

AP[®] ART HISTORY

2013 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

Throughout history, narrative has been used in art to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

Select and clearly identify two works of art that use narrative. One of your examples must date before 1800 C.E., and one must date after 1800 C.E. For each work, identify the content of the narrative and analyze how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. (30 minutes)

Background

This question asks students to identify two works of art that use narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. One of the works must date before 1800 C.E. and one must date after 1800 C.E. Students must identify the content of each work's narrative and then analyze how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. Appropriate works may be drawn from a variety of cultures, periods, and media. The intent of this question is to have students demonstrate understanding of how art uses narrative to convey a range of meanings that are often determined by historical and cultural contexts.

Although narrative constitutes a common element in art, the manner in which it has been used to communicate social, political, or religious meaning has varied considerably throughout history. Narrative in this case can be defined as the visual representation of some kind of story, whether a specific moment within a story or a sequence of events. Narrative works can illustrate well-known historical, religious, or mythical stories drawn from textual sources or from an oral tradition. The relating of an event as it unfolds over time, however, is a difficult task for the visual arts, because a work of art often lacks an obvious beginning, middle, and end—essential features of any story. In response to this challenge, artists across both time and cultures have found creative ways to represent narrative sequence, in which the story and the form in which it is represented function together to communicate specific meaning. For instance, artists have often sought to present multiple points of a narrative within a single image to convey meaning, as in the case of Masaccio's *The Tribute Money* (circa 1424–1427). Or, artists encapsulate a sequential event within an individual composition, as in Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (1937). In other instances, artists have employed continuous narrative to communicate a political message, as in the relief cycle of the Column of Trajan in Rome (dedicated 112 C.E.).

Successful responses will focus on works that clearly use narrative to communicate a specific social, political, or religious meaning. For instance, appropriate examples that date before 1800 C.E. include works such as the *Stele of Naram-Sin* (circa 2254–2218 B.C.E.); the *Bayeux Tapestry* (circa 1070–1080); Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise* (1425–1452); and Hogarth's *The Breakfast Scene* from *Marriage à la Mode* (circa 1745). Although students need not discuss works from outside the European tradition, appropriate examples from a larger global perspective that date before 1800 C.E. include the Japanese wood panel *Hungry Tigress Jataka* (circa 650 C.E.), the Japanese narrative scroll *Night Attack on the Sanjō Palace* (circa 13th century C.E.) and the representation of the founding of Tenochtitlan from the *Codex Mendoza* (circa 1540–1542). Appropriate examples that date after 1800 C.E. include works such as Géricault's *The Raft of the Medusa* (1818–1819); Rodin's *The Burghers of Calais* (1884–1889); Ringgold's *Who's Afraid of Aunt Jemima?* (1983); and Walker's *Darkytown Rebellion* (2001).

Note that students who use inappropriate choices—such as works of art that do not use narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning—will encounter great difficulties when attempting to construct meaningful arguments that respond to the issues posed.

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Question 2 (continued)

Along the same lines, responses that discuss a work's narrative without analyzing the manner in which the narrative is used to communicate social, political, or religious meaning do not actually answer the question. To earn full credit, students must do more than just restate the work's narrative.

Three Tasks for Students

1. Select and clearly identify two works of art that use narrative. One example must date before 1800 C.E. and one must date after 1800 C.E.
2. Identify the content of the narrative in each work.
3. Analyze how each work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

Points to Remember

For an example to be appropriate for this question, it must use a narrative with a social, political, or religious meaning.

Symbols, allegory, and iconography may all be features of a narrative; however, they are not narratives in their own right.

Students are not asked to link narrative to form and style as part of their discussion. They are asked to address narrative content and its relation to meaning.

The identification of each work must be clear; however, identifications may be located within the body of the essay, or the specific identification may emerge only through the description of the work.

Works may be in any medium, but one work of art must date before 1800 C.E., and one must date after 1800 C.E. If both examples date from before 1800 C.E. or after 1800 C.E., the better analysis should be scored.

Similarly, if a student provides more than two examples, the two better examples should be scored, keeping in mind that one must still date from before 1800 C.E. and one after 1800 C.E.

Students are not limited to examples from the European tradition. They may select works of art from a larger global perspective, provided they adhere to the chronological requirement.

Prehistoric examples, such as the Caves of Lascaux, about which little information regarding specific narratives or meaning are available, are not appropriate choices and should not be scored.

Students are not asked to compare or contrast the two works.

Notes written in the blank space above the response should not be scored.

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Question 2 (continued)

Scoring Criteria

9–8 points

Response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.

The student clearly and correctly identifies two appropriate works of art that use narrative. For each work, the student clearly and correctly identifies the content of the narrative and analyzes how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. The response may include minor errors that do not have a meaningful effect on the analysis.

