

**AP<sup>®</sup> ART HISTORY**  
**2006 SCORING GUIDELINES**

**Question 8**

NOTE: Question 8 is based on the following quotation. There are no slides with this question.

This excerpt comes from Charles Baudelaire’s “On the Heroism of Modern Life,” part of a critique of the Salon of 1846.

“[S]ince all centuries and peoples have their own form of beauty so inevitably we have ours . . .

“The pageant of fashionable life and thousands of floating existences—criminals and kept women—which drift about in the underworld of a great city . . . all prove that we have only to open our own eyes to recognize our heroism. . . . The life of our city is rich in poetic and marvelous subjects . . .

“The themes and resources of painting are . . . abundant and varied; but there is a new element—modern beauty.”

8. What new approach to the making of art does Baudelaire suggest to artists in the excerpt above? Your essay must identify and discuss how at least one work of mid- to late-nineteenth-century art reflects Baudelaire’s ideas. (10 minutes)

Background:

The French poet Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867), best remembered for his controversial *Flowers of Evil* (1857), was also an influential art critic. In his essay “The Heroism of Modern Life,” a review of the Salon of 1846, Baudelaire embraces the notion of modernity, insisting that beauty is relative rather than eternal, and that each century has its own distinctive form of beauty. In the text he apotheosizes the black frock coat as a symbol of perpetual mourning and a uniform of equality. Baudelaire called upon artists to reject shop-worn historical subjects. Instead, they needed to open their eyes to the fashionable pageant and the heroism of modern life, in particular the rich array of urban subjects, from suicides to kept women to the modern nude in bed or bath. His ideas about modernity and the *flâneur* (stroller or idler) are further developed in another, later, essay, “The Painter of Modern Life” (1863), dedicated to the largely forgotten illustrator Constantin Guys. Although few artists of Baudelaire’s generation answered his call, his ideas later influenced Manet, Degas, and the Impressionists, whose art celebrates the boulevards, cafes, and dance halls of Paris and the flux of modern life.

Students have two tasks:

- (1) They must identify the new approach to making art that Baudelaire proposes in this excerpt from his critique of the Salon of 1846.
- (2) They must identify at least one appropriate mid- to late-nineteenth-century work of art and demonstrate how it reflects Baudelaire’s ideas.

Text-based questions are intended to give students the opportunity to analyze primary-source material and apply it to what they know about a given period, artist, or related work of art. The question does not require prior knowledge of the text; the author and source are identified. No slide is provided; it is up to the student to identify an appropriate work of art and discuss how it illustrates Baudelaire’s ideas.

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**Question 8 (continued)**

**Scoring Criteria**

**Score Scale 0–4**

**4** Identifies modernity or the painting of modern life as the new approach to the making of art Baudelaire proposes. Clearly identifies and discusses at least one mid- to late-nineteenth-century work of art that reflects Baudelaire’s ideas with a high degree of specificity. Includes a full discussion of the ideas outlined in the text and relates them to the chosen work of art. Discussion has no significant errors.

**3** Identifies modernity or the painting of modern life as the new approach to the making of art Baudelaire proposes. Clearly identifies and discusses at least one mid- to late-nineteenth-century work of art that reflects Baudelaire’s ideas with a fair degree of specificity. Includes a less full discussion of how the ideas outlined in the text relate to the chosen work of art. Discussion may have some errors.

**OR**

Fails to identify modernity or the painting of modern life as the approach to the making of art Baudelaire proposes but is otherwise a 4.

**2** Identifies modernity or the painting of modern life as the new approach to the making of art Baudelaire proposes. Identifies at least one mid- to late-nineteenth-century work of art and attempts to relate it to Baudelaire’s ideas. Discussion is weak and may contain significant errors.

**OR**

Fails to identify modernity or the painting of modern life as the new approach to the making of art Baudelaire proposes but is otherwise a 3.

**1** Identifies modernity or the painting of modern life as the new approach to the making of art Baudelaire proposes but makes no other points of merit.

**OR**

Fails to identify modernity or the painting of modern life as the new approach to the making of art Baudelaire proposes but is otherwise a 2.

**0** Makes an attempt, but the response is without merit because it restates the question or contains only incorrect or irrelevant statements.

— Indicates a nonresponse, such as a blank paper, crossed-out words, or personal notes.

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"The themes and resources of painting are . . . abundant and varied; but there is a new element—modern beauty."

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Baudelaire suggests that the artist looks around and notes the beauty of everyday life, ~~the~~ a "modern beauty". Manet took this idea and twisted it fit what he thought was interesting. In ~~Les Femmes d'Alger~~ *Olympia*, Manet challenges the typical work of the Salon.

