

Art Analysis

Observing and Dissecting Art forms

SUBJECT

Art and Art History

GRADE

6-12+

OVERVIEW

In this Lesson, we will explore the principles of design in order to use what we have learned to analyze art critically. We will then dive into the history of critique; it is notable to acknowledge the different periods but not as important to be tested on that material. There is a reading assignment to help solidify this knowledge students should annotate it and be ready to discuss in class. We will then learn how to read paintings and walk through the steps together as a class analyzing three works through affinity/partner group discussion. They will then be asked to use worksheet 1 to write about one of the three works discussed. There is one optional homework assignment that reviews vocabulary in a fun and engaging puzzle. Then, there is a smaller project that students should independently work on to demonstrate their understanding of objective and subjective analysis. Lastly there is a final project where students will create their own piece to be critiqued together as a class.

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OBJECTIVES	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students will learn and understand how to both objectively and subjectively analyze art using the principles of design.2. Students will think critically and collaborate with each other to find common themes and symbolism within the works.
INFORMATION	<p><i>Getting Started:</i></p> <p>Review or introduce these ideas and vocabulary before introducing what an objective and subjective analysis to students.</p> <p>Color: element that refers to the light reflected from an object and perceived by the eye.</p> <p>Complementary: pairs of hues that are directly opposite each other on the color wheel, such as red and green, blue and orange, or yellow and purple. When used together, they create a strong contrast and make each other appear more vibrant. They can also be mixed to create neutral shades or blended to create shadow.</p> <p>Contrasting: the visual differences between elements, such as color, value, shape, texture, and size, that are arranged together to create visual interest, emphasis, and a dynamic composition.</p>

Harmonious: refers to pleasing and cohesive effects achieved when similar or related elements are combined.

Tone: the lightness or darkness of a color or shade within a composition. It's a fundamental element used to create depth, texture, form, and even mood in the artwork.

Composition: refers to the strategic arrangement of elements within a work, such as lines, shapes, colors, and textures, to create a visual harmony and guide the viewers eye.

Landscape: a depiction of natural scenery like mountains, valleys, rivers, and forests.

Portrait: a visual representation of a person, typically focusing on their face and often aiming to convey their personality, character, or mood.

Foreground: part of a composition that appears closest to the viewer.

Background: refers to the elements in the scene that are farthest from the viewer, forming the backdrop for the primary subject.

Centered: the placement of elements within a composition, particularly the main subject or focal point, in the center of the artwork.

Asymmetrical: a design where elements are arranged unevenly, yet the composition still feels balanced.

Symmetrical: when visual elements in a composition are arranged equally on either side of a center line, creating a mirror like effect.

Unity: the senses of oneness or wholeness created when different elements work together harmoniously to form a cohesive whole.

Balanced: refers to the use of artistic elements such as line, texture, color, and form in the creation of artworks in a way that renders visual stability.

Negative Space: the area around and between the subject of an image.

Positive Space: the subject or areas of interest within a work of art.

Texture: the surface quality of a work, perceived either physically (through touch) or visually.

Mark Making: refers to the intentional creation of lines, textures, and patterns on a surface, using various tools and

	<p>materials, to express ideas, emotions, or create visual effects in art and design.</p> <p>Mood or Atmosphere: mood refers to the emotional feeling a piece evokes in the viewer, while atmosphere is the broader, more general feeling or impression created by the artwork.</p> <p>Form/Shape: form refers to something that is three-dimensional, having length, width, height, and encloses a space. Shape on the other hand, is two-dimensional, flat, and limited to height and width.</p> <p>Lighting: refers to the use of light, whether natural or artificial, to create an artistic effect, define form, and evoke mood within a visual work.</p> <p>Viewpoint and Pose: the viewpoint refers to the position from which a subject is depicted, influencing how the viewer perceives the artwork. Pose describes the way a figure is positioned, including its body language, which can convey emotions and meanings.</p> <p>Subject Matter: the specific topic or content a work represents, such as a person, an object, a scene, or an abstract idea.</p> <p>Still Life: a type of art that depicts a scene of inanimate objects, such as food, flowers, or everyday household items.</p> <p>Style: refers to the distinctive manner in which an artist portrays their subject matter and expresses their vision, encompassing elements like form, color, and composition.</p> <p>Media: a contemporary art form that utilizes electronic and digital technologies in its creation and presentation.</p> <p>Size: the physical dimensions of an element or art work, like its height, width, or length.</p> <p><i>Introduction to Critique</i></p> <p><i>What is critique?</i></p> <p>A critique is a detailed analysis and assessment of something. However, we aren't only interested in what you think it means or how you feel. Together we want to be able to support your claim using the correct verbiage to explain our speculated theories of what it symbolizes and such.</p> <p>In the context of art, a critique involves a thoughtful and often critical evaluation of a piece of art, focusing on its strengths, weaknesses, and overall effectiveness. It's a structured process that can help individuals better understand and appreciate art, whether they are artists, students, or simply enthusiasts.</p>
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History:

