

# AP<sup>®</sup> ART HISTORY

## 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 8

In his *Notebooks*, Leonardo da Vinci wrote the following:

**“The painter is lord of all types of people and of all things. If the painter wishes to see beauties that charm him it lies in his power to create them, and if he wishes to see monstrosities that are frightful, buffoonish or ridiculous, or pitiable he can be lord and god thereof. . . . In fact whatever exists in the universe, in essence, in appearance, in the imagination, the painter has first in his mind and then in his hand; and these are of such excellence that they can present a proportioned and harmonious view of the whole, that can be seen simultaneously, at one glance, just as things in nature.”**

**What does Leonardo’s statement suggest about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance? Select and clearly identify one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo’s ideas. Making specific reference to both the quotation and to the selected work, analyze the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. (10 minutes)**

#### Background

This question asks students first to analyze how an artist [makes a claim for art making] during a particular art-historical period, and then to select and clearly identify a work created during that period that reflects the artist’s ideas. To answer the question successfully, students must think critically about Leonardo’s words from his *Notebooks* and how they relate to the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. The intent of the question is to prompt students to analyze how statements made by an artist are visually expressed in work created during the same period.

The Italian artist, scientist, and engineer Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519 C.E.) lived and worked during the art-historical period known as the High Renaissance, roughly spanning the years 1495 to 1520 C.E. The style during this period is characterized by an emphasis on linear perspective, classical proportion, and compositional harmony, as well on the creative genius of the artist’s imagination. Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo Buonarotti, and Raphael Sanzio are key representatives of the High Renaissance style in Italy.

In the mid-1480s, while employed as a court artist to the Duke of Milan, Leonardo began to fill notebooks with drawings, designs, inventions, and musings, as well as sophisticated theories about natural phenomena. The scientific bias of Leonardo’s approaches accords with the intellectual ambit of the Milanese court comprised of doctors, mathematicians, and military engineers, among other courtiers. In his writings, Leonardo offers general views on the nature of art and the science of painting, as well as advice on studio practice. Leonardo believed that direct observation was a critical component of an artist’s training. He insisted that Nature, as the handwork of God, must be the artist’s ultimate guide, and that no aspect of the material world was unworthy of consideration. To this end, Leonardo carefully observed and recorded the dynamic interaction of natural processes, such as the muscular movements of animals. He also turned to the direct observation of human physiognomy through dissections, resulting in his famed anatomical drawings. While informed by medieval scientific knowledge, Leonardo’s understanding of natural workings demonstrated a marked commitment to firsthand observation and deductive reasoning. His approach to the observable world neatly carried over into the realm of artistic practice and theory in his work.

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### Question 8 (continued)

In the specific quotation cited in the question, Leonardo insisted on the godlike nature of the artist's imagination: in creation, the mind of the artist, for Leonardo, resembles the mind of God. As Leonardo notes, the intellect is a bountiful source of imagery, and the artist has the authority to draw from the mind anything that may be conjured. To this effect, Leonardo's fantastical drawings of grotesque heads, battle scenes, and mythological compositions demonstrate how he explored this principle about the role of the artist in the creative process. Leonardo believed that the artist must not only recreate the semblance of that which he sees, but also select and use his observations with harmonious intention. The proportional relationship among parts is what brings together the whole and pleases the senses. This assertion derives from ancient architectural principles, such as those found in the treatise of Vitruvius, and it is perhaps most famously demonstrated in Leonardo's drawing of the *Vitruvian Man*: a man inscribed within a circle and a square. With proportion, which lay at the root of Renaissance aesthetics, the physically perfect man could become the measure of all beauty.

Leonardo's confidence in the artist's combined intellectual and practical skills marked a shift during this period from the role of the artist as a mere craftsman to a wider practitioner of the liberal arts, and it indicates one of the defining changes in the conception of the artist between the Early to the High Renaissance periods.

