

ART CRITICISM CHECK SHEET

After your initial reaction, follow the following steps:

STEP 1:

DESCRIPTION: What do you see? (Do not draw inferences or express feelings. **Only give the facts.**) What elements of design did the artist use? What information can you get from the credit line?

1. **LINES.** What kinds of lines do you see?
2. **SHAPES.** What kinds of shapes do you see?
3. **TEXTURES.** What kinds of textures do you see?
4. **COLORS.** What kinds of colours do you see?
5. **OBJECTS.** What kinds of objects do you see?

STEP 2: ANALYSIS: How is it organized? How do the parts relate?

Describe the relationships among the things you see. How do the things affect or influence each other? You may want to consider one of the following:

1. **BALANCE.** What kind of balance is used?
2. **FOCAL POINT.** What is the first thing that you see when you look at the art work? What elements/principles have been used to create the centre of interest?
3. **CONTRAST.** How does contrast create emphasis? variety?
4. **ILLUSION OF SPACE.** What kind of space is used? How is the illusion created?
5. **RHYTHM CREATED BY REPETITION.** What elements do you see repeated in the art work?

STEP 3:

INTERPRETATION: What does it mean? What is the purpose?

Combine what you learned about the work in Description and Analysis to determine what it means. Remember, a work of art is sometimes very complicated. It can be interpreted in different ways by different people. Your interpretation will be a personal one, but must be based upon the information you have gathered from the picture. Consider the context in which the art was created: culture/nationality of the artist, world events, history etc.

1. The artist seems primarily concerned with imitating nature.
2. The artist seems to be mostly interested in expressing a feeling or motion.
3. The primary concern of this artist seems to be with lines, shapes, colours, and textures, and with design and composition.
4. The artist is interested in a combination of things.
5. The title tells you something about the painting. What?
6. What words best describe what you think is the meaning of this art work?

STEP 4: JUDGMENT: What is the success or lack of success of the art work?

What is your opinion of the art work?

1. This painting is an excellent / good / fair / poor example of:

IMITATIONALISM (imitating nature). The work reminds us of what we see in the real world. It is a realistic representation of subject matter.

EMOTIONALISM (showing a feeling or emotion). The art work is a vivid communication of moods, feelings, and ideas to the viewer.

FORMALISM (making the viewer aware of lines, shapes, colours, or designs). The art work shows an effective organization of the elements of art through the use of the principles.

2. I like / don't like this art work because.....