

Westside High School A.P. ART HISTORY SYLLABUS

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Purpose:

AP Art History is designed to provide the same benefits to high school students as those provided by an introductory college course in art history. The course will provide an opportunity for students to develop an understanding and a knowledge of architecture, sculpture, painting, and other art forms within a diverse historical and cultural context. In the course, students will examine major forms of artistic expression from the Paleolithic Age up to the 21st century. The course will teach students to understand works of art through visual analysis but also through an examination of the historical and cultural context of the work. While we will discuss artistic techniques, materials, and design principles, we will also explore issues such as politics, religion, patronage, gender, function, and ethnicity. Students will learn to look at works of art in a critical manner, with intelligence and sensitivity, and to analyze what they see. For the majority of the class, we will focus on artwork in European and American traditions, but we will also examine artwork from cultures in China, Japan, Ancient Egypt, the Islamic World, and the Ancient Near East. Roughly 20% of our lectures will focus on work beyond the “Western tradition.” No prior experience in studio art or art history is necessary to take the course. The course does require a high degree of commitment to academic work as it is designed to meet college standards. Many colleges and universities offer advanced placement and/or credit to students who have performed successfully on the College Board AP Art History Examination.

Testing and the AP Exam:

Quizzes and tests will occur regularly. Each will use the format of the AP Exam. Tests will be longer than quizzes, but they will retain the AP Exam format and will be formulated to be a small-scale AP Exam.

On May 5th at NOON, the work of each student will be evaluated on the basis of a comprehensive examination: the AP Art History Exam. All students registered for this course are expected to take the AP Art History Exam.

There are two sections to the AP Exam. The format of section one is multiple choice. Students will be asked specific questions regarding terminology, dates, artists, cultures and other important characteristics. The format of section two is free-response essays. Some of these essays are short-answer questions focusing on one monument. Some essays deal with comparisons between two works of art from different time periods or cultures. In these types of questions, the student will analyze differences, similarities, and concepts. Other essays are of a longer format involving multiple cultures and time periods which will allow the student to synthesize what they have learned over the whole of the course. The student will receive ample practice in preparing for the AP Exam as all quizzes and tests will each be designed in the same format as the AP Exam.

Daily Working and Notebooks:

The bulk of the daily coursework will consist of teacher directed lectures and PowerPoint presentations. Students should pay attention during these PowerPoint lectures and participate in our daily class discussions. **Note-taking is vital to success in this course.** Students should take detailed notes and ask questions. Note-taking for this course may be much different than what the student has done for other classes. The teacher will provide outlines for each lecture. Students are encouraged to use the daily outlines provided by the teacher. On the handouts will be a listing of all monuments covered. Also included will be vocabulary and important historical information. The student should try to build on those outlines with additional notes and sketches. Students will also have regular reading assignments in their textbook. The readings will be short but important to the content of the course. The readings should be done to enhance the lectures and class discussions. **The pace of the course will be brisk** and students will need to be disciplined in order to maintain progress. The student should keep some kind of notebook to keep up with handouts and their class notes. A three ring binder with loose-leaf paper, dividers, and pocket folders will be ideal.

The Textbook:

The textbook is Gardner's Art Through the Ages by Fred S. Kleiner. Each student is responsible for the care and “well-being” of the book. Do not write in the book or highlight the text. Each student is responsible for any damages to their book. Almost all of the major monuments of art history we discuss will be in this book. We will discuss some monuments that are not in your textbook and I will present some information that this book does not address. This is where your note-taking will be important. We will rely on the textbook, but you will also need to do some extra research on your own as you study.

Attendance:

I will do everything I can as a teacher to cover the material that you need as a student to succeed on the exam – and on all the work we do each week. I hope you will do all that you can to be here on a daily basis. The class is 1st period – so plan ahead. Do what you have to do to be here and ready at the beginning of the day. This class will be difficult, but you can make it easier by being present, staying awake, regularly studying, being organized, and not procrastinating.

Tutoring Hours: After-school tutoring is offered weekly. Days and hours will be announced monthly beginning in September.