To answer the question, students may select from a range of works associated with the High Renaissance. Examples of appropriate works that combine observation with imagination include Michelangelo's fresco cycle for the Sistine Ceiling; Michelangelo's *Pietà*; Michelangelo's *David*; Michelangelo's *Slaves*; Raphael's *School of Athens*; Leonardo's *Last Supper*; and Leonardo's drawings of natural phenomena and grotesque figures from his notebooks. Although some works by High Renaissance artists, such as Leonardo's *Virgin of the Rocks* and Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, fall outside the conventional High Renaissance time frame of 1495 to 1520 C.E., they are still acceptable choices as they demonstrate how the creative process was aligned with the artistic goals of the High Renaissance. Students may cite the use of harmonious composition, idealized human form, monumental scale, innovative treatment of space, and evidence of direct observation to support the view that the creative process of the High Renaissance artist was governed not only by the laws of nature but also their God-given capacity for artistic excellence.

### Three Tasks for Students

1. Analyze what Leonardo's statement suggests about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance.
2. Select and clearly identify one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas.
3. Making specific reference to both the quotation and to the selected work, analyze the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance.

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**Question 8 (continued)**

**Points to Remember**

This is a text-based question that addresses not only Leonardo's artistic practice but also that of other artists working within the High Renaissance. To answer the question successfully, students will need to address, at least implicitly, the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance.

Students do not need to select a work by Leonardo. Work by any artist active during the High Renaissance in any medium is acceptable, provided the work reflects Leonardo's ideas.

Students must engage with both the quotation and the selected work. A response that fails to do both is not fully answering the question. The highest score a response can earn if it does not address both the quotation and the selected work is 2 points.

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### Question 8 (continued)

#### Scoring Criteria

##### 4 points

**Response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response clearly and correctly identifies one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas. The response accurately analyzes what Leonardo's statement suggests about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. Making specific reference to both the quotation and the selected work, the response analyzes the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. The response may include minor errors that do not have a meaningful effect on the analysis.

##### 3 points

**Response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response correctly identifies one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas. The response analyzes what Leonardo's statement suggests about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. Making specific reference to both the quotation and the selected work, the response analyzes the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. However, the response may be somewhat unbalanced, with a stronger analysis of either the quotation or the selected work, although both are represented. It may include minor errors that have some effect on the analysis.

##### 2 points

**Response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response identifies one Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas, although the identification may be implied rather than stated directly. The response explains, at least implicitly, what Leonardo's statement suggests about the role of the artist in the creative process during the Renaissance. Making reference to both the quotation and the selected work, the response addresses the role of the artist in the creative process during the Renaissance, but that discussion is less analytical than descriptive. It may be overly general, simplistic, or unbalanced. For example, the discussion of the selected work may be mostly accurate, whereas the discussion of the quotation may include errors that affect the response.

##### OR

The response identifies one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas. Making specific reference to either the quotation or the selected work, the response analyzes the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance.

**NOTE:** This is the highest score a response can earn if it does not discuss both the quotation and a selected work.

##### 1 point

**Response demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response demonstrates some general familiarity with the issues raised by the question. However, the response is weak, overly descriptive, and/or contains significant errors. If the response identifies an appropriate Renaissance work, then there is no other discussion of merit.

##### 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. The score of 0 points includes crossed-out words, personal notes, and drawings.

— This is a blank paper only.

Note: There are no images provided for Question 8.

8A  
1/2

8. In his *Notebooks*, Leonardo da Vinci wrote the following.

"The painter is lord of all types of people and of all things. If the painter wishes to see beauties that charm him it lies in his power to create them, and if he wishes to see monstrosities that are frightful, buffoonish or ridiculous, or pitiable he can be lord and god thereof. . . . In fact whatever exists in the universe, in essence, in appearance, in the imagination, the painter has first in his mind and then in his hand; and these are of such excellence that they can present a proportioned and harmonious view of the whole, that can be seen simultaneously, at one glance, just as things in nature."

What does Leonardo's statement suggest about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance? Select and clearly identify one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas. Making specific reference to both the quotation and to the selected work, analyze the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. (10 minutes)