Art critique, in the form of written analysis and evaluation, has a long history, with its roots tracing back to ancient Greece and flourishing in the Renaissance. However, the modern form of art criticism, as a distinct genre of writing, emerged in the 18th century. The term "art criticism" was coined by Jonathan Richardson in 1719.

Ancient Beginnings:

Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle in ancient Greece discussed the purpose and role of art in society, laying the groundwork for future critiques.

Renaissance:

During the Renaissance, art criticism began to emerge as a distinct discipline, with writers like Giorgio Vasari documenting the lives and works of artists.

18th Century:

The Enlightenment saw the development of more detailed analysis and evaluation of art, with figures like Denis Diderot and Johann Joachim Winckelmann linking art criticism to cultural and historical analysis.

Modern Art Criticism:

In the 19th and 20th centuries, new theories of art criticism, such as formalism, Marxism, and feminist critique, emerged. Today, art criticism continues to evolve and encompass various platforms, including journals, blogs, and social media.

How to read a painting

Video supplement to get comfortable talking about art:

The Death of Socrates: How To Read A Painting

<https://youtu.be/rKhfFBbVtFg?si=wH5pm9BWC3oZVDV1>

How to Critique

Video supplement to introduce Critique:

How to Critique | The Art Assignment | PBS Digital Studios

<https://youtu.be/9neybpOvjaQ?si=iHuvi4CzmDOTUHNB>

Getting Started:➤ **Description**

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	<p>Describe the work without using value words such as "beautiful" or "ugly":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the written description on the label or in the program about the work?• What is the title and who is (are) the artist(s)?• When and where was the work created?• Describe the elements of the work (i.e., line movement, light, space).• Describe the technical qualities of the work (i.e., tools, materials, instruments).• Describe the subject matter. What is it all about? Are there recognizable images? <p>➤ Analysis</p> <p>Describe how the work is organized as a complete composition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How is the work constructed or planned (i.e., acts, movements, lines)?• Identify some of the similarities throughout the work (i.e., repetition of lines, two songs in each act).• Identify some of the points of emphasis in the work (i.e., specific scene, figure, movement).• If the work has subjects or characters, what are the relationships between or among them? <p>➤ Interpretation</p> <p>Describe how the work makes you think or feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the expressive qualities you find in the work. What expressive language would you use to describe the qualities (i.e., tragic, ugly, funny)?• Does the work remind you of other things you have experienced (i.e., analogy or metaphor)?• How does the work relate to other ideas or events in the world and/or in your other studies? <p>➤ Judgment or Evaluation</p> <p>Present your opinion of the work's success or failure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What qualities of the work make you feel it is a success or failure?• Compare it with similar works that you think are good or bad.
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- What criteria can you list to help others judge this work?
- How original is the work? Why do you feel this work is original or not original?

Analyze Work Together as A Class



Salvador Dalí, *Persistence of Memory*, 1931



Edvard Munch, *Separation*, 1896



Pablo Picasso, Girl Before a Mirror, 1932

(Use worksheet 1 Art Analysis)

They should only be turning in one analysis of the three works discussed.

VERIFICATION

Benefits

Critique in art, whether of your own work or others', offers numerous benefits. It fosters critical thinking, encourages self-reflection, and helps artists improve their skills and communication. Critique also expands artistic perspectives, builds community, and can even drive the art market.

