

Chapter 2 – Developing Visual Literacy

Multiple Choice Questions

1. In *The Treason of Images*, the artist combines awareness, creativity, and communication by encouraging the viewer to look closely at an object. The artist is

- a) Duane Michaels.
- b) Lorna Simpson.
- c) René Magritte.
- d) John Ahearn.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Words and Images

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

2. Jan van Eyck's *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife Giovanna Cenami* depicts many objects that have symbolic meaning. The use or study of these symbols is called

- a) iconography.
- b) content.
- c) form.
- d) aesthetics.

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

3. While in prison, Howling Wolf made many drawings called

- a) scraffitti.
- b) ledger drawings.
- c) office drawings.
- d) calculated drawings.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: The Critical Process

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

4. When a painting is so real it appears to be a photograph, it is called

- a) illusionistic.
- b) a pseudo-photograph.
- c) photographic.
- d) photorealistic.

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

5. Beatriz Milhazes's *Carambola* is based on

- a) the square.
- b) the horizontal line.
- c) the zigzag.
- d) a triangle.

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.3 Discuss how form, as opposed to content, might also help us to understand the meaning of a work of art.

Topic: Form and Meaning

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

6. Jan van Eyck's *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife Giovanna Cenami*, like René Magritte's *The Treason of Images*, is concerned with

- a) expensive objects that signify wealth and success.
- b) images that are not literally what they appear to be.
- c) experimental painting materials.
- d) political messages.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

7. In the sixteenth century, *The Ghent Altarpiece*, which represents the divine, was threatened by

- a) calligraphers.
- b) iconographers.
- c) graffiti artists.
- d) iconoclasts.

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Words and Images

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

8. The painting *The Treason of Images* asks us to consider

- a) that images and words refer to things that we see but are not the things themselves.
- b) that there is a direct, one-to-one relationship between objects and the words we use to name them.
- c) that we are often fooled by what we see, as with trompe-l'oeil paintings.
- d) that images and words not only refer to things that we see but are also the things themselves.

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Words and Images

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

9. The *Triumphal Entry* page from the *Shahnamah* manuscript, a sacred text, exemplifies the preference of word over image in

- a) Japanese art.
- b) Chinese art.
- c) Islamic art.
- d) Korean art.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Words and Images

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

10. The symbolic hand gestures that refer to specific states of mind or events in the life of Buddha are called

- a) bismillah.
- b) mudras.
- c) handies.
- d) calliforms.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Conventions, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

11. The terms “naturalistic art” or “realistic art” are sometimes used to describe

- a) folk art.
- b) abstract art.
- c) nonrepresentational art.
- d) representational art.

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

12. The title of Willem de Kooning’s *North Atlantic Light* refers to

- a). the town on Long Island where the artist lived
- b) the name of the artist’s sailboat.
- c) the feeling of light.in the painting.
- d) the practice of painting outdoors.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Chapter Introduction

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

13. Why are images traditionally frowned on in Islamic art?

- a) Humans are thought to be a symbol of filth.
- b) The word can be trusted in a way that images cannot.
- c) Human images are not frowned on in Islamic art.
- d) Calligraphy is more challenging.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Words and Images

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

14. In a work of art, “content” refers to

- a) what the work means.
- b) the culture that produced it.
- c) its style.
- d) the way it looks.

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.3 Discuss how form, as opposed to content, might also help us to understand the meaning of a work of art.

Topic: Form and Meaning

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

15. What kind of reading does Kenneth Clark illustrate in his assessment that an ancient Greek statue represents a “higher state of civilization” than a West African mask?

- a) American
- b) aesthetic
- c) Afrocentric
- d) ethnocentric

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Conventions, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

16. What is the chief form of Islamic art?

- a) calligraphy
- b) abstractions of animals
- c) figurative representation
- d) conceptual art

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Words and Images

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

17. What is the subject matter of Shirin Neshat's *Rebellious Silence*?

- a) It depicts the prominent place of women within every aspect of Iranian culture.
- b) It depicts a Muslim woman in a black chador, a rifle dividing, and Farsi text inscribed over her face, showing her as liberated and equal to men.
- c) It is depicts a Muslim woman in Western dress to show her as rebellious.
- d) It reflects the artist's comfort with the roles of women in Iranian society.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.1 Describe the relationship between words and images.

Topic: Words and Images

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

18. Naturalism is a brand of representation in which the artist

- a) paints exactly, faithfully what he or she sees.
- b) abstracts what he or she is depicting, to varying degrees.
- c) retains realistic elements but presents the world from a personal or subjective point of view.
- d) works with ideas instead of images, creating purely nonobjective artwork.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

19. Kazimir Malevich called his art

- a) Dreaming.
- b) Realism.
- c) Cubism.
- d) Suprematism.

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.3 Discuss how form, as opposed to content, might also help us to understand the meaning of a work of art.

Topic: Form and Meaning

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

20. SAMO is a name adopted by

- a) Charlie Parker.
- b) John Taylor.
- c) Jean-Michel Basquiat.
- d) Willem de Kooning.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Conventions, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

21. When a work does not refer to the natural or objective world at all, it is called

- a) representational.
- b) realistic.
- c) photorealistic.
- d) nonobjective.

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

22. The less representation resembles the real world, the more it is considered

- a) abstract.
- b) symbolic.
- c) SAMO.
- d) natural.

