

### Visual Analysis/Museum Paper

In lieu of visiting a public art venue, use a work that you plan to discuss in your Research Paper, made between 1970 and the present day, to conduct a visual analysis. This paper is preparation for your Research Paper. You should consider this a building block to the analysis you will expand upon in your paper. Before you begin, please read Marjorie Munsterberg's explanation of visual description at, <http://writingaboutart.org/pages/visualdesc.html>.

First, describe what you see, drawing the viewer's attention to key elements (objects, subjects, symbols) in the composition. Identify three to five visual elements (subjects, objects, textures, lines, differing contrast, etc.) in the work. Discuss the work's subjects. What are the main components, what is represented, who is portrayed, where is the scene set? While you may want to keep your visual description concise, remember that you cannot assume that what you are seeing and experiencing is universal. In other words, be careful not to make assumptions!

Next, identify important formal elements in the work. While this may feel descriptive, what you're focusing on in this section are the formal elements of the work (i.e. line quality, color harmonies, representational strategies) and their compositional traits (i.e. perspective, balance, rhythm, and symmetry). Ask yourself whether the work is abstract or realistic, what style it is made in, and move beyond vague or general descriptions of physical aspects (i.e. colorful, detailed, interesting).

Finally, connect your private experience with the work and its visual elements (description, subjects, and form). How do the visual elements of the work build meaning? What connections to the work's historical context and current hanging relate to what you see? You are not required to conduct further research, but if you cite sources, please use Chicago Manual of Style footnotes (no bibliography).

Visual Analysis/Museum Paper Rubric	
The basics (artist, title, date, etc.)	out of 5 points
Consideration of subject	out of 15 points
Description of physical properties	out of 15 points
Personal experience	out of 10 points
Writing style	out of 5 points
Total	out of 50 points