For the Artist:

- ✓ **Improved Skills:** Constructive criticism provides actionable suggestions for improving technique, composition, and overall artistic approach.
- ✓ **Self-Reflection:** Critiques help artists understand their own work better by providing different perspectives and highlighting strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ **Validation:** Receiving positive feedback and constructive criticism can boost confidence and encourage artists to continue pursuing their artistic endeavors.
- ✓ **Learning from Others:** Critiquing the work of others allows artists to see how others solve problems and learn new techniques or approaches.

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- ✓ **Perspective and Context:** Critiques can help artists consider the presentation and context of their work, including its meaning and potential impact.
- ✓ **Professional Development:** Practicing art criticism helps artists develop communication skills and prepare them for the professional art world.
- ✓ **Lifelong Learning:** Critiques encourage artists to continuously learn, grow, and refine their artistic abilities.

For the Viewer:

- ✓ **Enhanced Understanding:** Critiques provide context and meaning for artwork, helping viewers to appreciate its complexities and historical context.
- ✓ **Critical Thinking:** Critiques encourage viewers to engage with art in a more thoughtful and analytical way.
- ✓ **Diverse Perspectives:** Exposure to different interpretations and viewpoints enriches the viewer's understanding of art and its cultural significance.
- ✓ **Emotional Engagement:** Critiques can help viewers understand the emotional impact of art and connect with it on a deeper level.
- ✓ **Community Building:** Critiques foster a sense of community among artists and art enthusiasts.

Reflection/Bigger Picture

Why critique is important:

- Refining work: Critique offers opportunities to identify areas for improvement and make revisions based on feedback, leading to more polished and well-crafted pieces.
- Providing feedback: Critique provides a structured way for others to offer constructive feedback, which can be invaluable for learning and improvement.
- Promoting growth: By identifying strengths and weaknesses, critique can help individuals grow in their creative or academic pursuits.
- Developing critical thinking skills: Critique encourages individuals to analyze, evaluate, and justify their ideas, fostering critical thinking skills.
- Exploring different perspectives: Critique can help individuals see their work through different eyes, broadening their understanding and appreciation for various approaches.
- Enhancing communication: Critique teaches individuals to communicate their ideas and receive feedback effectively, fostering communication skills.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building a collaborative environment: Critique can create a collaborative environment where individuals feel safe sharing their work and receiving feedback. ○ Improving communication skills: Critiques help individuals learn to effectively communicate their ideas and receive feedback in a constructive way. ○ Fostering a deeper understanding of the subject matter: Critiques allow for a more in-depth evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, leading to a greater understanding and appreciation of the subject <p>Supplemental Lesson:</p> <p>Teaching Students to Critique Helping your students learn how to creatively critique each other's work</p> <p>https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/educators/critique--feedback/teaching-students-to-critique/</p> <p>Art Critiques Made Easy 7 tips for leading classroom discussions about works of art</p> <p>https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/educators/critique--feedback/art-critiques-made-easy/</p>
ACTIVITY	<p>In Class Activity:</p> <p>How to See Like an Artist Scott Mallory TEDxAbbotsford https://youtu.be/mqIMtpXKsEY?si=ati26gyWHMjNw-aN</p> <p>Work Sheet 1 Art Analysis</p> <p>Reading: A History of Art Criticism https://www.pearsonhighered.com/assets/samplechapter/0/2/0/5/0205835945.pdf</p> <p>Optional Homework:</p> <p>Work Sheet 2 Art Critique Vocabulary Crossword</p>

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SUMMARY	<p>Smaller Project</p> <p>(Can be optional or adjusted for younger students)</p> <p>Objective: Allows students to explore an artist's portfolio and think critically using the principles of design. While demonstrating their knowledge they will also compose an objective and subjective analysis of at least three works by the same artist. The works can be but is not limited to paintings, ceramics, sculpture, glass, and digital arts.</p> <p>INTRODUCTION:</p> <p><i>Now that we have learned both the history and importance of critique you will be asked to analyze works independently just like we did together as a class.</i></p> <p>Now it's your turn:</p> <p>Research a reputable artist that you enjoy and pick at least three works to both objectively and subjectively analyze. Create a 3-5 slide* PowerPoint that includes a short biography and at least three works to think critically about and present.</p> <p>*Slides submitted do not include title slide or works cited slide</p> <p>Final Project Based on this Lesson:</p> <p>After discussing key terms, practicing art analysis as a group, researching and creating a PowerPoint to demonstrate your ability to think critically about an artist's work, you will now create your own work to be critiqued by the class.</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Decide what your subject will be (still life, landscape, portrait, etc...)2. Pick what materials you would like to use (i.e. paint, markers, graphite, clay, canvas, paper)3. Plan a schedule that works to complete the piece4. Create your piece5. Title your work6. Be prepared to talk about your piece after critique from your classmates has been shared
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REQUIREMENTS**RESOURCES****NOTES**

