2025

AP® Art History

Free-Response Questions

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ART HISTORY
SECTION II
TIME – 2 HOURS

Directions:

Section II has 6 free-response questions and lasts 2 hours.

This section of the exam requires answers in essay form. Use complete sentences. An outline or bulleted list is not acceptable.

Read the questions carefully. You can receive full credit only by directly answering all aspects of the question. For questions that require you to identify a work of art, you should try to include all of the following identifiers: title or designation, name of the artist and/or culture of origin, date of creation, and materials. You will earn credit for the identification if you provide at least 2 accurate identifiers beyond any included in the question, but you will not be penalized if additional identifiers you provide are inaccurate.

You may pace yourself as you answer the questions in this section, or you may use these optional timing recommendations:

Questions 1 and 2 are long essay questions, and it is suggested that you spend 1 hour to answer these 2 questions. Questions 3 through 6 are short essay questions, and it is suggested that you spend 15 minutes on each.

You may use scratch paper for notes and planning, but credit will only be given for responses entered in this application. Text you enter as an annotation will **not** be included as part of your answer. You can go back and forth between questions in this section until time expires. The clock will turn red when 5 minutes remain—**the proctor will not give you any time updates or warnings.**

Note: This exam was originally administered digitally. It is presented here in a format optimized for teacher and student use in the classroom.

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Art Resource, NY

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1. The painting shown is *Hunters in the Snow* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, created in 1565 CE. The painting depicts human activity within a natural landscape.

Select and completely identify another painting that depicts human activity within a natural landscape. You may select a painting from the list below or any other relevant painting.

Describe one visual characteristic of *Hunters in the Snow* and one visual characteristic of your selected painting.

Using specific visual evidence from *Hunters in the Snow* and specific visual evidence from your selected painting, explain ONE difference in how the artists depicted human activity in the natural landscape.

Using specific visual evidence from *Hunters in the Snow* and specific visual evidence from your selected painting, explain ANOTHER difference in how the artists depicted human activity in the natural landscape.

Make a claim that explains one similarity or difference in why the artists depicted human activity in the natural landscape.

Support your claim using specific contextual evidence from *Hunters in the Snow* and specific contextual evidence from your selected painting.

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When identifying the work you select, you should try to include all of the following identifiers: title or designation, name of the artist and/or culture of origin, date of creation, and materials. You will earn credit for the identification if you provide at least two accurate identifiers, but you will not be penalized if any additional identifiers you provide are inaccurate. If you select a work from the list below, you must include at least two accurate identifiers beyond those that are given.

The Swing
Travelers among Mountains and Streams
The Court of Gayumars

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Note: There are no images provided for Question 2.

2. Contemporary artists often use installations to communicate political, cultural, or personal meaning.

Select and completely identify one work of art from the list below or any other relevant work from the Global Contemporary (1980 CE to Present) in which the artist uses an installation to communicate political, cultural, or personal meaning.

Explain how the installation communicates political, cultural, or personal meaning.

In your response, you should do the following:

- Provide two accurate identifiers for the work of art you have selected.
- Respond to the prompt with an art historically defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least two examples of relevant visual and/or contextual evidence.
- Explain how the evidence supports the claim.
- Corroborate or qualify your claim by explaining relevant connections, providing nuance, or considering diverse views.

When identifying the work you select, you should try to include all of the following identifiers: title or designation, artist, culture of origin, date of creation, and materials. You will earn credit for the identification if you provide at least two accurate identifiers, but you will not be penalized if any additional identifiers you provide are inaccurate. If you select a work from the list below, you must include at least two accurate identifiers beyond those that are given.

Shibboleth
En la Barberia no se Llora (No Crying Allowed in the Barbershop)
Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)

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Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

The work shown is The Valley of Mexico (El Valle de México) *by Jose María Velasco, created in 1888 CE. This work is not from the required image set.*

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3. In your response you should do the following:

Describe two visual characteristics of *The Valley of Mexico (El Valle de México)*.

Using specific visual evidence, explain how the artist creates a sense of depth.

Using specific visual evidence, explain how the artist helps the viewer identify the landscape as a specific place in Mexico.

Using specific visual or contextual evidence, explain how *The Valley of Mexico (El Valle de México)* demonstrates continuity with nineteenth century Romantic landscape paintings.

