

When: The oral test on Arts and Ideas will take place over several days. Students in the class will be divided evenly among those days: one day for taking the test, and the other days for working on the rest of the final exam. Mr. Woodruff will have checked with students ahead of time to make sure they are available on that day. (Students who are absent on the day of the test will receive a 0 and will be allowed to take a written make-up test later in the week that will be averaged with the zero.)

What: Each day Mr. Woodruff will present to the testing group of students images from the different time periods we have studied and students will comment on them to demonstrate their learning of the semester's material.

How: Student responses should follow a three step format: identifying what time period the piece of art is from, naming an idea from that time period the piece engages, and pointing out the features of the piece that illustrate that idea. The student can also work in the opposite order, moving from features of the art that develop an idea and tying that idea to a culture. Using terminology that the course develops greatly helps others understand what one is trying to say, and students are strongly encouraged to have memorized certain key terms besides the time periods, the cultural ideas, and the main supporting ideas. An inarticulate response will lower a student's score for that image. Names of artists, pieces, and special techniques, however, may raise a student's score for that image. Naming is not essential for performing well on the test, but those names certainly can elevate a somewhat mediocre explanation to a better score.

Each image can support several different answers, getting at different ideas that a time period valued. (Obviously, it is in the interest of the student to pay attention to his or her peers' answers to refresh the memory, learn points he or she might have missed, and to get a feel for what makes a good answer.) An image will be available until Mr. Woodruff feels the image has been exhausted; then he will present another image or images. The test will continue like this until the end of the period. Mr. Woodruff will give each student a chance to demonstrate their knowledge, with each student getting to respond to four or more images (out of 8 or more, usually). The images usually proceed from easy to hard, and the period ends with images that have not been presented in the course at all. If Honors students are testing with High Honors students, they will be given the first chance to answer if everyone has had the same number of chances to answer. Students who are behind in the number of answers attempted will also get to start when a new image is presented.

Grading: The teacher will not indicate what part of any answer is right or wrong, but will comment on the overall answer by saying (and writing down) one of the following:

excellent: features, ideas, time period all correct; well expressed with use of a technical term (3 of 3)
very good: features, ideas, or time period correct, one element is unclear; well expressed, may lack terms (2 of 3)
good: two of the elements are correct but one is definitely wrong; or element is unclear and answer not well expressed (2 of 3)
poor: only one of the elements is correct; wrong statements overwhelm any correct point
wrong: none correct

Add-ons: Students may also add to other students' comments. Add-ons are noted and are used to help raise a test by up to a half letter.

The teacher will record all comments, and then assess the quality of the comments made during the testing time in light of the other days' tests and the other period's tests.

Although the actual numbers of kinds of responses may vary, below is a sample of how grades have been assessed in the past.

A: Three to four excellent responses. No wrong or good responses. Four or more cultures identified.

B: One to Two excellent responses. No wrong responses. Three cultures identified.

C: Two or more Very Good responses. No more than one Wrong responses. Three cultures identified.

D: More Good responses than Wrong responses. Two cultures identified.

F: More Wrong responses than other responses.