

AP[®] ART HISTORY

2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 4

The work shown is an Etruscan sculpture of Aulus Metellus from the early first century B.C.E.

Which elements tie the work to Classical Greek sculpture? Which elements deviate from Classical Greek sculpture? (10 minutes)

Background

This question asks students to describe elements of Aulus Metellus that tie the Etruscan sculpture to Classical Greek sculpture as well as elements that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. The term “Classical” refers to the Classical period of ancient Greece: 480-323 B.C.E. As such, responses should engage with sculptural elements of the Early, High, and/or Late Classical periods, as opposed to the Archaic or Hellenistic periods. The intent of this question is to have students demonstrate an understanding of artistic tradition and change; in this case, the positioning of Etruscan sculpture as both adhering to and departing from the traditions of Classical Greece.

Defined by a careful observation of nature, a new concern for the mechanics of the body, and the pursuit of ideal forms, Classical Greek sculpture represents a radical departure from the compact forms and upright poses of Archaic male nudes. Whereas Early Classical works such as Kritios Boy demonstrate close attention to the musculoskeletal structure of the body and the kinetic potential of poses and shifts in weight, sculptors working during the High Classical period sought an ideal for representing the human body. In his famous treatise the *Canon*, Polykleitos proposed a set of rules for constructing the ideal human figure to achieve “the beautiful” and “the perfect or the good” through mastery of *symmetria*, the perfect “commensurability” of all parts of the statue to one another and to the whole. Polykleitos also claimed that the dynamic and asymmetric arrangement of parts of the body resulted in a balanced harmony of opposites, and in much of Classical Greek sculpture, shifts of weight from one leg to another are echoed throughout the body in an arrangement that conveys a sense of life and movement. In Late Classical sculpture, the desirable canon of proportions was slightly altered. Figures assumed expressions of wider emotional range, and, in their gestures and poses, broke free into their surrounding space. However, during all of the periods defined as Classical, Greek sculpture was generally reserved for the idealized representation of mythological subjects, warriors, and athletes, with the latter often having the appearance of gods. Such male figures were often depicted in the nude, although when clothed, the drapery frequently clung to the body to reveal the form beneath.

With regard to Aulus Metellus, certain stylistic elements clearly tie the Etruscan work to the traditions of Classical Greek sculpture. The refined arrangement of mobile limbs and slightly turned head recalls the balance of much of Classical Greek sculpture. The suggestion of natural motion through the figure’s contrapposto stance and the engagement with the viewer across space, rather than in a purely frontal manner, also recalls the conventions of Classical Greece. As well, the naturalism of the figure is clearly indebted to the Greek style. Students may also comment on other stylistic aspects of the work. For instance, the drapery has been fashioned to conform to the body of the figure, which may elicit favorable comparison to the Greek practice. In terms of medium, Aulus Metellus is a life-size cast bronze sculpture that falls within the tradition begun by the Greeks during the Classical period.

While Etruscan sculptors were indebted to their Greek counterparts, Aulus Metellus is not entirely influenced by Classical art. Created in the early 1st century B.C.E. toward the end of the Roman conquest of the Etruscan city-states, Aulus Metellus was created during a period when Etruscan art was subsumed under Roman rule. At this time, Etruscan artists, highly praised for their sophistication in casting and engraving on bronze, were sought after by Roman patrons for Roman commissions. Aulus Metellus, for

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Question 4 (continued)

instance, is a life-sized bronze portrait of a Roman official, whose name, Aule Metele, and position as a Roman magistrate have been inscribed in Etruscan letters on the hem of his garment. Rather than an idealized figure from Classical mythology or a model of graceful and idealized athleticism, Aulus Metellus is a specific individual rooted in history with particular traits. In keeping with Roman sculptural traditions, his facial features are specific rather than general, and the lines and wrinkles on his face indicate a man of mature age, communicating his wisdom and experience. Other personalized touches in this statue are conveyed through the figure's folded Roman toga, his gold ring, and his leather sandals, which provide evidence of his high social and political status. The lively gesticulating figure has antecedents in earlier Etruscan terracotta sculpture, but in the context of the Roman Republic, the arm raised in a gesture of address and greeting effectively signals Aulus Metellus's prowess as an orator and is a sculptural trope not seen until this period. The inscription notes that the statue was dedicated in recognition of Aulus Metellus' service to the public. It is thought that the work was created close to his lifetime, and possibly honored his peacekeeping role as an effective communicator between the Roman Republic and the Etruscan people, just as the statue itself communicates both Classical and non-Classical traits.

