

Art 1

Community Name \_\_\_\_\_

Modern to Contemporary Art

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Each member earned \_\_\_\_\_ out of 20 possible points.

### Community Discussion #1

#### The Fine Art of Description

1. Once your community has been assembled, introduce yourselves to each other, decide on the best way to communicate with each other (for example, via email, phone, etc.) and exchange contact information. Write that info below.

Member Name	Contact info

2. Choose a creative name for your group relating to the course and write it above.
3. Identify the title, artist and date of the artwork that your group has chosen.

Title	
Artist	
Date	

4. Brainstorm and build a list of at least 20 describing this artwork using the table below.

Descriptive Words/ Adjectives			

5. Using as many of the words from your table above write a description of the basic look of the artwork in NO LESS than 200 words (about two paragraphs). Discuss the colors and materials used, describe any textures you may see, consider the work's symmetry or asymmetry, record the dimensions of the piece, define the artist's use of line, decide if the work is representational or abstract, etc.

Be careful NOT to interpret the work! Your objective is to describe, not to explain.

Some things to consider when describing a work of art:

You are conducting a *formal analysis* of a relevant work. *Form* is the shape and structure of a work of art. *Formal elements* include color, shape, pattern, and duration. Many artists strive for a relationship between form and content, so that the way something is made fits with what the artist intends the work to be about or how it will be seen. However, in this assignment, you are asked to master methods of description (we'll get to content next time). While it is not necessary to answer all of the following questions, this checklist should give you some ideas.

What are the formal elements of the work?

- Medium - What materials were used to make this work?  
What are the qualities of the media used?  
What did this material allow the artist to do and prevent the artist from doing?
- Line - Are the lines thick or thin, straight or curved, crisp or fuzzy, calm or wild, bold or subdued, organic or mechanical?  
Are the lines actual or implied?  
Do the lines organize the elements of the work in some way?
- Color - Do the colors of the work reflect the natural world or are they expressive?  
Is the color palette warm or cool, bright or muted, in contrast or harmonious?  
Are the colors suggestive of something outside of the physical work?
- Light - Is there an obvious source of light in the work? For what purpose is it used?  
Are shadows noticeable in the work and how are they used?
- Space - Is the space actual or an illusion, deep or shallow, real or fantasy?  
How are the elements of the work configured within its space?  
Is space depicted systematically (as with linear perspective) or randomly?
- Composition - How do the various formal elements interact?  
How does the eye move across the work? Is the eye stopped by an element?  
How is the viewer's gaze directed?
- Style - Is the work part of a historical tradition or style?  
Does the work reflect an artistic movement or concern?  
Generally, how does the work look? Is the work realistic or abstract, geometric or organic, energetic or subdued, bold or harmonious.... ?

How is the work displayed?

- Is the work outside or inside? Is it in a big and open or small and confined space?
- Is the lighting bright or dim?
- Was the work made for the place that you are viewing it?
- Are you allowed to touch the work or asked to participate in some way?

If you're at a loss for words or are not yet familiar with art terminology, please see:

[http://www.pbs.org/art21/education/glossary\\_pop.html](http://www.pbs.org/art21/education/glossary_pop.html)

<http://www.artlex.com/>