ANALYSIS OF A WORK OF ART

1. Description:
   - **Artist:** Banksy
   - **Title:** In Tesco We Trust
   - **Type:** Graffiti/Street Art
   - **Subject:** Kids pledging allegiance to a Tesco bag instead of a flag = consumerism

   - **Objects in painting:** A boy raising the “flag”, flag pole is piping that is part of wall, Tesco bag as flag, girl and boy pledging allegiance.
   - **First impression:** Tesco bag is the only thing in colour; kids look like they’re in awe but also kind of like they don’t know what they are doing.
   - **Colours used:** white, red, blue (Tesco bag), black and white.
   - **Shapes, lines:** Mostly stenciled so lines are geometric with some curves (large except for lettering) and are clearly defined; there isn’t any outlining except for around the Tesco bag and the string the boy is pulling on the raise the flag.
   - **Light, saturation:** The light is emanating from the Tesco bag. If you look at the shadows and highlights on the kids, the bag is the source of light.
   - **Sensory qualities:** the mood is critical, like you’re watching innocence being corrupted.

2. Analysis:
   - Banksy uses the canvas to his advantage and there are clear signs of expediency (it is stenciled, non-stenciled lines are the string and the minimal outlining of the bag) as is the nature of street art. The fact that the bag is the only element in colour shows its importance in the work and within the work. Not only is it being revered, it is situated above the children symbolizing that it is of more importance than them. Also the fact that the kids are in black and white could symbolize conformity and uniformity as different colour combinations differentiate objects and make them unique. In addition, it is important to notice the nature of the shades and colours being used. Black usually absorbs light whereas white reflects it. This is parallel to the nature of consumerism where the consumer (the kids) buys and consumes products whereas the producer distributes product for the consummation of the public.
   - The bag catches the eye first (since it is in colour, it stands out) and then the eye travels down the flagpole to the boy raising the flag, and finally to the the kids pledging allegiance which brings our eye back toward the flag. It’s a vicious cycle.
   - The proportions are a bit off because flagpoles are usually higher, but this could just be because of the piping.

3. Interpretation:
   - This work is clearly about consumerism and how it starts at a young age. Indeed, those who have studied marketing know that it is essential to acquire customers at a younger age in order to secure brand loyalty. Also, the work shows how we can’t only blame the corporations because we raise their flag ourselves by giving their products status, by putting them above all, even our countries, and by training our kids to have reverence for them just as we train them to stand at attention during the national anthem. Moreover, the flag being replaced by a Tesco bag could also be implying that our countries have become corporations, interested only in profit, and operating as any corporation would to “serve the public interest” while really only serving their own. In fact, the kids have their hands on the wrong side (not placed on their hearts) which could either be a commentary on how their hearts aren’t in it or how they are heartless, with both having their own implications. If their hearts aren’t in it, it could mean that they’re drones who do what they’re told without considering what their hearts are telling them to do. If they’re heartless, it could be a commentary on consumerism and how mass production and consumerism ignores the negative implications/consequences (child labour, pollution, etc.).

4. Judgement:
   - I really like this work. I think it evokes many thoughts and feelings and presents many problems, issues and criticism in one image. It shows us the vicious cycle of consumerism and its corruption not only of innocence but also of all those involved including government.