be true or an imaginary story.
   - Try to imagine what happened a second before the camera clicked?
   - Try to imagine what will happen or how the picture will look a second after the click of the camera?
   - When I zoom out of the picture, what do I see?
   - What detail in the picture would I zoom in on?
3. The **stylistic part** - based on observation
   - What are the illuminated places in the picture?
   - What are the shadowed places in the picture? Pay attention to the colors of the picture. It may be black and white, or colored, or monochrome.
   - What do I think and feel about this colorfulness?
   - What are the crowded parts in the picture?
   - What are the ‘empty’ parts in the picture?
   - Pay attention to the composition of the picture, does it reflect anything for you?
   - Does the picture have a scent? Or what is the scent that accompanies the picture, if any?
   - Does the picture have a sound? Or what is the sound that accompanies the picture, if any?
   - Is there movement in the picture? Or is the picture static?

4. The **personal and emotional part** - based on the viewer’s feelings
   - What do I feel when I look at the picture?
   - Where would I position myself in the picture, if at all?
   - What is the detail that most speaks to me in the picture, or is most meaningful to me? Why?
   - Do I like or dislike the picture? Why?
   - What is missing for me in the picture? What would I add to the picture?
   - For my part, what detail is unnecessary in the picture? What would I ‘clear off’ or take away from the picture?
   - How does the picture relate to subjects I am dealing with in my life today?

5. The **comparative part** - based on looking at a number of pictures
   - What story does the picture tell when looking at the whole range of pictures?
   - Is there some common ground between the pictures?
     - With regard to the subject of the photograph (hands, two images, flowers, etc).
     - With regard to the style (colorfulness, composition, light and shade) at the emotional level.

Looking at a picture is a breakthrough process, verifying, challenging, inspiring, and opening up the heart. The questions are intended to help us illuminate and arouse those places that our patient / trainee / participant is dealing with.