- Complete Worksheet 1
- Art Analysis
- Complete Reading
- Complete Worksheet 2 Art Critique Vocabulary Crossword
- Complete Smaller Project
- Complete Final Project
- <https://www.thoughtco.com/art-words-list-2577414>
- <https://www.britannica.com/art/art-criticism>
- <https://library.fiveable.me/history-of-art-criticism/unit-1>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/11/10/arts/art-review-how-criticism-began-and-grew-in-america.html>
- https://historytimelines.co/timeline/the-influence-of-art-criticism-and-theory#google_vignette
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnYitlNpy1s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QHr1tjsrOY>

Grade Level: High School

The Art and Symbolism of Egyptian Jewelry

Lesson Objectives

1. Describe the historical and cultural significance of jewelry in ancient Egyptian society.
2. Identify key materials, symbols, and motifs used in Egyptian jewelry.
3. Analyze the social and religious functions of jewelry in ancient Egypt.
4. Design a piece of jewelry inspired by Egyptian motifs and explain its symbolic meaning.

Materials Needed

Images of ancient Egyptian jewelry (projected or printed)

Handouts with common Egyptian symbols (ankh, scarab, eye of Horus, etc.)

Art supplies (colored pencils, markers, paper, optional: clay, beads, wire for hands-on craft)

Lesson Procedure

1. Hook

- Begin with a slide or image presentation showing several striking pieces of Egyptian jewelry (e.g., Tutankhamun's pectoral, scarab rings, broad collars).
- Guiding Discussion Questions:
 - What materials do you notice?
 - What do you think these items were used for?
 - Who might have worn them and why?

2. Brief lecture or video covering:

- Materials: gold, faience, semi-precious stones like lapis lazuli, turquoise, carnelian.
- Common symbols: scarab (rebirth), ankh (life), eye of Horus (protection), lotus flower (purity).
- Functions of jewelry: decoration, status symbol, protection in life and afterlife, religious offering.
- Who wore it: royalty, nobility, and to a lesser degree, commoners (with simpler materials).

3. Group Discussion (10–15 min)

- Break into small groups to analyze one piece of Egyptian jewelry (using images).
- Guiding questions:
 - What materials and symbols are present?
 - What might this item say about the wearer's status or beliefs?
 - Where and when would this be worn? Casually daily? During rituals? Burial garb? Royal?

Activity

Option A – Design a Jewelry Piece (Art-focused)

- Students create a drawing of an original jewelry piece inspired by Egyptian motifs.

- They must include at least two authentic Egyptian symbols and explain their meanings in a written paragraph.

Option B – Jewelry Craft (if time/materials allow)

- Students use craft supplies to build a simple necklace, bracelet, or amulet inspired by Egyptian style.

Activity Reflection/Exit Ticket

- What did you learn about Egyptian culture through its jewelry?
- How does jewelry serve as a cultural storyteller?

Grade Level: High School

Korean Ceramics from 300 BCE - the 15th Century Silla and Gaya Ceramics

Essential Question:

How do Korean ceramics reflect cultural values, innovation, and historical shifts?

Overview:

Before visiting RAFFMA's Korean Ceramic exhibition, students will be introduced to the core styles and cultural context of Korean ceramics from the Three Kingdoms period, with a focus on Silla and Gaya Pottery. Students will examine key characteristics of these ceramics traditions, compare styles, and explore their significance in society and ritual practice.

