

ARH 131: VISUAL ANALYSIS PAPER

One of the more traditional assignments students encounter in an introductory Art History class is to write a visual (formal) analysis paper. This assignment, which is based on the student's visit to the Lowe Art Museum on the University of Miami campus in Coral Gables, whose permanent collection contains Greek pottery from the time period that we are studying in Unit 2, requires students to trace the development of Greek pottery, by examining the various techniques and quality of naturalism that evolved over the course of approximately four centuries.

Students will select four objects in the collection to analyze: one (1) from the Geometric period; one (1) from the Orientalizing period; one (1) object utilizing the black-figure technique; and one (1) utilizing the red-figure technique. Pay close attention to each of the object's stylistic features, describing each element and integrating into your analyses comparisons to object(s) we have studied in the textbook or in lecture from the PowerPoints. When selecting objects to compare the Lowe museum pieces to, be discerning. That is, try to find objects that share more characteristics than not.

The aim of this 5-7 page (excluding printed imagery of the objects, which may be either wrapped in the text or placed at the end of the document and labeled), double-spaced, typed assignment is for students to develop an eye for style and locate the subtle differences that distinguish one technique or tendency from another. As such, the paper should be organized with an introductory paragraph, body, and conclusion. The introduction may include some general information (e.g., historical, economic, cultural) about the objects' specific time period(s), and the technique(s) utilized to create the object(s). More importantly, the introduction should include a thesis statement.

Be sure to organize the body in a logical, analytic fashion, and conclude the paper with some remarks about the significance of the objects -- that is, how they fit into a larger Greco-Roman art historical framework. Remember, this is NOT a research paper; however, if you quote a source (e.g., a placard or web site from the museum), be certain to include a citation.