Two Tasks for Students

1. Describe elements of Aulus Metellus that tie the work to Classical Greek sculpture.
2. Describe elements of Aulus Metellus that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture.

Points to Remember

This is a formal analysis question that requires an understanding of the traditions of Classical Greek sculpture. Without that understanding, students will not be able to answer the question.

The highest score a response can earn if it does not describe elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture and that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture is 2 points.

Students are not asked to compare Aulus Metellus to specific examples of Classical Greek sculpture, although some students may include such details in their responses.

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Question 4 (continued)

Scoring Criteria

4 points

Response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.

The response clearly and accurately describes elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture and that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. 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 response accurately describes elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture and that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. However, the response may be somewhat unbalanced, with a stronger description either of elements that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture or of elements that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture, although both are represented. The response may include minor errors that have some effect on the discussion.

2 points

Response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.

The response describes elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture and that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture, but the response may be overly general, simplistic, or unbalanced. For example, the description of elements that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture may be mostly accurate, whereas the description of elements that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture may include errors that affect the response.

OR

The response clearly and accurately describes either elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture or elements that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture, but not both.

NOTE: This is the highest score a response can earn if it does not describe elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture and that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture.

1 point

Response demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the question.

The response demonstrates some general familiarity with the issues raised by the question by describing elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to Classical Greek sculpture and/or elements that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. However, the response is weak, limited, and/or contains significant errors.

0 points

Response demonstrates no discernible knowledge and understanding of the question.

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

— This is a blank paper only.

4A1/1

4. The work shown is an Etruscan sculpture of Aulus Metellus from the early first century B.C.E.

Which elements tie the work to Classical Greek sculpture? Which elements deviate from Classical Greek sculpture? (10 minutes)

Although the Etruscan culture thrived in Italy, its art boasts direct influence from Ancient Greek sculpture. The sculpture of Aulus Metellus shows a slight contrapposto, with weight seemingly shifted to his right leg. His organic and natural ~~positioning~~ positioning also calls to mind images of Doryphoros and Kritios Boy. Many things, however, are ~~the~~ different from elements of Greek tradition. Most apparently, Metellus is clothed, which indicates that the Etruscans were slightly less concerned with the beauty of the human body. His right arm is raised in a gesture that portrays him as a possible political leader. This is different than the Greek tradition because Greeks were more concerned with depicting athletes. The Aulus Metellus sculpture is more naturalistic than it is idealized, as evidenced by ~~the~~ the slight wrinkles in his forehead. The Greeks would have never portrayed a naturally aged figure because they believed that youthfulness was a part of the beauty in humans.

4C11
4. The work shown is an Etruscan sculpture of Aulus Metellus from the early first century B.C.E.

Which elements tie the work to Classical Greek sculpture? Which elements deviate from Classical Greek sculpture? (10 minutes)

Many Elements of this Etruscan sculpture tie it to Classical Greek sculpture, but there^{are} also some that differ between the two. Wet drapery is a way of sculpting clothes that makes them look wet and stick to the features of the body of the sculpture. In Classical Greek sculpture, wet drapery reveals ~~the~~ ~~the~~ highlights the muscles and ~~cont~~ contours of the subject. In this Etruscan sculpture, wet drapery is used, but it is not as dramatic. A main focus of Classical Greek sculpture is the human body and perfecting it to make it anatomically correct and the Etruscan sculpture pictured had that focus in mind as well, ~~the~~ ~~main~~ ~~difference~~ but it was not the main focus. Its main focus was to portray a narrative, something Classical Greek sculpture was not concerned with at all. Also, the subject of Classical Greek sculpture was the ideal athlete. The Etruscan sculpture does not depict an athlete, nor is it idealized.

