



AP[®] Art History 2002 Sample Student Responses

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5. The American artist Jacob Lawrence painted the two works shown.

Discuss the historical and social themes in his work. How does the artist use formal elements to construct narrative? (10 minutes)

On L, Lawrence depicts migrating African-Americans, as he was highly concerned with issues facing African Americans in the 20th century. L's composition is triangular and establishes the figures as a group and makes them a solid and isolated mass. Their isolated singularity is representative of the alienation African Americans felt in the 20th century. The figures in L ~~rest~~ along diagonal axes, which emphasizes their forward motion. He uses flat colors and planar composition, which is reminiscent of synthetic Cubism.

On R, the composition uses elements of rising perspective to give a slight illusion of spatial depth that is non-existent in 2D. He uses the powerful vertical central axis of the banister in the center to emphasize the ~~separate~~ segregation of whites and blacks in the restaurant. The people at each table seem isolated from one another in this atectonic composition, which illustrates African-Americans' feelings of alienation.

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5. The American artist Jacob Lawrence painted the two works shown.

Discuss the historical and social themes in his work. How does the artist use formal elements to construct narrative? (10 minutes)

In the painting on the ~~R~~R Lawrence is showing a very harsh topic of segregation, w/an almost relaxed feeling to it. Although the posts down the center create a line that is obviously the boundary or separation line, you can find almost no hateful elements. The artist formally portrays the white men as much more proud or stuck up. The white men are also accommodated much better off than the ~~black~~ men on the other side. By using elements such as these Lawrence is telling us a story about what's going on. The painting on the L refers to a historical event, or a journey, that has to be made to find a better place. ~~The~~ Lawrence narrates this by showing the people moving, some w/their heads down but all carrying their belongings w/them.