He choose a woman with unique, ~~modern~~ features as a nude. He paints her a nude, bold, and confident all new ideals of this "modern beauty". Baudelaire asked that artists look around to see the beauty of everyday life and Manet answers this plea with his unique answer. He takes a woman, depicts her by lines and contrasting, and gives her a unique beauty.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

The sight of a nude, not hiding under the respectable guise of classical mythology is a break from the past. She looks at us with eyes of this "modern beauty". She does not care who sees of her and is not modest of body as she does not shrink from her maid. By painting the tired out convention of a nude as a real person - a scandalous action, Manet gives us Baudelaire's "beauty" by opening "our own eyes" to a tired out sight of a nude and adding his own twist by making her with bold spirit & her own special beauty of a confident and unashamed woman.

**END OF SHORT ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED,  
YOU MAY CHECK YOUR WORK ON QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 8.  
DO NOT GO ON TO QUESTION 9 UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**

Note: Question 8 is based on the following quotation. There are no slides with this question.

8B,

This excerpt comes from Charles Baudelaire's "On the Heroism of Modern Life," part of a critique of the Salon of 1846.

"[S]ince all centuries and peoples have their own form of beauty so inevitably we have ours . . .

"The pageant of fashionable life and thousands of floating existences—criminals and kept women—which drift about in the underworld of a great city . . . all prove that we have only to open our own eyes to recognize our heroism. . . . The life of our city is rich in poetic and marvelous subjects . . .

"The themes and resources of painting are . . . abundant and varied; but there is a new element—modern beauty."

8. What new approach to the making of art does Baudelaire suggest to artists in the excerpt above? Your essay must identify and discuss how at least one work of mid- to late-nineteenth-century art reflects Baudelaire's ideas. (10 minutes)

Baudelaire is suggesting to artists that they "open [their] . . . eyes" and really look at life. He is suggesting that they paint more realistically. This advice can be seen in Daumier's Third Class Carriage. Baudelaire discussed the "underworld" of the city, and Daumier shows the poor on the train. It is not glorified, it is presented how it is in reality, ~~and~~ according to the Realism movement. In Third Class Carriage, Daumier presents the poor. It is done in a rough manner, showing how unideal that life is. The woman in the front is breastfeeding her child, something that is real, but is never discussed. Daumier brings focus to the realities of the poor in the Third Class Carriage, he has opened his eyes to the world around him. Daumier does what Baudelaire suggests by showing life in honesty, and goes to poor subjects instead of the wealthy and clean. This does not glorify

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

8B<sub>2</sub>

the poor, but reveals it.

**END OF SHORT ESSAY QUESTIONS**

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Baudelaire suggests that ~~not~~ artists simply look at the "modern beauty" around them, because the modern world is full of "poetic & marvelous" subjects. He is stating that the artists should & can focus on the beauty of today, which is different than the beauty of all other ages. One mid to late 19th century artwork that reflects this idea is the Rock Breakers. This painting is a painting done in the realistic ~~style~~ technique. The realism is a technique where the artist records the events around him. These events can be characterized as modern beauty. Also Monet's Impressionism paintings, especially the train station, depict the beauty of modern life. Record what modern life is & how it too has inner beauty.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

# AP<sup>®</sup> ART HISTORY

## 2006 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 8

#### Overview

This was the one text-based question on the exam. This year there was no slide with the question. Students were to read a text by Baudelaire, “On the Heroism of Modern Life” (a critique of the Paris Salon of 1846); then, based on the information given about the text, its content, their knowledge about the author, and their knowledge of the art history of the time and place in which the text was written, students were to identify and discuss how one work of art reflected Baudelaire’s new approach to art making and his ideas on art and modern life. The question was also intended to encourage students and teachers to consider two key issues. First, students need to be able to read texts and to think abstractly about how those texts relate to the art theories of the time and place in which they were written. Second, students need to know the differences between the nineteenth-century French concept of the modern and the twentieth-century concept of the modern.

#### **Sample: 8A** **Score: 4**

The essay thoroughly addresses the concept of modernity in relation to “the beauty of everyday life.” It discusses Baudelaire’s concept of modern beauty in relation to Manet’s *Olympia* by distinguishing it from the classical academic nude. There are no significant errors.

#### **Sample: 8B** **Score: 3**

The essay addresses the concept of modernity in relationship to the realism of the underworld. Daumier’s *Third Class Carriage* is an appropriate work, but the discussion is more general and less fully developed than is required for an essay earning a score of 4. The essay primarily discusses social realism rather than Baudelaire’s concept of modern life.

#### **Sample: 8C** **Score: 2**

The essay addresses the concept of modernity in a limited manner—in terms of inner beauty. The selected work is appropriate but is not fully identified because the title is incorrect (“*the Rock breakers*”). A better choice is included at the end; however, there is no significant discussion of either work. The attempt to relate these works to Baudelaire’s ideas has no particular focus.