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

23. *Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast* was painted by

- a) George Green.
- b) Albert Bierstadt.
- c) Willem de Kooning.
- d) Wolf Kahn.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

24. How did Kenneth Clark know of the African dancing mask he disparaged in his television series and book *Civilization*?

- a) He saw a photograph of it in a book.
- b) He saw it in a museum of natural history.
- c) He owned it.
- d) He saw it in a magazine.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

25. Why were images in religious settings destroyed in sixteenth-century northern Europe?

- a) The Book of Genesis forbids images.
- b) The Ten Commandments forbid images.
- c) The angel Gabriel forbids images.
- d) The New Testament forbids images.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

26. How is Wolf Kahn's *Afterglow I* comparable to Willem de Kooning's *North Atlantic Light*?

- a) Both paintings are largely concerned with the effects of light.
- b) Both paintings are highly representational.
- c) Both paintings are photorealistic views of real landscapes.
- d) Both paintings employ trompe-l'oeil.

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

Short Answer and Essay Questions

27. Define the terms "form" and "content."

Answer: "Form" refers to the overall structure of the work, including the materials used to make it, its various formal elements, and the way the elements are organized into a composition. "Content" is what the work of art expresses or means. Form can also suggest meaning.

Learning Objective: 2.3 Discuss how form, as opposed to content, might also help us to understand the meaning of a work of art.

Topic: Form and Meaning

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

28. What aspect of George Green's . . . *marooned in dreaming: a path of song and mud* is characteristic of Abstract Illusionism?

Answer: He paints onto a sheet of raw birch an illusionistic frame and matte, a painted frame and seascape, and an overlay of scrolls of color, globes of wood, and snapshots of landscape, in a trompe-l'oeil effect.

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: The Creative Process

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

29. In Jan van Eyck's *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife Giovanna Cenami*, what abstract concepts does the dog symbolize?

Answer: Here accompanying a man and woman joining hands, the dog symbolizes faith in the context of marriage or betrothal, indicating that this couple pledge to remain faithful to each other. The dog might also symbolize that the man and woman are faithful in their religious beliefs.

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

30. In *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife Giovanna Cenami*, what does the mirror reflect?

Answer: The mirror reflects the backs of the subjects and, standing in the same space as the viewer, are two other figures, one of whom is most likely the artist.

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

31. What did Kenneth Clark not recognize about a carved mask from the Sang tribe of Gabon in West Africa?

Answer: Clark surmised that the mask was a symbol of fear and darkness. He did not recognize the ritual function of the mask that affects its features. The masks were worn in celebratory ceremonies as vehicles through which the spirit world became accessible, and its features were exaggerated to separate it from the "real."

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

32. Explain the concept of Dreaming in Australian Aboriginal culture, as in Old Mick Tjakamarra's *Honey Ant Dreaming*.

Answer: The Dreaming is the presence, or the mark, of an Ancestral Being in the World. Tjakamarra's *Honey Ant Dreaming* represents a landscape according to the idea that the Ancestral Being can be revealed in the landscape.

Learning Objective: 2.2 Distinguish between representation and abstraction.

Topic: Representation and Abstraction

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

33. Jean-Michel Basquiat's painting *Charles the First* is filled with personal, ambiguous imagery that the artist summed up as "royalty, heroism, and the streets." Cite some motifs that illustrate each of these concepts, in positive or negative ways, in the painting.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. **Royalty:** Basquiat uses the crown as a symbol of his personal success and of the success of African American heroes such as jazz musicians and athletes. Also, the title *Charles the First* refers to King Charles I, who was beheaded by the Protestants, and the panels are inscribed with the phrase "Most kings get thier (sic) head cut off."
2. **Heroism:** He refers to heroism by repeating the letter "S," referring to the comic-book superhero Superman. The S, sometimes lined or crossed out, can also refer to dollar signs and the price of success.
3. He paints the letters X-MN to refer to the X-Men comic-book heroes who protect the world that hates them, drawing an analogy with his African American heroes.
4. **The streets:** The "X" also refers to a Hobo sign, marks hobos leave, such as graffiti, to inform other hobos about places. The "X" Hobo sign means "OK, alright." The X can also stand for negation.

Learning Objective: 2.4 Explain how cultural conventions can inform our interpretation of works of art.

Topic: Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

34. Compare and contrast the two works titled *Treaty Signing at Medicine Lodge Creek*, one by John Taylor and one by Howling Wolf. In your discussion, use the terms “form,” “content,” “representational,” “abstract,” and “ledger” art.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Both artists represent the same event; therefore, their works share similar content.
2. Their works differ in form in their medium and composition. Taylor, an Anglo-American journalist, made his work for a magazine and based it on sketches made on the scene. It was published soon after the event. Howling Wolf, a Native American, made his work nearly a decade later when he was in jail and drew it on blank accounts’ ledgers. It is so-called ledger art.
3. Taylor’s view is limited to the grove itself. It represents more closely a natural view that could be called more representational. Howling Wolf shows the scene from above to show the grove and to include many cultural motifs related to the Indians, such as tipis and warriors. He adjusts space in a way that could be called abstract; for instance showing the tipis head-on instead of foreshortened as they would be seen from above. However, both artists selected how to depict the scene, according to their own purpose and point of view.
4. Taylor does not show women, whereas Indian women are very prominent in Howling Wolf’s work, suggesting the importance of women in his culture.

Learning Objective: 2.3 Discuss how form, as opposed to content, might also help us to understand the meaning of a work of art.

Topic: The Critical Process

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