Leonardo's statement suggests that an artist ~~was~~ had all power in the creative process during the High Renaissance. Stating that an ~~artist~~ artist may paint anything, whether a figment of the imagination or ~~an~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~observable~~ ~~thing~~ depiction of something observable or tangible. An artist of the High Renaissance ~~had complete power~~ ~~over~~ ~~the~~ ~~art~~ ~~work~~ had the ability to convey any idea through their artwork because they had the complete power in creating a piece of work. This idea can be reflected in *The School of Athens* by Raphael. This painting depicts scholars, philosophers, and many others in one scene. While using contemporary artists' ~~own~~ ~~faces~~ and bodies to depict the famous Greek philosophers Aristotle and Plato, Raphael had "the power to create" a scene that included both the ~~real~~ Greek ideas ~~presented~~ introduced by the philosophers and valued by those of the High Renaissance while also incorporating the significance of artists during the time, who were then <sup>no longer</sup> ~~seen~~ <sup>just</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>craftsmen,</sup> ~~but~~ <sup>as</sup> scholars. ~~Therefore~~, Raphael also alludes to antiquity through the use of ~~ancient~~ Ancient Roman arches in the background. In addition, one philosopher points up, referring to divine power which contributes to all, while one points toward the ground, signifying the ~~human~~ <sup>aspects of their</sup> ~~past~~ ~~and~~ culture rooted in science and observation. This ambiguity continues throughout the painting, demonstrating Leonardo's idea that an artist in the High Renaissance could

create ideas that "can be seen simultaneously" throughout their work.

8A 2/2

Note: There are no images provided for Question 8.

8B<sub>1/2</sub>

8. In his *Notebooks*, Leonardo da Vinci wrote the following.

"The painter is lord of all types of people and of all things. If the painter wishes to see beauties that charm him it lies in his power to create them, and if he wishes to see monstrosities that are frightful, buffoonish or ridiculous, or pitiable he can be lord and god thereof. . . . In fact whatever exists in the universe, in essence, in appearance, in the imagination, the painter has first in his mind and then in his hand; and these are of such excellence that they can present a proportioned and harmonious view of the whole, that can be seen simultaneously, at one glance, just as things in nature."

What does Leonardo's statement suggest about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance? Select and clearly identify one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas. Making specific reference to both the quotation and to the selected work, analyze the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. (10 minutes)

Leonardo is suggesting that the artist is key in the creative process and that he or she has the ability to make whatever is on her mind beautiful art. Leonardo da Vinci created The Mona Lisa during the High Renaissance, which was a time that appreciated the role of nature and the universe. Leonardo took an idea of a woman and turned it into a masterpiece through mystery, atmospheric perspective, sfumato, chiaroscuro and several other techniques. The Mona Lisa is ambiguous in meaning, yet that is what makes it imaginative and natural. The receding nature is prevalent and makes "beauty charm him," and sfumato or haziness is implemented for the artist's pleasure. The painting is both light and dark and uses chiaroscuro to reflect Leonardo's ideas. Placing a woman in nature was his idea of "a proportioned and harmonious view of the world." Trees can be seen at one glance because they are nature and Leonardo wanted to compare his woman to artistic beauty that is aesthetically pleasing. The creation was all up to Leonardo and represents a blend between portraits

8B2/2

and nature. He wanted the world to appreciate what was inside of the minds of artists and all High Renaissance artwork challenged typical beliefs of what was common in art.



Note: There are no images provided for Question 8.

8C  
1/2

8. In his *Notebooks*, Leonardo da Vinci wrote the following.

"The painter is lord of all types of people and of all things. If the painter wishes to see beauties that charm him it lies in his power to create them, and if he wishes to see monstrosities that are frightful, buffoonish or ridiculous, or pitiable he can be lord and god thereof. . . . In fact whatever exists in the universe, in essence, in appearance, in the imagination, the painter has first in his mind and then in his hand; and these are of such excellence that they can present a proportioned and harmonious view of the whole, that can be seen simultaneously, at one glance, just as things in nature."

What does Leonardo's statement suggest about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance? Select and clearly identify one High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas. Making specific reference to both the quotation and to the selected work, analyze the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. (10 minutes)

Leonardo's statement suggests that the artist has the ability to create anything that is in his mind. This suggests that the artist had a more important role than ever during the High Renaissance. This idea is apparent in Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling. Michelangelo was commissioned by the pope to paint the ceiling, but would only do it if he had free reign on the fresco. The pope agreed, but still Michelangelo threatened to leave, and did at one point, claiming lack of artistic freedom. The role of Michelangelo was so important in the production of the Sistine Ceiling. He created some of the most beautiful images from the Renaissance, in creating the story of the first book of the old testament, Genesis. It was up to Michelangelo to create images that did justice to this important book in the Bible, which is why the role of the artist is so important. As Leonardo said, "If the painter wishes to see beauties that charm him it lies in his power to create them." This reflects the importance of Michelangelo in the creative process.