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Question 4

Overview

This question asked students to describe elements of Aulus Metellus that tie the Etruscan sculpture to Classical Greek sculpture as well as elements that deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. The term “Classical” refers to the Classical period of ancient Greece: 480–323 B.C.E. The intent of this question was to have students demonstrate an understanding of artistic tradition and change; in this case, the positioning of Etruscan sculpture as both adhering to and departing from the traditions of Classical Greece.

Sample: 4A

Score: 4

The response clearly and accurately describes elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to and deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. The response describes how the Etruscan sculpture exhibits “a slight contrapposta [sic]” and an “organic and natural positioning” that derives from Classical Greek traditions. The response notes in particular the formal influences of two Classical Greek sculptures, the Doryphoros and the Kritios Boy. The response explains that a key difference between Aulus Metellus and its Greek predecessors is in the way the Etruscan figure “is clothed, which indicates that the Etruscans were slightly less concerned with the beauty of the human body.” The pose of the Etruscan bronze is also described as a feature that is distinct from Greek sculptures because the pose identifies the subject as a “political leader.” The response explains that this “is different than the greek [sic] tradition because Greeks were more concerned with depicting athletes.” Aulus Metellus is also described as being “more naturalistic than . . . idealized,” and the response specifically highlights the wrinkles on his forehead as evidence. This observation leads to a final distinction between Greek and Etruscan sculptural traditions: “The greeks [sic] would have never portrayed a naturally aged figure because they believed that youthfulness was a part of the beauty in humans.” In this way, the response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.

Sample: 4B

Score: 3

The response accurately describes elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to and deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. The response notes the influence of Greek art upon Etruscan sculpture by indicating the resemblance between Aulus Metellus and the “Greek figures above the Altar of Zeus.” The features that are shared by these works are not mentioned; however, the response states that the Aulus Metellus is a free-standing sculpture in the same way as the Greek statues the Doryphoros and the Kritios boy and that it demonstrates “a slight shift in weight, resembling Greek contrapposto.” The response implies that the life-size scale of the Etruscan bronze is also connected to Greek ideals, although the response incorrectly links the issue of scale to the canon of Polykleitos. This is considered a minor error. The folded drapery of Aulus Metellus is related to the Greeks, but the response does not elaborate on this observation. The response notes that the Etruscan work is different from Greek sculpture because Aulus Metellus is clothed. The response explains that the Greeks depicted males in the nude so that they “could show their underlying idealized body [sic].” Finally, the response recognizes that the “expression in facial features” of Aulus Metellus is a further deviation from Classical Greek traditions. In this way, the response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.

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Question 4 (continued)

Sample: 4C

Score: 2

The response describes elements of Aulus Metellus that are tied to and deviate from Classical Greek sculpture. The response focuses on wet drapery as a central element that links the sculpture of Aulus Metellus with earlier Greek sculptures. The response makes a distinction between the Greek practice in which “wet drapery reveals [and] highlights the muscles and contours of the subject” and its use in the Etruscan bronze where it “is not as dramatic.” While this is a noteworthy difference, it is not a primary one. The response further notes that Classical Greek sculpture was focused on “the human body and perfecting it to make it anatomically correct.” Aulus Metellus is described as having “that focus in mind as well, but it was not the main focus.” Instead, the response notes that the Etruscan bronze “portray[s] a narrative, something Classical Greek sculpture was not concerned with at all.” This is factually incorrect and constitutes a significant error. The response’s concluding observation is that “the subject of Classical Greek sculpture was the ideal athlete,” while “[t]he Etruscan sculpture does not depict an athlete, nor is it idealized.” While mostly accurate, the description is vague and overly general. In this way, the response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.