

WELCOME to AP Art History!

Greetings!

I am glad you will be taking AP Art History next year!

If you do not have a copy of the reading already, please email me right away at sbayliss@acsdny.org, and I will send you a physical copy of the textbook reading described in the rest of this letter. Thanks!

To prepare for the course here's what you need to do:

Due Friday, September 6: "Notes on readings" and a "Student Questionnaire"

Read the "Starter Kit" and "Introduction" from our textbook, Art History (5th edition) by Marlilyn Stokstad and Michael Cothren. On a separate sheet of lined paper, take notes that are sufficient to allow you to recall the main points of the chapters. On these notes, use some system (such as a certain highlighter) to indicate to yourself anything you want clarified in class, or that you are just not sure you understand.

Go online to Smarthistory.org, and watch the video entitled "Art historical analysis (painting), a basic introduction using Goya's Third of May, 1808" and also "Why Look at Art?" (If you cannot find the links, or they do not work, just Google them on YouTube.) Take notes on the content of these videos, and be prepared to discuss them in class on September 6.

Fill out the "Student Questionnaire" and bring this to class by September 6. This helps me learn about your experience and interests and I'm better able to plan parts of the curriculum with those things in mind. Be assured though that if you are a person who has not had much (or any!) experience with making art or observing it, you should not feel at a disadvantage! Many students have described themselves this way at the beginning of the class, and they have done extremely well, and thoroughly enjoyed the class.

Due Wednesday, September 11: A 500+ word Description of a work of art from the Loeb Center on the Vassar College campus.

Go to Vassar College's Loeb Art Center and write a short (500+ word) Description of one work of art on view in the galleries. Please choose an artwork from the Permanent Collection, not the special exhibitions. (If you are unsure where the Permanent Collection is, ask one of the security guards to show you.)

IMPORTANT: Do not do this assignment online! Be sure to actually go to the Loeb Art Center on the Vassar College campus, to complete the writing assignment. To make sure you do this, I am requiring

that you **take a photo of yourself (ok, a “selfie”) at the Loeb Art Center, in front of the artwork you have decided to write about, and send it to me at: sbayliss@acsdny.org**. I will not accept your paper unless I see this evidence of you actually in front of the artwork! *****

If you go with a friend (a good idea!) and you are both in the class, you should choose different works of art. It is a great idea to discuss your ideas with a friend, in front of the artwork. Often other people will see things you don't, and vice versa, and this conversation will help you write a richer description.

In this Description, you are trying to give the reader an excellent idea of the appearance of the artwork. Look at the following pages xxii and xxiii the “Starter Kit” (from Stokstad and Cothren's Art History.) Consider as many of the vocabulary words from these pages as apply to the artwork. With your most imaginative and specific phrasing, write the Description as if you were describing this artwork to someone who is unable to see it, and who needs to know everything about its appearance: size, materials, color, use of line, space (techniques for showing perspective), shape, value, texture, mass, composition. On page xxxvii of the handout “ Introduction” (from Stokstad and Cothren's Art History) you will find a wonderful description of Rogier van der Weyden's *Crucifixion*, as inspiration for your writing. This assignment is due September 11, but of course you may hand it in on the first day of class if you have completed it over the summer.

Enjoy your summer, and I'll see you in September!

Mr. Bayliss

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