Met Museum Paper Assignment #2: Comparative Paper

Assignment Overview: In this comparative paper, you will analyze and explain the relationship between an artwork from the post-modern period with one from the modern period by an artist we’ve studied this semester.

1. Viewing the Post-Modern Artworks at the Met:

Find Gallery 915 within the Met and walk around the entire length of this long gallery looking at each painting. Select two possible artworks as options and record your impressions about these artworks in person. Record your visual impressions and what is interesting about the artworks. Note all the information on the wall labels as well. (Note: The reason you are selecting two artworks now is so that you have some choice. If one becomes difficult to find information about or hard to make a comparison with, you can drop it and go with the other one.)

2. Research and Analysis at Home:

After examining the post-modern artwork in person, read about it on the Met’s website at home. Is there an essay about this artist on the Met’s website? Are there more works in the Met’s collection by this artist? If so, read about them. Is it part of a style or group in post-modern painting? If so, read about this. Your material on the post-modern artist will be based mainly on your visual analysis of this artwork and incorporate any additional information from the Met’s wall label and website.

3. Select a Modern Artwork for Comparison:

After selecting, analyzing and gathering information about the post-modern artwork, select your modern artwork. Think back over the entire semester about the styles and artists we have studied to select an artist or style that relates to the post-modern artwork you have selected, either in terms of a visual and stylistic influence that exists between the two artists or a similar social, political, or cultural theme or subject matter that connects these artworks. Select one artwork from this modern artist or style to serve as your comparative example. In this paper, you will analyze the appearance of both artworks and explain their art historical context and other ideas relating to both of them.

(Note: The modern artwork does *not* have to come from the Met. It can be an artwork we studied or it can be a new and different artwork by an artist we studied.)

4. Further Research:

Consult the following sources to see what information they have about both your artists. Keep notes of this information to use in your written comparison.

* Read relevant essays related to the modern artist or the movement/style in which they are categorized from the Met’s website to solidify the content for your comparison: from the Met’s homepage (www.metmuseum.org), select the ART tab near the top; select the *Timeline of Art History* to find various timelines, thematic essays or essays about individual artists. You can also search by keyword. One of these might have already been assigned during the semester, so this will be a review.
* Read relevant essays related to the modern artist or style from Khan Academy’s website: from the homepage (khanacademy.org), select ‘Subjects’ in top left; then ‘Art history’ in the Arts & Humanities column near the right.
* Read relevant material from the website theartstory.org: On theartstory.org, you can search by styles and movements or by individual artists. Start with searching for your artists by their last names. If they are associated with a specific style or movement, read about this as well. Any information on the post-modern artist will likely be found on this site.
* To browse artworks, consult the database artstor.org. Artstor is a database of artworks sorted by artist, date, and other categories. From the Lehman library’s webpage, find database list underneath the OneSearch box and find Artstor by selecting Database A-Z List. Search for all the artworks by your artists. This might help you to find the best modern artwork example for your comparison. (You can download images from artstor.org with your Lehman college email address.)

Guidelines for Writing Your Paper:

* Include a thesis statement in the introductory paragraph that makes clear the reason you have selected these two artworks for comparison. For example, do the two artists’ techniques appear similar, is the content similar, or has the post-modern artist been influenced by the earlier artist (as stated on the Met’s label or from your reading)?
* The body of your paper should explain how this influence or visual relationship is seen in either subject matter or the appearance and treatment of the formal characteristics or both. You will also explain how the overall goal or idea in the post-modern artwork is either similar or different to the comparative modern artwork and explain what this means in relation to the appearance of the artworks.
* Include separate paragraphs for the post-modern artwork and the modern artwork. Remember that this is a comparison paper, so if you discuss the subject matter of one work, you should be analyzing the second work in relation to its subject matter as well, and the same goes for technique and formal characteristics.
* You should not simply describe each artwork separately, but rather compare and contrast them to explain information that supports your thesis statement.
* This is a visual analysis paper. The text should be written in your own words, rather than relying on the use of quotations to explain what you should be saying yourself. If you are using information from the Met’s wall label or their website, document the source of this information by indicating it like this at the end of the sentence. (Met Museum label)
* In your conclusion, explain what you find interesting in regards to the similarities and/or differences between the two artworks after considering their relationship.

Formatting Guidelines: typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, approx. 3 pages long. No images inserted in the text.

The following worksheet is a required part of the assignment and is to be handed in with your paper.

Use this area below for notes during your museum visit and/or for making bullet points of content before you begin writing your paper.

Name:

Project Worksheet Page: Fill in this page with neatly handwritten text or on the computer and print it out. It must be turned in with your paper.

Artwork in Gallery 915: Artist’s name, title, date, size and material information from the label here:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Briefly explain why you selected this post-modern artwork:

Modern Artwork from the semester for comparison: Name of artist, title of artwork, date, style:

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Briefly explain what led you to select the comparative modern artist or the style you are comparing it with? Something about them should be related to warrant this comparison either in terms of their styles or appearance or in the context or ideas with which they relate. Explain this here and state where you found the one modern artwork you used for your representative example:

From the Met’s *Timeline of Art History*, list the titles of any essays you read and explain how they related to your comparison:

From the Khan Academy’s website, what information did you find and how did it relate to your comparison:

From the website theartstory.org, what information did you find and how did it relate to your comparison:

Did you find your image on artstor.org?

**Checklist for art historical comparison paper:**

Use this as a guide for writing your paper and for preparing to turn it in.

**Introduction**

\_\_\_\_ Thesis statement is clearly articulated – this is the basis of your comparison. Why are they brought together in this paper? Establish this here. What the paper is about should be made clear in the first paragraph.

\_\_\_\_ The artworks under discussion are introduced properly:

**Construction and other details:**

\_\_\_\_ correct punctuation, grammar, sentence construction - no sentence fragments!

\_\_\_\_ text is free from spelling errors and typos – use Spell Check!

\_\_\_\_ 12-point type; double spaced; no extra spaces between paragraphs

\_\_\_\_ no images inserted in the body of the text – I will reference your artworks with the label information provided in the worksheet and from your introduction

**Body of the Paper**

\_\_\_\_ Art historical terms and vocabulary are used correctly;

\_\_\_\_ analysis of the artworks uses valid, clear and descriptive explanations rather than vague language. Do not say ‘it pops’ or ‘the artist takes it to a new level’

\_\_\_\_ The text is a comparison. For example, if surface texture is discussed about one sculpture, compare and contrast the surface texture of the other sculpture and explain how the similarities or differences impacts the meaning in both artworks.

The discussion of the artworks is well-integrated into the overall discussion:

\_\_\_\_ You are not just describing, you are analyzing what holds these two artworks together; and explaining what is different about their appearance or the ideas that go into their appearance

\_\_\_\_ Be specific, using details from the appearance of the artwork and information from the label to support your analysis whenever possible.

\_\_\_\_ text is not repetitious and stays on topic because it is organized by paragraphs (An outline before writing can be helpful for this!)

**Conclusion**

\_\_\_\_ There is a conclusion that nicely wraps up the discussion. The conclusion does not have to be long, but it should quickly summarize without being overly repetitious.

It is a good place to incorporate your opinions or response to the analysis you have just undertaken.

**Citations of sources (if/where required):**

\_\_\_\_ Text is written in your own words, rather than relying on long quotations from sources to explain the information for you. Put things in your own words!

(Since this is not a research paper, you most likely will not have any citations requiring footnotes. But, if you do take analysis from another source, you must cite it with a footnote, including the Met’s website or museum label.)

\_\_\_\_ if any material did come from the wall label or the Met’s website, it is footnoted