

## What is Beauty and the Arts?

### Assignment: Artwork Critique

**Introduction:** This assignment is about the branch of philosophy called *aesthetics*. Many people have strong opinions regarding beauty and the arts and can get quite passionate when discussing their views. The question of what is art, is not always an easy one to answer.

**Your Task:** You are going to critique a piece of art using philosophical concepts fundamental to the branch of aesthetics. You must choose your own (school appropriate) art work to critique. You may submit your critique in writing or do an oral presentation.

- Each student will choose **ONE** artwork from one of the following art forms to analyze:
  1. Visual Art (painting, photograph, architecture or sculpture)
  2. Music
  3. Dance
  4. Theatrical Art (film, television, or play)
  5. Literature (novel, poetry or short story)

### Critique

Once you have chosen your artwork, you must then critique it.

Your critique should be approx. 500 – 750 words (total), double-spaced, size 12 font *OR* a 4-5min presentation.

Using your knowledge gained from the powerpoints, worksheets, discussions and video clips studied in class, you are going to answer the following questions separately:

1. Why did you choose this artwork? Explain with reference to aesthetic value.
2. In your own opinion, what makes this a work of art?  
(Refer to any relevant course concepts - i.e. beauty, aesthetic pleasure, quality, senses, intellect, morality, content, context, style)
3. What theory of art is being demonstrated in this artwork? Explain your reasoning.  
(Refer to the 'theories of art' worksheet)
4. What criteria of art does this artwork meet? Explain your reasoning.  
(Refer to any relevant criteria listed on the 'criteria of an artwork' worksheet)
5. Does your artwork have intrinsic value? Does your artwork have any moral, utility, or truth value? Explain.
6. Does your art work convey meaning and/or truth? Explain.
7. Choose one of the philosophers we've discussed in this chapter (i.e. Clive Bell, Plato, Aristotle, Oscar Wilde, Cao Yu, David Hume etc...). What would they say about the piece of artwork you have chosen?
8. Is there such a thing as good/bad taste? Explain.

\*If you choose to do research for this assignment, be sure to cite your sources using APA format.

**Rubric**

Category	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Below Expectations
<p><b>Knowledge:</b> Student demonstrates a thorough understanding of philosophical theories and key concepts related to aesthetics</p>	Extensive	Considerable	Some	Minimal	Lacking
<p><b>Thinking/Inquiry:</b> Student demonstrates excellent critical thinking skills and thoughtful insight/reflection across all answers</p>	Extensive	Considerable	Some	Minimal	Lacking
<p><b>Communication:</b> Student communicates the results of their critique with a high degree of clarity (written or verbal)</p>	Extensive	Considerable	Some	Minimal	Lacking
<p><b>Application:</b> Student effectively applies the position of a relevant philosopher to their chosen art work, and accurately explains what their respective opinion would be</p>	Extensive	Considerable	Some	Minimal	Lacking

**Teacher Comments and Suggestions for Improvement:**