of making ~~the Sistine Ceiling~~ this large <sup>8C 2/2</sup> scale fresco. ~~If Michelangelo had not played such a large role in its creation, it may not have been turned out to be one of the most~~  
~~important~~ The role of the artist also plays a large part in overall idea of the piece. "Whatever exists in the universe... the painter has first in his mind and then in his hand." This phrase shows the importance of the artist's mind in the creation of a piece. The image of the Sistine Ceiling could not have come from the mind of anyone else. The artist's mind is such an important part in creating the final product in any piece. Artists were given so much more freedom to create during the High Renaissance due to their enlightened patrons, like the pope who commissioned the Sistine Ceiling. They allowed the artist to be more of a factor in the creative process rather than just telling ~~an~~ an artist exactly what to do and not allowing them to really create.

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## 2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 8

#### Overview

This question asked students first to analyze how an artist makes a claim for art making during a particular art-historical period, and then to select and clearly identify a work created during that period that reflects the artist's ideas. To answer the question successfully, students needed to think critically about Leonardo's words from his *Notebooks* and how they relate to the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance. The intent of the question was to prompt students to analyze how statements made by an artist are visually expressed in work created during the same period.

#### Sample: 8A

##### Score: 4

Raphael's *School of Athens* is clearly and correctly identified as a High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas about the creative process during this time. The response accurately analyzes what Leonardo's statement suggests about the role of the artist during the High Renaissance by stating that the creative process allows the artist to "paint anything, whether a figment of the imagination or a depiction of something observable or tangible." This analysis is supported by the observation that Raphael uses "contemporary artists' faces and bodies to depict the famous Greek philosophers Aristotle and Plato." This demonstrates that "Raphael had 'the power to create' a scene that included both the Greek ideas introduced by the philosophers and valued by those of the High Renaissance while also incorporating the significance of artists during the time, who were then no longer seen as just craftsmen, but as scholars." The response uses specific visual evidence from the *School of Athens* as well as language from the quotation to support how the painting reflects Leonardo's ideas by referring to how the philosophers in the painting point in one direction or another to demonstrate different viewpoints regarding the origin of the creative process, one emanating from "divine power" and the other "rooted in science and observation." These gestures, the response states, demonstrate "Leonardo's idea that an artist in the High Renaissance could create ideas that 'can be seen simultaneously' throughout their work." In this way, the response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.

#### Sample: 8B

##### Score: 3

Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* is correctly identified as a High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas about the role of the artist in the creative process during this time. The response analyzes what Leonardo's statement suggests about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance by observing how "mystery, atmospheric perspective, sfumato, chiaroscuro and several other techniques" are used by Leonardo to make the painting "imaginative and natural" in ways that reflect "an idea of a woman." The response states how the artist, by "placing a woman in nature," was able to reflect "his idea of 'a proportioned and harmonious view of the world.'" The response is unbalanced, however, with a stronger discussion of the quotation than of the *Mona Lisa*. Aside from mentioning the trees in the background of the painting, the response lacks specificity in explaining how the painting reflects Leonardo's ideas. In this way, the response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.

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**Question 8 (continued)**

**Sample: 8C**

**Score: 2**

Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel Ceiling is identified as a High Renaissance work that reflects Leonardo's ideas about the role of the artist in the creative process during this time. The response explains what Leonardo's statement suggests about the role of the artist in the creative process during the High Renaissance, stating that since "artists were given so much more freedom to create during the High Renaissance due to their enlightened patrons," the artist was "more of a factor in the creative process rather than just telling an artist exactly what to do and not allowing them to really create." The response makes reference to both the quotation and the Sistine Chapel Ceiling; however, the Sistine Chapel Ceiling is only referred to as a depiction of "the story of the first book of the old testament, Genesis." A stronger response would have highlighted features within the Sistine Chapel Ceiling that exhibited Michelangelo's creative process, such as the treatment and arrangement of human figures with a complex narrative cycle. Moreover, after quoting Leonardo's phrase that "the painter has first in his mind and then in his hand," the response provides neither visual nor contextual evidence as support for the observation that the phrase "shows the importance of the artist's mind in the creation of a piece." In this way, the response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.