

AP[®] ART HISTORY

2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 4

Left slide: Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face)*, 1983.

Right slide: Blank

4. This work was made by the American artist Barbara Kruger. Analyze how Kruger uses image and text *and* appropriation to convey meaning in this work. (10 minutes)

Background:

Barbara Kruger (b.1945) explores the cultural construction of gender. In order to show viewers how images encode power, Kruger appropriates images and texts from mass media, consumer marketing, and high art. These images reveal how power constructs political, social, cultural, and economic meaning in culture and art. Kruger questions the transaction between image and text and makes the role of the spectator or audience an integral part of the art. In much of her art she deals with the theory of the male gaze, which has emerged from the postmodern writings of authors like Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan, as well as the film theorist Laura Mulvey. Feminist art-historical investigations of the male gaze examine the asymmetrical power relationship between men and women in society, the ways in which women are viewed (women are passive and thus robbed of agency), particularly by heterosexual men, and the ways in which men view women (actively and with agency). In Kruger's work, which is technically a photograph, the profile of the woman passively invites the "gaze," while the words, by confronting the viewer directly through the use of "your" and "my," as well as stating assertively that the gaze "hits the side of my face," actively deflects or returns it.

Barbara Kruger simultaneously employs and exposes several strategies of contemporary display in our society, as well as the techniques of mass media and advertising, to communicate her message. Kruger began her career as a graphic designer for *Mademoiselle*, and this influence is clear in many of her works. Kruger often appropriates from stock files used by advertisers, cropping the images and presenting them close to the surface, without background space to provide context. In this example, she uses a large-scale, low-resolution photographic print, as well as cheap advertising copy, standard 1980s graphic layout, and bold red typeface. The value that she places on creating a large-scale work contradicts the ephemeral nature of the original three-color advertisement. This photograph intentionally undermines the slick, manipulated, professionally produced fashion photographs that seduce consumers with their flawless beauty. At the same time, the bold text, read with a jumpy verticality, commands us to stop, read, and react.

In *Untitled (Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face)*, 1983, the appropriated image is passive while the words are active. Read separately, neither image nor text is particularly important, and neither can stand alone as a significant work of art. Read together as a single statement, however, the image and text oscillate conceptually to produce a work of art that is deeply subversive and directly challenging to the viewer.

Students have two tasks:

- (1) To demonstrate how Kruger uses **image and text** in combination to convey meaning.
- (2) To demonstrate how Kruger uses **appropriation** to convey meaning.

Points to remember:

- Students cannot earn a higher score without analyzing how Kruger uses both image and text *and* appropriation to convey meaning.
- According to the *Thames & Hudson Dictionary of Art and Artists* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1994), appropriation is defined as "... the direct duplication, copying, or incorporation of an image ... by another artist who re-presents it in a different context, thus completely altering its meaning and questioning notions of originality and authenticity."

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Question 4 (continued)

Scoring Criteria

Score Scale 0–4

- 4** Analyzes how Kruger uses image and text *and* also explains how appropriation is used to convey meaning. The analysis is cogent and specific.
- 3** Analyzes the use of image and text *and* also explains how appropriation is used to convey meaning, but the argument is less developed than an essay receiving a 4.
- 2** Describes the use of image and text **or** explains how appropriation is used to convey meaning.
- 1** Provides a general discussion of the work of art that is more descriptive and lacks a conceptual understanding.
- 0** Makes an attempt but the response is without merit because it makes only incorrect or irrelevant statements.
- This is a nonresponse, such as a blank paper, crossed-out words, or personal notes.

4. This work was made by the American artist Barbara Kruger.

Analyze how Kruger uses image and text and appropriation to convey meaning in this work.

(10 minutes)

4A

?

