

AP Art History

Course Syllabus 2026-27

Torah High School

Instructor

Ms. Phan

mytienphan.mtp@gmail.com

Class Time

Tuesday/ Thursday 11:15 AM-12:30 PM

Friday 12:55-2 PM

Room 304

Course Description

This introductory college-level course explores the history of art across cultures, regions, and time periods. Throughout the year, students will study works of art and architecture from around the world while exploring how artists and cultures communicate ideas, beliefs, identities, values, and experiences through art.

Students will learn how to analyze, compare, understand context, and develop evidence-based interpretations of art. Students will also practice the types of multiple-choice and free-response questions (FRQ's) used on the AP Art History Exam. **By the end of the year, students will be able to thoughtfully analyze works of art, connect them to their historical and cultural contexts, and support their interpretations with specific visual and contextual evidence!**

Major Units of Study

→ Unit 1 – Global Prehistory

- ◆ Explore how early human art and architecture communicate meaning through materials, techniques, and subject matter
- ◆ Consider different theories about the purpose and meaning of prehistoric art

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- Unit 2 – Ancient Mediterranean
 - ◆ Explore the art and architecture of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, and related cultures
 - ◆ Examine relationships between art, religion, politics, society, and representations of power
 - Unit 3 – Early Europe and Colonial Americas
 - ◆ Explore European art from the Middle Ages through the early modern period, including roles of religion, patronage, and cultural exchange
 - ◆ Explore art of the Americas during and after European colonization
 - Unit 4 – Later Europe and Americas
 - ◆ Explore European and American art from the 18th-20th centuries
 - ◆ Examine changing approaches to representation, identity, politics, and society in response to historical and cultural developments
 - Unit 5 – Indigenous Americas
 - ◆ Explore artistic traditions of Indigenous cultures across the Americas and their relationships to environment, belief, and community
 - ◆ Consider the impact of European colonization and cultural change
 - Unit 6 – Africa
 - ◆ Explore diverse artistic traditions across Africa and their roles in religion, leadership, community, and identity.
 - ◆ Examine how materials, techniques, and cultural traditions influence artistic expression
 - Unit 7 – West and Central Asia
 - ◆ Explore artistic traditions of West and Central Asia, including connections between art, religion, and architecture
 - ◆ Examine cultural exchange and how artistic traditions developed across regions
 - Unit 8 – South, East, and Southeast Asia
 - ◆ Explore diverse artistic traditions and the influence of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and other belief systems
 - ◆ Compare how art and architecture communicate religious and cultural ideas
 - Unit 9 – The Pacific
 - ◆ Explore artistic traditions of the Pacific Islands and Oceania, such as connections to environment, ancestry, community, and identity
 - ◆ Examine how materials and artistic practices reflect cultural traditions
 - Unit 10 – Global Contemporary
 - ◆ Explore global art from 1980 to the present, including identity, politics, globalization, technology, and social issues
 - ◆ Consider how artists challenge traditional definitions and practices of art

About the AP Exam

The AP Art History exam is split evenly between multiple-choice and free response. It covers 10 global art eras and regions, which are how our 10 units are organized.

Section I: Multiple-Choice (50% of score)

- 80 questions in 1 hour
- Tests image identification, visual and contextual analysis, and art comparisons

Section II: Free-Response (50% of score)

- 6 questions in 2 hours
- Includes two long essays (comparison, visual/ contextual analysis) and four short essays (visual analysis, contextual analysis, attribution, and continuity/ change)

Grading Policies & Expectations

Late Work

Assignments may be submitted up to one week late with a **5% reduction per day**. After one week, work may earn up to **50% credit** until the end of the semester.

Each semester, students receive 1 late-work freebie, allowing a submission up to one week late with no deduction. If unused, it converts to **1% extra credit**.

Grade Weights

Projects & Activities	50%
Assessments & Quizzes	30%
Discussions	20%

Projects & Activities

- **Activities:** Review important artworks, concepts, and terminology learned in lecture. May include reading textbook excerpts, multiple-choice questions, visual analysis, or brief written responses.
- **Projects:** Explore art-historical concepts through more in-depth visual analysis, comparison, research, and presentation.



Assessments & Quizzes

Demonstrate understanding of artworks, cultures, terminology, and historical context through AP-style questions and unit assessments.

Discussions

Practice analyzing and writing about works of art through AP-style prompts. Students should contribute thoughtfully, use course vocabulary, and support ideas with specific evidence. Students must also respond to at least one classmate.

Required Materials

- Textbook: *Kilroy-Ewbank, Lauren, ed. Reframing Art History. Smarthistory.org, 2022.*
 - ◆ **Available online:** <https://smarthistory.org/reframing-art-history/>
- Laptop to access Jupiter and AP Classroom materials
- Notebook or lined paper for notes and in-class activities
- Additional resources provided throughout the year (documentaries, field trips, etc.)

Optional but helpful:

- Flashcards or digital flashcard app (<https://quizlet.com/>) for reviewing artworks and terminology

Tips for Success

You do NOT need to be an art expert to succeed in AP Art History!

Focus on more than memorizing names and dates. *Practice asking:* What do I see? Why was it made? What does it communicate? What was happening in the culture at the time? How can I use evidence to support my interpretation?

The more you practice analyzing, comparing, and discussing art, the more confident you will become. Strong AP Art History students don't just know the artwork – they know how to explain it!