A score of **8** may be earned when the response is slightly unbalanced—with a stronger analysis of either one example or the other, although both are represented—and/or includes several minor errors that do not have a meaningful effect on the analysis.

7–6 points

Response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.

The student correctly identifies two appropriate works of art that use narrative. For each work, the student correctly identifies the content of the narrative and analyzes how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. However, the response may be somewhat unbalanced and/or may include minor errors that have some effect on the analysis.

The score of **6** may be earned when the essay is significantly unbalanced and/or contains several minor errors that have some effect on analysis.

5 points

Response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.

The student identifies two appropriate works of art that use narrative. For each work, the student identifies the content of the narrative and discusses how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. However, the discussion is less analytical than descriptive. It may be overly general, simplistic, digressive, or unbalanced. For example, the discussion of one of the works may be mostly accurate, whereas the discussion of the other includes errors that affect the response.

OR

The student identifies **only one** appropriate work of art that uses narrative, but the student correctly identifies the content of the narrative and analyzes how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

NOTE: This is the highest score an essay can earn if the student identifies and analyzes only one appropriate work of art that use narrative correctly and coherently.

4–3 points

Response demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of the question.

The student identifies two appropriate works of art that use narrative. The identification of these works may be incomplete, implied, and/or contain errors. For each work, the student identifies the content of the narrative and discusses how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. However, the discussion is limited, digressive, overly unbalanced, and/or contains significant errors.

OR

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Question 2 (continued)

The student identifies **only one** appropriate work of art that uses narrative but the discussion demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding both of the content of the narrative and how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

The score of **3** may be earned if both examples are appropriate, but the discussion contains many significant errors.

2–1 point

Response demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the question.

The student identifies two appropriate works of art that use narrative. The identifications of the examples may be incomplete, implied, and/or contain errors. The response demonstrates general familiarity with the issues raised by the question. However, the discussion is weak, overly descriptive, and/or contains significant errors.

OR

The student identifies **only one** appropriate work of art that uses narrative. The discussion demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of both of the content of the narrative and how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

A score of **1** may be earned, with one or more appropriate works of art that use narrative, when the discussion is either irrelevant or too limited to ascertain the student's level of knowledge or understanding.

0 points

Response demonstrates no discernible knowledge or understanding of the question.

The student attempts to respond, but the response is without merit because it simply restates the question, includes no appropriate or identifiable works of art that use narrative, and/or consists entirely of incorrect or irrelevant statements. The score of 0 points includes crossed-out words, personal notes, and drawings.

— This is a blank paper only.

Question 2

- Standard of Ur
- Guernica

2. Throughout history, narrative has been used in art to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

Select and clearly identify two works of art that use narrative. One of your examples must date before 1800 C.E., and one must date after 1800 C.E. For each work, identify the content of the narrative and analyze how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. (30 minutes)

Throughout history, art has played an important role by providing a narrative medium to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. In particular, ~~the~~ The Standard of Ur from Mesopotamia and Pablo Picasso's Guernica are prime examples of art used as a narrative, but as one with a ~~def~~ deeper meaning.

The Standard of Ur ~~was~~ depicts the lifestyle and activities of the citizens of a Mesopotemian king. It is split into two sides, one for war and one for peace, that respectively convey separate narratives. On the side for peace, the artist portrays various powerful figures such as the king and the nobles enjoying a banquet while musicians play pleasant music. The people appear to be quite prosperous and individuals of all trades appear to thrive in this ~~near~~ almost utopian society, that is represented by idyllic peace. In contrast, the side of war depicts an entirely different scene. The king and his soldiers engage in a brutal

war, one that the Mesopotamian king appears to be winning. He tramples over his enemies, and is surrounded by scenes of his army's violent and crushing victory. Soldiers drive over crushed bodies of enemies while others carry the spoils of war, including treasures and prisoners. Both sides of the Standard of Ur tell completely different stories, and yet they are united in their common meaning. The purpose of this piece was to centrally convey the near-divinity, and power and authority of the king. Clearly, he wanted to be seen as a leader of values, one whose policies led to thriving prosperity during times of peace. His rule was to appear almost perfect, and unharmed by any troubles. At the same time, the king (who appears in a hierarchy of scale in the standard and breaks the borders of the registers) is also a formidable warrior and military general. His enemies are swiftly and efficiently crushed, and he seems more like an unconquerable god than a mere mortal. Therefore, the Standard of Ur clearly functioned as a narrative, one that glorified the social and political status of the Mesopotamian king.