Kruger makes use of the juxtaposition of image & text in her work by using short, cut-out words over simple photographic images to create something reminiscent of an ~~advertisement~~ advertisement that conveys a strong message, usually feminist. In this work, a photograph of a female statue's head is in profile, along with the words "your gaze hits the side of my face." The words are arranged vertically, and so each word sounds more punctuated, distinct, and even aggressive. Had they been written out in a line, it could have sounded almost romantic, but the words now sound aggressive and violating. The image of the statue identifies "women" as "object" to be looked upon without regard to her feelings, and the text accentuates that. Also, her use of a photograph she did not take lends her work to looking even more like an advertisement which typically ~~does~~ stereotype women into sexist roles.

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4. This work was made by the American artist Barbara Kruger.

4B

Analyze how Kruger uses image and text and appropriation to convey meaning in this work.
(10 minutes)

Barbara Kruger uses this image to convey her meaning both through words and the use of artistic appropriation. The figure shown ~~is~~ ^{was} appropriated from the classical marble statues from Greece and Rome. ~~As well as the~~ ~~presence~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~figure~~ ~~has~~ ~~an~~ ~~idealized~~ ~~face~~ ~~and~~ ~~a~~ ~~serene~~ ~~expression~~, this helps to relate to the meaning of the words which clarifies the overall meaning. When the words say "your gaze hits the side of my face" the artist is commenting on how indifferent the subject of the piece is to that gaze. This is emphasized by the placid expression on the figure's face and the turned away head and down cast eyes. ~~The~~ ~~piece~~ the Author is commenting on how someone's gaze (likely a man's as the subject is effeminate in appearance) is either unwanted or unnoticed and that the gaze does not cause disturbance ~~to~~ to the subject, hence the calm expression. Also, it is most likely a woman turning from a man's gaze or the world's gaze as the artist is a woman and is expressing her indifference to scrutiny.

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4. This work was made by the American artist Barbara Kruger.

4C

Analyze how Kruger uses image and text and appropriation to convey meaning in this work.
(10 minutes)

Kruger uses mixed media to convey her meaning. The face of the woman is an idealized form of beauty. She places the text vertically to slow down the viewing of the art, and to bring the viewer's eye down past ~~the~~ through the painting. This piece ~~shows~~ ~~is~~ a ~~man's~~ perspective is how a man would look at a woman, hence the text. Kruger masterfully uses light
↳ in a sort of predatory way, in the photograph to accentuate certain ~~side~~ parts of the face, and the text ~~increases~~ increases the sense of drama to the piece.

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2007 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 4

Overview

This 10-minute question asked students to analyze *how* Barbara Kruger uses both image and text *and* appropriation to communicate meaning in *Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face* (1983). The intent of the question was twofold: to make students analyze how Kruger uses image and text together to communicate her meaning, and also to analyze how she uses appropriation to do the same. Since image-and-text narratives are well represented throughout art history, this question offered an opportunity for students who may not have seen the image to use analytical skills honed in other areas of the course. Similarly, because *appropriation* is a standard term in art history (as well as other disciplines), it also gave students the chance to use analytical skills learned in other areas and other disciplines. In addition, since many early modern artists (Picasso most notably) made frequent use of both image-and-text *and* appropriation strategies in collages, photo collages, and photomontages to communicate very specific meanings, students should have been very familiar with both concepts. This question also related to several recent issues in the arts: the gaze, feminism, advertising, and consumerism among them. These issues were not asked about specifically and not required in answers, but they were all possible topics of discussion. Finally, this was the only essay question located fully in the twentieth century, and it should remind students and teachers alike that the modern period is a significant part of the AP Art History curriculum that cannot be ignored without serious consequences for students.

Sample: 4A

Score: 4

The essay fully analyzes how Barbara Kruger used image and text, and appropriation of a photograph she selected, to convey issues of feminism, gender roles, and the objectification of women. This is a cogent and specific response.

Sample: 4B

Score: 3

This essay analyzes how Barbara Kruger used image and text, and the appropriation of a Classical marble sculpture, to convey the idea of the role of the gaze. However, the analysis of the meaning is undermined by the description of that gaze being received passively by its subject.

Sample: 4C

Score: 2

This essay links image and text to the idea of the “predatory” male gaze. The essay shows how the text guides the viewer in seeing the “idealized form of beauty.” However, no attempt is made to analyze the use of appropriation.