

## **THE 4 STEPS OF ART CRITICISM**

*The following worksheets will lead you through the four different steps of how to properly look at, talk about, and eventually understand a work of art. Each step has a set of questions to answer either in short answer or essay form. Please read and complete each section carefully. Edit your writing. Incomplete sentences or informal language must not be used.*

***(100 total points)***

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### **STEP 1—DESCRIPTION “*Just the details, just the facts.*”**

As an artist looking at art, you are searching for details that will give you clues to understanding and appreciating the work and the artist’s intentions. Describe what you see with as much detail that a person could almost create the work of art from your description. Use visual language. What do you see in the art work? List all the things that can be seen.

**STEP 2—ANALYSIS “How did the artist organize the art work?”**

Artists use Elements of Art and Principles of Design to organize their work. Look carefully at the work of art and use the correct vocabulary to analyse the work. For a refresher on the elements and principles, please visit the class website for an in-depth explanation.

1. What do you think are the 2 most important and emphasized Elements of Art? List them.

Element 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Element 2: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where does the artist use Element 1?

3. Where does the artist use Element 2?

4. What Principle of Design does Element 1 create? \_\_\_\_\_ How does the artist do this? How are they connected?

5. What Principle of Design does Element 2 create? \_\_\_\_\_ How does the artist do this? How are they connected?

**STEP 3—INTERPRETATION “What is the artist’s intention?”**

After looking for visual clues in Step 1 and examining the artist’s creative choices in Step 2 you should be able to start exploring what you think are the artist’s intentions.

1. What mood does the artist create with their work? What specifically does the artist do to create this mood? *(write a short paragraph explaining)*

2. What does the artwork make you think about? Why? *(write a short paragraph explaining)*

3. Is the artist telling a story? What is the story? **THINK ABOUT THIS.** To answer this fully, you must include specific details as evidence of what leads you to this conclusion? *(write a short paragraph explaining)*

#### **STEP 4—JUDGEMENT “Was the artist successful?”**

This is not about whether you like the artwork or not. In Step 3, you uncovered what the artist intended, and, now, in Step 4 you must decide if they were successful.

1. Try to think like the artist. What were their intentions with this work? Make an artist’s statement and include details. (*The artist’s goal was to...*)
2. What is your favorite thing about this work of art? Why?
3. What is your least favorite thing about this work of art? Why?
4. Was the artist successful in achieving their goal? Why? What specifically makes you think they did well to tell their story or create a mood with their artwork?
5. What specifically would you do differently to improve the work?