Another work of art with political meaning is Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*. The artist finished this piece after hearing about the Luftwaffe bombing of the Spanish town, a brutal massacre that killed ^{and wounded} hundreds. The entire composition is frenzied in the style of Analytic Cubism; human forms lie shattered below various animals, including ^{a horse} ~~horses~~ and a bull. Sharp fragmented visions in the painting allude to the chaos and absolute madness that must have followed after the bombing, while the tormented human forms (including a ghastly head coming out of a burning building and a man being trampled by a horse) truly depict the situation as it must have been for the victims of the bombings. In response though, Picasso created the painting to clearly symbolize

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Question 2 is repeated for your convenience.

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The inhumanity of the event and the ~~into~~ inhumanity of the bombers themselves. The bull located in the left of the painting represents the disgust Picasso felt toward the Spanish general Francisco Franco for allowed such a brutal event to occur. Ultimately, Guernica symbolized the narrative of the tragic attacks by the Luftwaffe against this town, but it also doubled as a ^{medium of} political statement.

Art has play a crucial role in communicating certain meanings, whether social, political, or religious, throughout the world. The example of the Standard of Ur and Guernica prove this point by not only ~~also~~ depicting a narrative of events of time periods, but also providing viewers with the important, underlying meaning, the purpose that led the artist to create the piece.

Question 2

Bayeux Tapestry: William the Conqueror
conquering England
Max Beckmann, Night

2. Throughout history, narrative has been used in art to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

Select and clearly identify two works of art that use narrative. One of your examples must date before 1800 C.E., and one must date after 1800 C.E. For each work, identify the content of the narrative and analyze how the work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. (30 minutes)

Narrative, or telling a story, has been used throughout history in works of art to relate social and political commentary and meaning.

Two works, the Bayeux Tapestry, and Max Beckmann's Night reflect the use of narrative to impress upon viewers.

The Bayeux Tapestry is actually an embroidery that relates a condensed tale of William the Conqueror's conquest of England. It is believed that women embroidered several hundred figures and objects on the long embroidery. The story is full of deception, of William's manipulation of the weak king, and his sneaky taking of England. It also ~~shows~~ ^{exhibits} loyalty, death, and happiness of the war between William and the Vikings, and the Viking victory. The Bayeux chronicles the Hundred Years War. Through the use of this engaging and dynamic narrative, viewers are able to enjoy, but also absorb morality lessons, as well as learn a major

Contributor to English history. The use of color and descriptive depictions of scenes, (house burning, war, coronations) almost play out for the viewer like a good story book, yet also documents historical occurrences to be viewed and learned from for generations to come.

German artist Max Beckmann completed dynamic, disturbing paintings that express a prominent anti-war sentiment. Beckmann's portrayal of horrific events, conveyed by ^{intense human} expression and convoluted, crowded scenes, depicts a scene from a ~~so~~ horrific tale that the viewer can imagine will not end amicably. His painting, *Night*, presents a family, (mother, father, child,) being tortured, harassed, and killed by a group of ~~steezy~~ ^{raging} ~~people~~ ^{soldiers}. Beckmann modeled the family after his own, which heightens the psychological tension for the viewer. Beckmann's wife, the mother, hangs from the ceiling, her clothes torn away as what is obviously the aftermath of a rape. One of the ~~other~~ ^{soldier} soldiers, (~~the painting does not make the error,~~) holds the daughter under his arm. Beckmann is about to be executed, as a ~~person~~ ^{soldier} has a rope around Beckmann's neck. The chaotic, highly graphic scene is not easy to digest, and contributes towards a strong anti-war message ~~by~~ depicting horrific unspeakable events involving ~~a~~ a civilian family. This action scene seems to be part of a larger story, and by featuring ~~the~~ characters modeled after Beckmann's family, the story is all the more tangible.

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Question 2

Donatello's David → 1450's
 david & goliath
 strength & power of
 independent Florence

Ye Yushman's Line of tax payers
 → 1960's

get message across that it
 will never happen again

2. Throughout history, narrative has been used in art to communicate social, political, or religious meaning.

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TWO WORKS ~~works~~ of art that use narrative are Donatello's David and Ye Yushman's Line of Tax Payers. Both of these works of art are statues, and tell a story or convey a message.

Donatello's David was made in the 1450's and not only does it ~~also~~ tell a story, it conveys a message and is symbolic.

Donatello's statue is telling the story of David slaying Goliath. He represents

David as a younger version, in a femme way, and a relaxed contraposto stance.

It depicts David after he has slayed Goliath, with his foot resting on

Goliath's head in a victorious way.

Donatello made this David as a symbol of the strength and power and the independence of a young Florence Italy. This piece conveys a religious meaning because of the story chosen, David and the Giant. But it also conveys a political meaning because it is symbolic of an independent and strong Florence.

