

AP[®] ART HISTORY

2013 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 5

Attribute the painting to the artist who painted it. Justify your attribution by discussing specific visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of that artist. (10 minutes)

Background

This question asks students to correctly attribute a painting to the artist who painted it. Students are asked to justify the attribution by discussing specific visual characteristics of the painting commonly associated with the work of that artist. The intent of this question is to have students apply their knowledge of the visual characteristics of an artist's paintings to their discussion of a presumably unknown work.

The painting is *The Meeting at the Golden Gate*, painted in 1305 C.E. by Giotto di Bondone as part of the decorative program of the Arena Chapel (Cappella Scrovegni) in Padua, Italy. In the chapel, Giotto organized successive sacred episodes into multiple registers on the walls. The narrative of the story of Joachim and Anna, with which *The Meeting at the Golden Gate* concludes, begins on the upper level of the south wall of the chapel and continues from east to west. The fresco highlights Giotto's gestural naturalism in the encounter between Joachim and Anna: the two figures tenderly embrace one another outside the Golden Gate of Jerusalem and press their lips together. Giotto renders his figures with volumetric weight, using chiaroscuro to model the folds of their draperies and to emphasize their solidity. The architecture of the gate behind them is conceived in perspective to distinguish the foreground from the middle and backgrounds of the spatial field. The left and upper edges of the painting are filled with ultramarine blue pigment, a reference to the blue sky found in nature. The scene is framed and bordered with floral and vegetal decoration on all sides. To the left and right, vertical panels are punctuated by *quatrefoil oculi* that feature images of martyrs and saints. These vertical panels are used to separate one scene from the next in the larger context of the chapel.

Significantly, *The Meeting at the Golden Gate*, and the other scenes in the Arena Chapel, is distinguished from earlier representations of the same subject that were made by other artists via Giotto's focus on representing the emotional and physical presence of his figures. While the iconography is clearly recognizable, the bodies are rendered not only as monumental, but as clearly occupying the space in which they inhabit. Furthermore, the figures are given emotional depth through their individual facial expressions and gestures. As Joachim and Anna join together in their kiss, Anna's hands delicately play with Joachim's hair and they stare into one another's eyes. To emphasize their union, Giotto combines their haloes into one and joins their bodies to form an arch, which echoes the arch of the gate behind them. Small details of everyday life, such as the particular 14th-century garb of the women standing under the archway or the characteristic form of the basket held by the herdsman on the left, would have made the scene more accessible to its original viewers by placing the sacred scene in their temporal present.

In justifying the attribution, students may cite a range of specific visual characteristics that connect *The Meeting at the Golden Gate* to formal or conceptual features found in other works by Giotto. Students may cite such details as the weighty folds of the drapery or the plasticity of the figures, the use of chiaroscuro and perspective, as well as the charged emotional content, all of which are deployed to illustrate the narrative. With regard to subject matter, students may situate Giotto in terms of both the broader category of Christian iconography, as well as this particular painting's presentation of a Biblical scene. In some cases, students may link *The Meeting at the Golden Gate* to other specific frescoes by Giotto in the Arena Chapel, such as *The Lamentation*. As part of the same pictorial program, both *The Meeting at the Golden Gate* and *The Lamentation* convey a similar sense of theatricality through the stage like setting in which

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Question 5 (continued)

figures are crisply outlined against a brilliant blue sky. Both works illustrate innovations in perspective as well as a certain naturalism and temporality that marks a departure from earlier artistic styles. Whether or not such a specific comparison is attempted, students should be able to attribute *The Meeting at the Golden Gate* to Giotto through its characteristic visual drama.

Two Tasks for Students

1. Correctly attribute the painting to Giotto.
2. Justify the attribution by discussing specific visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of Giotto.

Points to Remember

This is an attribution question. The question requires an attribution to a specific artist, not to an art-historical movement or period. The correct answer is Giotto. The highest score a response can earn if the painting is not correctly attributed to Giotto is 2 points.

Students may imply an attribution to Giotto by identifying the artist not by name but as the same artist who painted works such as *The Lamentation* in the Arena Chapel. The highest score this kind of attribution can earn is 2 points.

When a response is granted partial credit, attention should be paid to the plausibility of the evidence cited for the incorrect artist and whether such evidence could reasonably apply to Giotto's *The Meeting at the Golden Gate*. In general, an incorrect attribution to another 14th-century artist, such as Cimabue or Duccio, will be a stronger response than an incorrect attribution to an artist outside of Giotto's era.

Note that students are not required to identify the painting or to provide a specific comparison to another work by Giotto, although some students may include such details in their responses.

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Question 5 (continued)

Scoring Criteria

4 points

Response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.

The painting is clearly and correctly attributed to Giotto. The response justifies the attribution by citing specific visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of Giotto. The response may include minor errors that do not have a meaningful effect on the discussion.

3 points

Response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.

The painting is correctly attributed to Giotto. The response justifies the attribution by citing visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of Giotto. However, the response may be somewhat general and/or include minor errors that have some effect on the discussion.

2 points

Response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.

The painting is correctly attributed to Giotto, although this attribution may be implied rather than stated directly. The response justifies the attribution by referring to visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with other works by Giotto; however, the response may be overly general, simplistic, or descriptive. The response may contain errors that affect the discussion.

