



## AP<sup>®</sup> Art History 2004 Sample Student Responses

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B

III

ART HISTORY  
SECTION II—Part B

Time—60 minutes

2 Questions

Directions: You have 60 minutes to answer the two questions in this part. Responses that answer the question directly will receive higher scores than those that simply list characteristics or include irrelevant points. Therefore, spend a few minutes organizing or outlining your response in the blank space provided above each question. (Notes in the blank space will not be graded.) Be sure to analyze each question carefully and choose appropriate examples. Identify your examples as fully as possible.

Non-Western: Khafre statue at Giza, Egypt 2500 B.C.

Western: Praxiteles, Aphrodite of Knidos 350 B.C.

humanism  
Plato  
Pythagoras

8. This question asks you to explore the stylistic relationships between the form and content of figurative art.

How a culture is perceived is often expressed in depictions of the human figure. Choose two specific representations of the human body from different cultures. Only one of your choices may be from a European artistic tradition. Discuss significant aspects of each culture that are revealed by the way in which the human body is depicted. (30 minutes)

The different aspects and traditions of a culture is evident in the depictions of the human figure. Two great cultures who placed great importance on the way they portrayed or sculpted the human body ~~are~~ are Egypt and Classical Greece. Both of these cultures portrayed the human body according to the religious beliefs they had.

Ancient Egyptian civilization started during

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the Pre-dynastic Period of Egypt (approx. ~~3500~~ 3500 B.C.) Egyptians believed in immortality and the after-life. They also believed that their pharaohs were the descendants of their gods. As seen in ancient Egyptian artifacts, the pharaohs of Egypt were greatly honored and praised. They made tombs for their pharaohs such as the Pyramids of Old Kingdom Egypt in order to house and protect the body of the pharaoh and his belongings, ~~they~~ be. The Egyptians believed that the ka, or spirit of the pharaoh would take its original form and enjoy a good afterlife. In order to guarantee a good afterlife, the tombs of the pharaohs were decorated with scenes of the pharaoh's life and had many sculptural depictions of the pharaoh. Egyptians believed that if the mummy deteriorated, the ka would take the shape of the sculptural ~~and~~ depiction of the pharaoh and go to the afterlife. One such sculptural depiction is the seated statue of Khafre from Giza, Egypt made around 2500 B.C. during the Old Kingdom of Egypt. The sculpture of the pharaoh has many of the features that all sculptures during old kingdom Egypt had. The figure depicted is frontal, stiff, and rigid. It shows

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The power and grandeur of the pharaoh, the figure is very idealized. This feature shows the way the Egyptians respected and honored their pharaohs. Another feature of the sculpture is that it is made of a stone called diorite. This stone is very strong and lasts a long time. In other words, it shows permanence, which is evident in the Egyptian culture, because they wanted to guarantee the pharaoh an afterlife, just in case the mummy had deteriorated. All the parts of the body are shown with ~~great detail~~ detail. These features of the sculpture are evident to the aspects of the Egyptian culture.

Another culture who depicted the human body was classical Greece which started around 480 B.C. and lasted until 390 B.C. During this time, the philosophical idea of Humanism had a great effect on the art and culture of Greece. Humanism, as proposed by a famous Greek philosopher and mathematician, Protagoras, states that humans are "the measure of all things,"

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This idea led to the idea of democracy and the democratic government, which started with the Greeks; it also had a great effect on the way the human body was depicted. Ancient Greeks believed in many gods which represented different things in nature. During the time of humanism, sculptors like Phidias, Polykleitos, and Praxiteles represented their gods as humans and humans as gods. One sculpture in which the humanistic approach is evident is the Aphrodite of Knidos by Praxiteles, made around 350 B.C., during the late Classical Period of Greece. This sculpture shows Venus portrayed in a very human-like form. It is evident in the sculptural depiction that the human body and anatomy was greatly studied. Also that mathematics was applied in order to represent the body. The Aphrodite of Knidos is portrayed in a realistic form, which sought balance, harmony, and proportion. Praxiteles was also the first sculptor of Classical Greece who portrayed the female in a completely nude and sensuous form. These features show that the humanistic qualities were used and that the Greeks during this period wanted to represent

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The African ethnicity is often looked down on because of the lack of ~~understanding~~ understanding about the culture. They are often considered savage and barbaric while in reality they are a proud people, a spiritual people and this is reflected in their art. One of the ~~parts~~ sculptures was a wood carving of a bust of a woman. Although the sculpture is stylized a little

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bit, it does show an almost accurate representation of the human form. The image shows ~~the~~ the pride of the tribe <sup>was</sup> towards their leader. Also it shows the importance of a woman in their cultural heritage. They believed women were the supreme decision makers of their time. ~~the~~ <sup>the men of the tribes</sup> even were known to wear female type masks ~~at~~ when the time <sup>had</sup> ~~to~~ come to make a decision <sup>for</sup> about the tribe. Also African art tended to ~~show~~ show a strong spirituality. Africans ~~for~~ believed that their family was the past dead, the present living, and the future unborn. This spirituality and beliefs are represented in their art.

Similarly, other cultures also showed their culture through their art. The Northern Dutch painters for example were known to paint everyday life (genre painting). They were more realistic and pragmatic than many other cultures. Artists like Rembrandt were able to depict self-portraits of himself that were not only realistic but also

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rather unflattering. The northern artists were interested in depicting the human ~~form~~ form as an accurate representation, rather than a symbol of their spirituality. Their paintings however are more prone to show the strength and hardworking characteristics of ~~the~~ the citizens.

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