Ye Yushan's statue, ~~was made~~ A line of tax payers, was made in the 1960's. It is over a 100 ft long and it depicts a line of peasants. These peasants are poor farmers and they are in line to pay their taxes to the republic. Not only does this ~~statue~~ statue tell this story but it also has a message that the artist wanted to get across. That message was that china will never return to the way it was. This statue gets across a social narrative of the poor peasants in the republic, it shows the way they looked, slender, weak, unstable, unhealthy. It shows that they were the underclass and that they had to go and pay ~~money~~ their taxes to the rich with their ~~products~~ produce. This statue also gets across a political ~~message~~

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meaning as well. It gets across the idea that they will never let this happen again by showing all of the despair, tragedy, and hopelessness of the poor peasants.

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Question 2

Overview

This 30-minute question asked students to identify two works of art that use narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. One of the works had to date before 1800 C.E. and one had to date after 1800 C.E. Works could be drawn from a variety of cultures, periods, and media. Students then had to identify the content of each work's narrative and analyze how each work uses narrative to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. The intent of this question was to have students demonstrate understanding of how art uses narrative to convey a range of meanings that are often determined by historical and cultural contexts.

Sample: 2A

Score: 9

This response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question by analyzing how narrative is used in art to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. The student clearly and correctly identifies two appropriate works, one from before 1800 C.E. and one after 1800 C.E.: the *Standard of Ur* and Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*. The response then clearly and correctly identifies the political content of the narrative in each work. The *Standard of Ur* is described as a monument that depicts the life and activities of the Mesopotamian king and his people. The response further notes that the work's content is "split into two sides, one for war and one for peace, that respectively convey separate narratives." Each of these narratives is then described accurately with specific supporting details, including that nobility enjoys "a banquet while musicians play pleasant music" on the peace side, while on the side of war, "[s]oldiers drive over crushed bodies of enemies while others carry the spoils of war." The response continues by emphasizing the role of the king in both war and peace, as "a leader of values" as well as "a formidable warrior and military general." Through such detail, the response supports the conclusion that the work communicates "the near-divinity and power and authority of the king." With regard to *Guernica*, the response describes the work's narrative as "the Luftwaffe bombing of the Spanish town, a brutal massacre that killed and wounded hundreds." The response correctly notes that the narrative is expressed from the point of view of the citizens, conveying what "it must have been for the victims of the bombing." On the analytic level, the response takes two tracks, investigating both Picasso's personal indictment against the Spanish leader Franco as well as the work's larger political statement against the inhumanity of war. The response supports this analysis with narrative details that emphasize the "chaos and absolute madness" of the event.

Sample: 2B

Score: 5

This response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question by discussing how narrative is used in art to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. The student correctly identifies two appropriate works, one from before 1800 C.E. and one after 1800 C.E.: the *Bayeux Tapestry* and Max Beckmann's *Night*. For the *Bayeux Tapestry*, the response states that the embroidery's narrative depicts "a convoluted tale of William the Conqueror's conquering of England." Beyond that, the response is overly general and offers little specific description or discussion of the political or social meaning of the work. By contrast, the description of *Night* is more specific, characterizing the work as "a family (mother, father, child) being tortured, harrassed [*sic*], and killed by a group of sleezy [*sic*] raiding soldiers." Supporting details are included to reinforce the narrative's focus on a "highly graphic scene" of violence, one that the response suggests "seems to be part of a larger story." Moreover, the response correctly presents *Night* as a political expression of "prominent anti-war sentiment" in which Beckmann "heightens the psychological tension for the viewer" by modeling the victims after himself and his family. As such, the discussion of *Night* is stronger and more detailed than the discussion of the *Bayeux Tapestry*. The errors

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Question 2 (continued)

and lack of analysis in the discussion of the *Bayeux Tapestry* causes the overall response to be unbalanced in favor of *Night*.

Sample: 2C

Score: 4

This response demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of the question by discussing how narrative is used in art to communicate social, political, or religious meaning. The student identifies two appropriate works, one from before 1800 C.E. and one after 1800 C.E.: Donatello's *David* and Ye Yushan's *Rent Collection Courtyard* (incorrectly identified in the response as "A Line of Taxpayers"). The response accurately identifies Donatello's work as the biblical narrative of David slaying Goliath and correctly notes the narrative moment as occurring "after he has slayed [*sic*] Goliath." The response then moves into a discussion of David as a symbol of the city of Florence. There is little analysis of the social, political, or religious meaning that the narrative communicates. With regard to *Rent Collection Courtyard*, the work can be identified through the description of "a line of peasants... poor farmers [who] are in line to pay their taxes," even though the given title is erroneous. The response then attempts an analysis of the work as "a social narrative of the poor peasants" that carries a political meaning that "they will never let this happen again." However, the discussion remains vague and offers few specifics on the political and historical context of the sculpture as a work of state-sponsored art of the post-Revolutionary Chinese government or how the narrative communicates the intended message. Ultimately, the discussion of both works is limited, forging incomplete connections between the works of art, their narratives, and the social, political, or religious meaning that they convey.