CLOSE-LOOKING EXERCISE

Jennifer Wynne Reeves, *Companionship*, 2005
Gouache and acrylic on paper, 11 x 14 inches, Tang Teaching Museum
collection, gift of the Jennifer Wynne Reeves Trust, 2016.16.2

Look closely: Examine the artwork closely.

Investigate: Take about 10–15 minutes to write down and/or discuss your observations. Here are some things to think about to help you get started:

• What do you notice about this painting? What do you think about the room depicted? What is the viewer's perspective in this room?

• What is happening outside the window? Where could this room be located? In what ways does it feel familiar or unfamiliar?

• Light and shadow are prominent in the painting: what do the light and shadow make you think of? What time of day is depicted?

• What kind of mood is set in this painting? How is the artist conveying tone?

• There are two main objects near the center of the floor. The object toward the left has a speech bubble above it that says, "COMPANIONSHIP." What does companionship mean to you? How does that meaning work or not work in this painting? What or who is the object speaking to?

Explain your ideas about the artwork, including how you understand it and why. What are you seeing that leads you to those ideas? Back up your ideas with visual evidence from the artwork. Ask yourself and others: What do you see that makes you say that?

Refer back to the artwork and look closer. What more can you find?

Reflect: What have you discovered from looking closely and writing and/or discussing the artwork with others? What did you discover about how you unpack and understand this painting?

• What do you think the artist is saying about companionship when there are no representations of people present? How is the artist talking about the idea of relationships using objects? How are the objects interacting with one another or not interacting?

• In the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, how have interactions changed? What connections can you make between this work and what's happening in our world?