About the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®)

The Advanced Placement Program® enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies — with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both — while still in high school. AP® Exams are given each year in May. Students who earn a qualifying score on an AP Exam are typically eligible to receive college credit and/or placement into advanced courses in college. Every aspect of AP course and exam development is the result of collaboration between AP teachers and college faculty. They work together to develop AP courses and exams, set scoring standards, and score the exams. College faculty review every AP teacher’s course syllabus.

AP Art History Course Overview

The AP Art History course is equivalent to a two-semester introductory college course that explores topics such as the nature of art, art making, and responses to art. By investigating a specific image set of 250 works of art characterized by diverse artistic traditions from prehistory to the present, the course fosters in-depth, holistic understanding of the history of art from a global perspective. Students become active participants in the global art world, engaging with its forms and content, as they experience, research, discuss, read, and write about art, artists, art making, and responses to and interpretations of art.

PREREQUISITE

There are no prerequisites for AP Art History.

AP Art History Course Content

Functions and effects of art are the focus of the AP Art History course. Students consider influential forces like patronage, politics, class, belief, gender, and ethnicity in their analysis of art forms. They examine styles, techniques, themes, and chronology, comparing and contrasting art forms from varied perspectives. Students explore a specific set of 250 works of art in 10 content areas beginning with art from global prehistory and ending with global works from the present.

I. Global Prehistory, 30000–500 B.C.E.: ~4% (11 works)
II. Ancient Mediterranean, 3500 B.C.E.–300 C.E.: ~15% (36 works)
III. Early Europe and Colonial Americas, 200–1750 B.C.: ~20% (51 works)
IV. Later Europe and Americas, 1750–1980 C.E.: ~22% (54 works)
V. Indigenous Americas, 1000 B.C.E.–1980 C.E.: ~6% (14 works)
VI. Africa, 1100–1980 C.E.: ~6% (14 works)
VII. West and Central Asia, 500 B.C.E.–1980 C.E.: ~4% (11 works)
VIII. South, East, and Southeast Asia, 300 B.C.E.–1980 C.E.: ~8% (21 works)
IX. The Pacific, 700–1980 C.E.: ~4% (11 works)
X. Global Contemporary, 1980 C.E.–Present: ~11% (27 works)

Within each content area, students explore essential contextual information about regions, cultures, and time periods. Students have options for focused, intensive learning about artworks, themes, and cultures they select as personally relevant and meaningful.

As students study works of art in the image set, they apply essential art historical skills within the learning objectives, such as visual, contextual, and comparative analysis. The following are big ideas and learning objectives of the AP Art History course:

• Big Idea 1: Artists manipulate materials and ideas to create an aesthetic object, act, or event.
  o Students describe how context influences artistic decisions about creating a work of art.
  o Students analyze form, function, content, and/or context to infer or explain the possible intentions for creating specific works of art.
• Big Idea 2: Art making is shaped by tradition and change.
  o Students describe features of tradition and/or change in a single work of art or in a group of related works.
  o Students explain how and why specific traditions and/or changes are demonstrated in a single work or group of related works.
  o Students analyze the influence of a single work of art or group of related works on other artistic production.
• Big Idea 3: Interpretations of art are variable.
  o Students identify a work of art.
  o Students analyze how formal qualities and/or content of a work of art elicit(s) a response.
  o Students analyze how contextual variables lead to different interpretations of a work of art.
  o Students justify attribution of an unknown work of art.
  o Students analyze relationships between works of art based on their similarities and differences.
AP Art History Exam Structure

**AP ART HISTORY EXAM: 3 HOURS**

**Assessment Overview**

Students demonstrate achievement of AP Art History learning objectives by applying their art historical knowledge and skills to address course content. Using works of art studied within the course image set or works they chose to study beyond the image set, students have many opportunities to evidence their understanding of art historical concepts. A single exam question is likely to encompass multiple learning objectives and works of art from different content areas. This underscores the exam’s focus on assessing students’ in-depth critical analysis of relationships among works of art, art historical concepts, and global cultures.

**Format of Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section I: Multiple Choice</th>
<th>~ 80 Questions</th>
<th>60 Minutes</th>
<th>40% of Exam Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Part A: Approximately 8 sets of questions (3 to 6 questions each) based on color images</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Part B: Approximately 35 discrete multiple-choice questions</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section II: Free Response</th>
<th>6 Questions</th>
<th>120 Minutes</th>
<th>60% of Exam Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Part A: Two 30-minute essay questions</td>
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<td>• Part B: Four 15-minute essay questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Essay questions often include images of works of art as stimuli.</td>
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**AP ART HISTORY SAMPLE EXAM QUESTIONS**

**Sample Multiple-Choice Question**

![Image of Buddha at Bamiyan](© Borromeo/Art Resource, NY)

Monuments like the Buddha at Bamiyan most directly influenced the form and scale of Buddhist statues created for

(A) Borobudur Temple in Indonesia
(B) Angkor Wat in Cambodia
(C) Todai-ji in Japan
(D) The Longmen caves in China

**Correct Answer: D**

**Sample Free-Response Question**

Interpretation of specific works of art or architecture can change over time due to shifting historical and cultural contexts.

Select and completely identify a specific work of art or architecture whose meaning has changed over time. The work of art or architecture may be from any time, culture, or medium. You must identify both the original meaning and a subsequent meaning of the work of art or architecture. Then, using visual and/or contextual evidence, analyze both how and why the meaning of the work of art or architecture has changed over time.

To answer the question, you may either select a work of art or architecture from the list below or select one of your own choosing. The work you select may be from the Image Set or from your own study. (30 minutes)

- Alhambra Palace
- Angkor
- Basin (Baptistère de St. Louis)
- Dome of the Rock
- Great Mosque at Córdoba
- Great Zimbabwe
- Hagia Sophia
- The Kaaba
- Qorikancha
- Wall plaque from Oba’s Palace

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