

Questions in Visual Criticism - Worksheet

The following is based on the author Terry Barrett's approach to art criticism.

His book: *Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary*, 1994

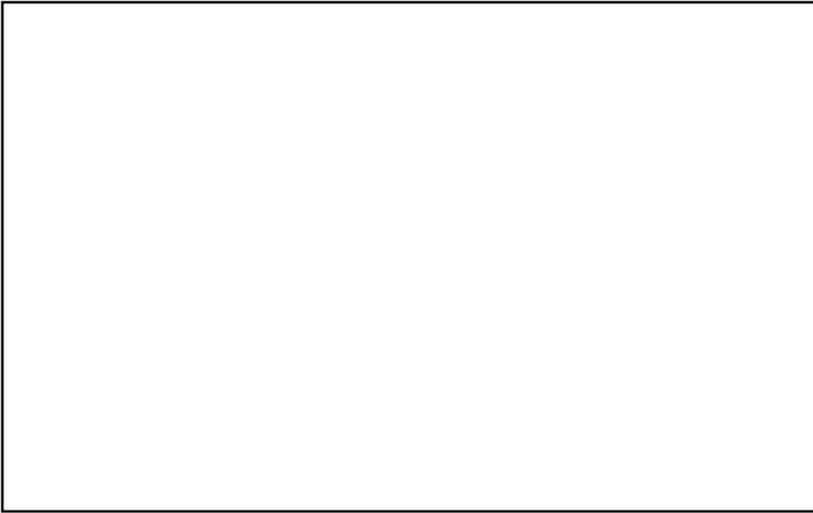
Your Name _____ Date _____

Artwork you are evaluating:

Title _____ Artist _____

Medium _____ Dated _____

1. Read through this entire sheet.
2. **Visual Description:** Use at least 30 minutes to make a detailed representation of the artwork you are evaluating:



3. **Written Description:** What do I see, feel, hear, smell, taste, etc?

a. Imagery: Does the artwork depict anything? If so, what?

b. Medium: What tools, materials, or processes did the art maker use?

c. Form: What formal elements did the maker choose and how did the maker organize the elements? This might include composition/framing, shape, color, texture within the image but can sometimes include physical properties such as the scale of a piece and its presentation.

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4. **Interpretation:** What is the artwork about?

a. Interpretive Statement: Can I express what I think the artwork is about in one sentence?

b. Evidence: What evidence within or outside of the artwork supports my interpretation?

5. **Judgement:** Is it a good artwork?

a. Criteria: What criteria do I think are most appropriate for judging the artwork?

b. Evidence: What evidence within or outside of the artwork relates to each criterion?

c. Judgement: Based on the criteria and evidence, is the artwork successful based on your criteria?

6. **Interpret the Image:** Using the information on this sheet, write a minimum of one page interpreting your chosen image and **staple it to the back of this worksheet and deliver both next class.**

Consider the following questions when writing your interpretation:

What does this image mean?

How is this meaning manifested?

Can you discern a difference between what was intended and the result?

What questions would you have for the artist?

Are there any metaphors you can decipher?

Do the objects/subjects depicted in the image have a connotation that owes its context to the nature of the materials they resemble, or is the connotation based in something else like light, shadow, form, composition, color/tones/contrast, etc.?

Can you discern a difference between what was intended and the result?

Furthermore, from what perspective do you bring your interpretation to this work? **Comparative? Archetypal? Narrative? Feminist? Historical? Formalist? Psychoanalytic? Documentary? Biographical? Technical?**

No work of art or artist ever existed in a vacuum. Can you identify a combination of **approaches** or **cultural influences** in your interpretation?