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Analyze visual characteristics and materials used in Korean ceramics.
- Interpret function and meaning within historical and cultural contexts.
- Evaluate the influence of religion, trade, and cultural exchange on the development of ceramic arts in Korea

Discussion Questions:

Opener:

- What everyday items in your life do you think might be seen as culturally significant in the future?
 - Lead into the idea that ceramics once used in ancient everyday life can now help us understand ancient cultures.
- How can we see evidence of cultural identity in the designs?
- What might've caused different styles to evolve, even if the techniques were similar?
- How does their ceramicware art reflect broader themes in cultural exchange and identity?

About Korean Pottery:

During the Three Kingdoms period (c. 57 BCE- 668 CE) in Korea, Silla and Gaya pottery styles dominated the Yeongnam region, separated by the Nakdong River. This is important to note because for around 150 years, this separation meant that they were geographically exclusive to their region.

Neither style was uniform but had several unique key characteristics.

Silla:

Silla potters used kilns that allowed for firing at high temperatures, giving their ceramicware a durable, metal-like finish. The production of this type of ceramic demonstrates a significant technical skill and standardized production, possibly indicating workshop systems or state-supported manufacturing.

- Tall jars with handles, pedestal bowls, double handled vessels
- Minimalist forms
- Functional design

- High fired gray stoneware
- Smooth surfaces and clean silhouettes
- Emphasized form over decoration; cultural preference for restraint and order.
- Many pieces were found in tomb sites, indicating that ceramics held an important role in burial practices and rituals.

Gaya:

The Gaya Confederacy was known for its technological innovation and unique ceramic production. Gaya ceramics highlight a culture that valued both practicality and expressive forms with a willingness to experiment in vessel design. Gaya potters developed two main types of ceramics:

High-fired gray-blue Stoneware (dojil ware)

- Storage, ceremonial purposes, decoration
- Complex shapes (animal-shaped vessels, anthropomorphic figures, and elaborately constructed jars)
- Reflect symbolism and shamanistic traditions unique to Gaya culture

Low-fired red Earthenware (yeonjil ware - everyday vessels)

- Simpler and more porous than stoneware
- Utilitarian
- Often unglazed with hand-formed shapes
- Sometimes featured stamped or incised patterns

Similarities:

- Gobae - mounted dishes/pedestal bowls used in rituals or for serving food
- Daebu janggyeongho - long-necked jars often found in tombs, likely used for holding liquids or offerings
- Both cultures used techniques that allowed for mass production and standardized forms
- Both styles were shaped by regional beliefs, daily needs, artistic decisions, and death ritual customs.

Exit Ticket: One thing students have learned and one question they still have. Bring your curiosity and questions to the visit!

Activity:

Visual Analysis and Comparison with Drawing activity

- Students will be shown images of silla and gaya ceramics and in pairs, fill out a comparison worksheet analyzing and comparing the following:
 - Material
 - Technique
 - Form and function
 - Region/time period

Then, students may sketch an inspired vessel, focusing on the shape and decoration with a written reflection on what their vessel is used for, and the value/message it represents.

Grade Level: High School

Researching Museum Objects and Using Museum Archives

Lesson Objectives:

- Understand how museums collect, preserve, and provide access to cultural objects
- Identify and use museum databases, catalogs, or online archives to research an object
- Analyze an object using contextual clues and historical background information
- Communicate findings in a summary or presentation

Materials Needed:

- Internet access
- Example websites:
 - Smithsonian Collections Search <https://collections.si.edu/search/>
 - MET Collection <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search>
 - British Museum Online <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/>

Lesson

Intro:

Show image of an interesting museum object

- Ask students
 - What do you think this is?
 - Who do you think made it?
 - What clues make you think so?

Mini Lecture

- Discuss how museums figure out these answers by researching with archives
- Overview questions:
 - What are museum archives?
 - Why are museums collections important for understanding history and culture?
 - How can students access digital archives?
- Demonstrate how to use an online museum database (Search terms, how to utilize filters, reading object pages)

Guided Practice

- As a class, walk through researching a sample object
- Identify: title, culture/origin, date, materials, purpose

Independent/Group Activity

- Students choose or are assigned an object from a museum website.
- Identify the following:
 - Object name
 - Date
 - Origin
 - Materials/technique
 - Location (Museum)
 - Historical context
 - Why it was collected or preserved

- Personal interpretation drawn from context clues
- Write a summary or presentation on their findings and share with the class.