OR

The painting is attributed incorrectly, but the specific visual characteristics cited as justification can reasonably be applied both to this painting and to the work of the incorrect artist.

NOTE: This is the highest score a response can earn if it does not correctly attribute the painting to Giotto.

1 point

Response demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the question.

The painting is correctly attributed to Giotto, but there is no other discussion of merit.

OR

The painting is attributed incorrectly. The response includes an attempt at justification, but the discussion may be overly general, simplistic, or descriptive, even if the visual characteristics cited as justification can reasonably be applied both to this painting and to the work of the incorrect artist.

0 points

Response demonstrates no discernible knowledge or understanding of the question.

The student attempts to respond, but the response makes only incorrect or irrelevant statements about the painting. The score of 0 points includes crossed-out words, personal notes, and drawings.

— This is a blank paper only.

5. Attribute the painting to the artist who painted it. Justify your attribution by discussing specific visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of that artist. (10 minutes)

This is a work of Giotto. This attribution can be justified by the blue background. Instead of employing gold to create a heavenly other-world as was common in religious art / the Italo-Byzantine style at the time, Giotto revolted, using blue to imply that the scenes he painted were very much of this world, and subsequently surrounded by a blue sky rather than a holy gold background. Further, figures have weight and gravity; it is obvious that they have bodies under their clothing, and their garments are draped over their figures, highlighting them rather than hiding them. This corpulence is characteristic of figures painted by Giotto, who rejected the figures conventional of his time, who had no real mass and had garments instead of true bodies. Figures are also overlapped to show perspective; Giotto has rid ~~his~~ his artwork of the "head clusters" common of the time which showed perspective by simply overlapping figures in tight groups, instead of using perspective, as Giotto has demonstrated here in the group of figures on the bridge, whose heads grow smaller as they recede into the building. Finally, figures have more individualized faces than seen in the past, another major characteristic of Giotto's art.

5. Attribute the painting to the artist who painted it. Justify your attribution by discussing specific visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of that artist. (10 minutes)

This painting is by Giotto. Giotto revolutionized painting, moving the late Gothic period to the Renaissance even quicker. Giotto is known to have compositions containing diagonals, + this piece depicts a ~~diagonal~~ building set on a diagonal plane and heads that move up from left to right. These diagonals create more movement. Giotto also uses emotionalism in his figures, attributing each person to a facial expression, which is true here. Giotto is known to place halos on the important individuals' heads, and this is relevant on the two individuals who are kissing. Light is coming from all directions and the drapery is modelled in a developed way. He is known for his scenes that look like they are stills from a theater production, and by the look of this piece, the castle looks like it is a cutout and the people truly look like actors on a stage.

5. Attribute the painting to the artist who painted it. Justify your attribution by discussing specific visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of that artist. (10 minutes)

The painting shown was painted by the artist, Giotto. His style is characterized by sculptural rendering of figures, which look solid and stand with their feet firmly situated on the ground. The image clearly displays Giotto's sculptural rendering of the drapery on the figures. In addition, it ~~also~~ shows Giotto's flawless perception of the lighting on the scene. All the figures, except the cloaked figure, face the couple in the foreground and direct the viewer's attention to them.

AP[®] ART HISTORY 2013 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 5

Overview

This 10-minute question asked students to provide a correct attribution of a painting (*The Meeting at the Golden Gate*) to the artist Giotto. Students were then asked to justify their attribution by discussing specific characteristics of the painting commonly associated with the work of Giotto. The intent of this question was to have students apply their knowledge of visual characteristics of an artist's work to their discussion of a presumably unknown work.

Sample: 5A

Score: 4

The painting is clearly and correctly attributed to Giotto. The response justifies the attribution by citing specific visual characteristics of the painting that are commonly associated with the work of Giotto; for instance, that Giotto indicated the natural world by using the color blue, unlike Italo-Byzantine artists who used gold to “create a heavenly other-world as was common in religious art.” The response also indicates that the “figures have weight and gravity” and “bodies under their clothing.” A contrast is made with previous artists whose figures “had no real mass and had garments instead of true bodies.” Moreover, the response indicates the beginnings of perspective in Giotto's work by referencing figures that overlap naturally rather than having groups of “head clusters,” which characterize the style of other artists of the time. Finally, the response points out that Giotto uses “more individualized faces” in his compositions. In this way, the response demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.

Sample: 5B

Score: 3

The painting is clearly and correctly attributed to Giotto. The analysis justifying the attribution contains solid statements about visual characteristics usually ascribed to Giotto: “uses emotionalism in his figures,” “drapery is modelled [*sic*] in a developed way,” and “scenes that look like they are stills from a theater production.” However, the response is not fully developed: comments about halos and lighting “coming from all directions” are too general and do not contribute to the justification of the attribution to Giotto. In this way, the response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.

Sample: 5C

Score: 2

The painting is clearly and correctly attributed to Giotto. The response justifies the attribution by indicating that Giotto's style can be characterized by a “sculptural rendering of figures,” a phrase that is repeated later with the statement “sculptural rendering of the drapery on the figures.” However, the response is somewhat simplistic and undeveloped. Comments such as “flawless perception of the lighting” are of questionable merit and ultimately irrelevant to the discussion. In this way, the response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.