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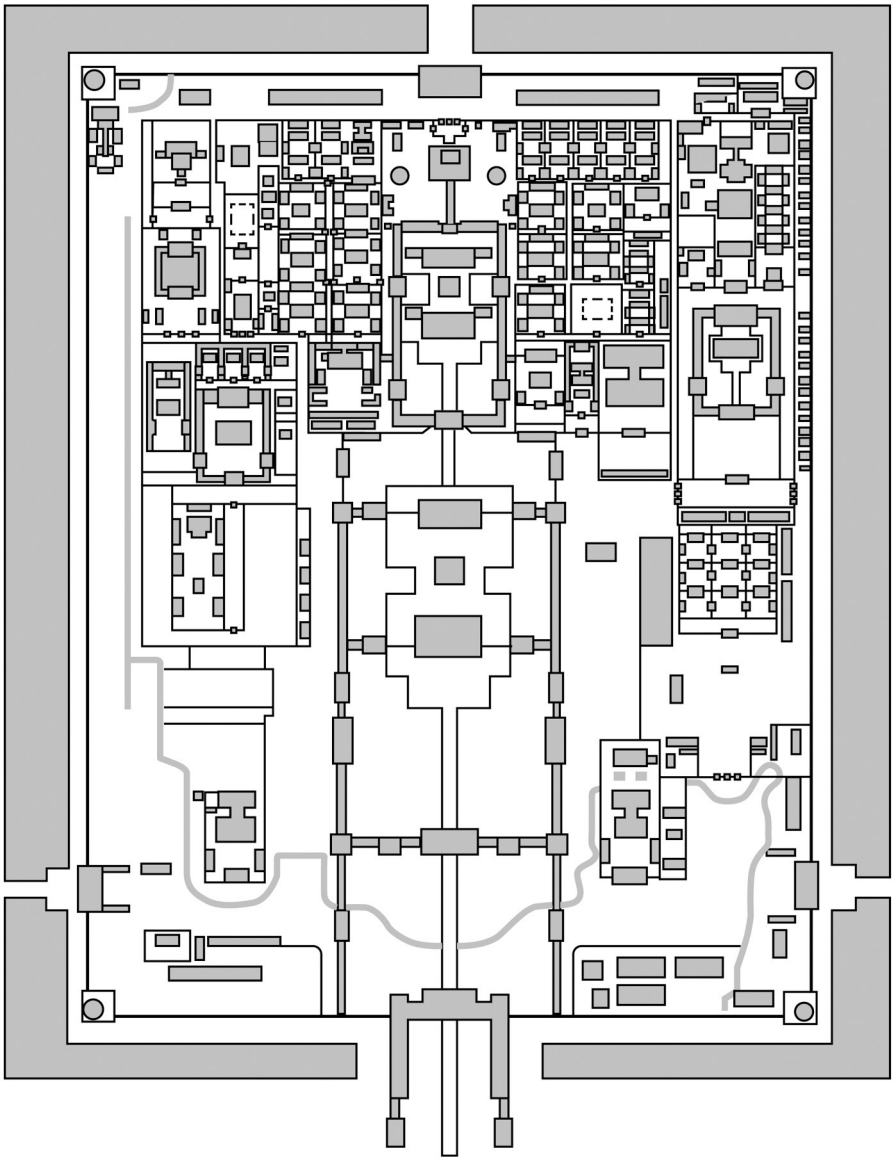
Source 1



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Source 2

Getty Images

The images show a plan and a view of the Forbidden City, originally constructed in the fifteenth century CE and located in Beijing, China.

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4. In your response you should do the following:

Describe one visual characteristic of the Forbidden City.

Describe the historical function of the Forbidden City.

Using two examples of specific contextual evidence, explain how the historical function of the site influenced the design of the Forbidden City.

Using specific visual evidence, explain why scholars have interpreted the Forbidden City as an expression of social and/or political hierarchy in Chinese society.

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© The Trustees of the British Museum

This work is not part of the required image set.

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5. In your response you should do the following:

Correctly attribute the work shown to the specific culture from the Indigenous Americas (1000 BCE–1980 CE) in which it was created.

Using two examples of specific visual evidence, justify the attribution by describing relevant similarities between the work shown and another work of the same type created by the same culture.

Using two examples of specific visual and/or contextual evidence, explain how the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of the culture in which it was created.

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Art Resource, NY

The work shown is the Ludovisi Battle Sarcophagus, created in Late Imperial Rome c. 250 CE.

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6. In your response you should do the following:

Describe two visual characteristics of the Ludovisi Battle Sarcophagus.

Using specific visual evidence, explain how the work shown demonstrates continuity with Classical Greek sculpture.

Using specific visual evidence, explain how the work shown demonstrates change from Classical Greek sculpture.

Using specific visual or contextual evidence, explain why this work might be interpreted as a demonstration of social or political change.

STOP

END OF EXAM

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