

Objective:

To better understand how to look at and critique art using the four components of artistic criticism. Rather than seeing a work as being very effective or without any importance or worth, does the work fall somewhere in-between? Do you think that the work is just o.k.? What do you base this opinion on? The use of elements of art? Lack of personal expression? Does the work lack major focus? Explore your criticism of the work as much as you would any positive perceptions. Realize that your own tastes and prejudices may enter into your criticism. Give your positive and negative perceptions.

Explanation:

A term paper that describes, analyzes, interprets, and judges a representational (as opposed to abstract) painting.

Directions:

Choose a painting from one of the four art museums listed below. Write a paper that follows the itemized criteria on this sheet (1-35). You must also adhere to the Word® formatting guidelines in the accompanying attachment.

Procedure/Guidelines:

- Choose a representational painting from the collection of one of the following art museums (use the web site to access information regarding specific collections, traveling exhibits, location, and hours):

Norton Simon Museum W. Colorado Boulevard • Pasadena, CA 91105 http://www.nortonsimon.org	Los Angeles County Museum of Art 5905 Wilshire Boulevard • Los Angeles, CA 90036 http://www.lacma.org
The J. Paul Getty Museum (The Getty Center) 1200 Getty Center Drive • Los Angeles, CA 90049 http://www.getty.edu	The Huntington Museum of Art 1151 Oxford Rd • San Marino, CA 91108 http://www.huntington.org
- Research books, periodicals and the Internet for source material on the artist or the work.
- Using Microsoft Word®, follow the formatting palette in the accompanying attachment.
- Follow steps 1 through 35 (listed below)
- Your paper's length must be at least 3 pages.
- Spelling and grammar will factor in your grade.
- Your paper must include (a) a cover page with a title, your name and the class title, (b) at least four pages of text, (c) a bibliography, and (d) a final sheet with an image of the painting and an image scan of your museum entrance ticket stub.

This paper's due date is on your syllabus. Late papers will not be accepted.

If you are unsure about your writing abilities, have the Writing Center review your paper before you submit it. Be sure to give yourself ample time to make revisions and corrections.

Description: Tell what you see (the visual facts).

1. What is the name of the artist who created the artwork?
2. What kind of artwork is it, what medium is it?
3. What is the name of the artwork?
4. When was the artwork created?
5. Name some other major events in history that occurred at the same time this artwork was created.
6. List the literal objects in the painting (trees, people, animals, mountains, rivers, etc.).
7. What do you notice first when you look at the work? Why?
8. What kinds of colors do you see? How would you describe them?
9. What shapes can we see? What kind of edges do the shapes have?
10. Are there lines in the work? If so, what kinds of lines are they?
11. What sort of textures do you see? How would you describe them?
12. What time of day/night is it? How can we tell?
13. What is the overall visual effect or mood of the work?

Analysis: Mentally separate the parts or elements, thinking in terms of textures, shapes/forms, light/dark or bright/dull colors, types of lines, and sensory qualities. In this step consider the most significant art principles that were used in the artwork. Describe how the artist used them to organize the elements. Suggested questions to help with analysis:

14. How has the artist used colors in the work?
15. What sort of effect do the colors have on the artwork?

16. How has the artist used shapes within the work of art?
17. How have lines been used in the work? Has the artist used them as an important or dominant part of the work, or do they play a different roll?
18. What role does texture play in the work? Has the artist used the illusion of texture or has the artist used actual texture? How has texture been used within the work.
19. How has the artist used light in the work? Is there the illusion of a scene with lights and shadows, or does the artist use light and dark values in a more abstracted way?
20. How has the overall visual effect or mood of the work been achieved by the use of elements of art and principles of design.
21. How has the artist's design achieved a particular look or focus?

Interpretation: An interpretation seeks to explain the meaning of the work based on what you have learned so far about the artwork, what do you think the artist was trying to say?

22. What was the artist's statement in this work?
23. What do you think it means?
24. What does it mean to you?
25. How does this relate to you and your life?
26. What feelings do you have when looking at this artwork?
27. Do you think there are things in the artwork that represent other things/symbols?
28. Why do you think that the artist chose to work in this manner and made these kinds of artistic decisions?
29. Why did the artist create this artwork?

Judgment: After careful observation, analysis, and interpretation of an artwork, you are ready to make your own judgment. This is your personal evaluation based on the understandings of the work. Here are questions you might consider:

30. Why do you think this work has intrinsic value or worth? What is the value you find in the work? (For example, is it a beautiful work of art, does it convey an important social message, affects the way that I see the world, makes insightful connections, reaffirms a religious belief, etc.)
31. Do you think that the work has a benefit for others?
32. Do you find that the work communicates an idea, feeling or principle that would have value for others?
33. If you find the work lacking, could the reason come from poor use of the elements of art? Explain.
34. Do you find the subject matter attractive or unappealing? Creative or unimaginative? Beautiful or repulsive? Why?
35. What kind of an effect do you think the work could have for others?