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Painting throughout history has always reflected the thoughts and intellectual concerns of the eras in which the pieces were created. While Raphael's School of Athens exhibits the importance of Renaissance humanism and a preoccupation with the classics of Greece and Rome, Picasso's Les Demoiselles d'Auignon demonstrates an interest in new representation and a break from traditional technique in painting.

During the Renaissance there was a rebirth of interest in ancient Greece and Rome. Humanism, the literary movement which focused on classical philosophy and writing, paralleled the Renaissance burst of creativity. Raphael's School of Athens directly reveals this interest in the two ancient civilizations. His work depicts the great philosophers of Greece and Rome including men such as Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato. The setting of the painting is in a classical building with broad arches and engaged columns. Raphael even included niches in the walls of the building holding two classical statues.
Everything about the painting hails the Greek and Roman cultures. All the men portrayed were considered the greatest philosophers and thinkers of the world. During the Renaissance it was these men who writers and philosophers looked to for inspiration and truth. Raphael's painting clearly exhibits this intellectual concern of his day.

The painting also exhibits the artistic concerns of including harmony, balance, and realism in every work. The work is symmetrically balanced and pleasing to the eye. Each figure is fully an individual with his own gesture and expression.

Picasso's painting is similar in the way it expresses the concerns of its day; however, these are very different. Picasso's painting is most concerned in showing the scene from a number of angles. Picasso was not interested in depicting realism. Instead, during the late 19th century a new movement called Expressionism emerged which involved emotion and non-traditional representation. Picasso, along with Braque, created the Cubist movement which transformed the way artists...
Looked at their subjects. This painting clearly shows the way in which Picasso combined several different viewpoints into one painting.

During this time, there was great conflict throughout Europe. Artists frequently began to paint "for art's sake" and to express their emotions rather than for the church or wealthy patrons. Picasso's style reflects this conflict of ideas which was occurring as countries underwent revolution, change in government and prepared to enter the first World War.

Picasso's influence by African Art, particularly African masks, is also apparent in this painting. Once again during the early 20th century new cultures and traditions were being transplanted into Europe as countries took colonies in Africa, South America, and elsewhere. These influences can be seen in the art work created of this period.
Humanity has always found art to be an efficient method to express concerns or current ideals. This is seen by the works of two of the greatest art figures of history: Raphael and Picasso. Living in very distinct time periods, each of these artist's works give insight on the artists and intellectual concerns of their era. Therefore, through their paintings, one can understand the artists' and intellectual stress and concerns of each of the painter's era.

Through Raphael's painting, one is given exposure to the artistic and intellectual concerns of the Renaissance. Raphael's most renowned painting is titled the "School of Athens." In this painting, he portrays classical protagonists of intellectual life, such as Plato and Aristotle, and places them with, not leading figures of the Renaissance, like Da Vinci and Michelangelo. This shows the will of Renaissance scholars to unite the Ancient world to their current world. Their will is also present itself with the Renaissance revival of the study of classical manuscripts in original language (learning the minds of the Ancients) and classical techniques of close natural studies (attention to details of natural shapes). As a cause of this latter, a realistic style of painting evolved, with single-paint perspective art, three-dimensional shapes, and realistic proportions. Chiaroscuro (shading) shows shadows and lights. Raphael shows the concern of Renaissance painter in
"School of Athens" by using the techniques of a realistic style of painting. In his painting, single point perspective, natural proportions, interest in studying and knowledge, and imitation of the old world are all shown making this painting suitable to provide insight on the careers of the artists and intellectuals of the Renaissance. Similarly, Picasso showed the current artistic and intellectual concerns of his era. "Les Demoiselles" depicts French prostitutes in nude. Picasso's painting style is known as cubism, and therefore he is not concerned with a realistic impression of the subject matter. Like his contemporary, Picasso is concerned with the emotion of emotion and the interpretation of the individual. This concern comes out directly from the early 20th century emphasis on individualism and the theories of Freud, based on the belief that each individual has a unique response to the world and that each individual should be allowed that freedom. Freud's theories support the idea that each individual has his own experience, due to our unconscious subconscious. Freud thought that humans were not just rational, but were also controlled by something of the subconscious, or our emotional nature. Therefore, Picasso's painting show the acceptance of individualism and the theories of Freud's theories in his painting.
A common precedent in our society is that history repeats itself. This concept is clear when looking at the rise of power of 19th century absolute monarchs and 20th century dictators. There are many similarities in the way both Napoleon and Stalin gained and maintained their power, but there are also differences in their methods and consequences.

Therefore, artists of different eras show us the different concerns of their society. Their style of painting, their subjects and the emphasis of their painting give us an insight into their complicated lives. Art is beauty, as we often say, because it shows the effects of humanity.