UNIFYING THEMES IN ART HISTORY*

*Resources taken from Dr. Robert Coad, Hamilton High School Humanities Magnet.

Spirituality
- Sacred space and the spiritual in art
- How world religions create very different religious art objects and places of worship

Creativity
- The nature of the creative process
- How the idea of creativity related to art making within various cultures

Realism vs. Abstraction
- The changing definition of realism
- Why does abstractions occur in diverse cultures and periods of art

Intellectual vs. Emotional
- How these different aspects of being human find expression in art
- The role of the spiritual, sexual, and subconscious in art and art making

The Individual vs. the Community
- The role of the artist within larger communities including relationships with their patrons
- Works of art as expressions of both the collective and individual aspirations

Propaganda
- Art in the service of politics and religion
- Art as an expression of power and authority

The Ideal
- Sources and definitions of the Ideal in art and culture
- The ever-changing relationship between the Ideal and the arts

Style
- The identification of issues of style
- How style changes over time and between cultures

Aesthetics
- Strategies of aesthetic valuing
- The changing definitions of beauty in art

Historical Record
- Subjective versus objective recording of reality
- Art as a catalyst for change
- Art as protest and dissent

The Nude
- The human body and metaphor

Change as a Tradition in Western Art
- The concept of modern and its relationship to the avant garde
- Reading contemporary culture and value through the study of art objects and architecture
ART HISTORY CORE ISSUES*

*Resources taken from Dr. Robert Coad, Hamilton High School Humanities Magnet.

Art function of art and the role of the artist as historian and catalyst for change
Reality subjective and objective recording of experience
Humanity balancing intellect, emotions, the subconscious, spirituality, and sexuality
Creativity origins and methods of the creative process
Change action and reaction of opposing elements throughout history
Faith man’s relationship to a higher order and to death/the afterlife
Appropriation co-opting the “other” and/or the “past” as one’s own
Beauty changing definitions of beauty within and between cultures and history
Power art as propaganda and symbol of authority
Ritual the shaping of sacred space
Nature changing metaphors throughout history
Self portrait, self portrait, and group portrait
Language description, analysis, comparison, meaning
Style differentiation of the individual and the collective

BIG IDEAS IN ART*

*Resources taken from the new AP Art History Guide.

1. Artists manipulate materials and ideas to create an aesthetic object, act, or event.
2. Art making is shaped by tradition and change.
3. Interpretations of art are variable.

THEMES:

Natural World
Human Body
Individual and Society
Knowledge and Belief

SUBTHEMES:

Conflict/Harmony
Identity
Domestic Life
Power
Inner Visions
Text and Image
Urban Experience

Converging Cultures
Display
History/Memory
Life Cycle
Private/Public
Performance
**AP ART HISTORY**

Art History Themes Overview

**THEMES EXPLORED BY ARTISTS**

*Resource taken from Gateways to Art.*

**Art and Community**
- Civic and ceremonial places
- Art in public spaces
- Manmade mountains
- Ritual: Performance, Balance, Healing
- Art in the Public Sphere
  - How does art affect its community?
  - How can artworks be controversial?
  - How does collaboration affect art?

**Spirituality and Art**
- Deities
- Spiritual Beings and Ancestors
- Connecting with the Gods
- Sacred Places
  - What makes a place sacred?

**Art and the Cycle of Life**
- Life's Beginnings and Family Ties
- Sacrifice, Death, and Rebirth
- The Power of Nature
- Judgment
  - In comparing different cultural traditions, how do their artists represent the life cycle?
  - How are symbols used in the representations of the cycles of life?

**Art and Science**
- Astronomical Knowledge in Art
- Art Celebrating Science
- Using Science to Create Art
- The Science of Perception and the Senses
- Science of Mind
- The Scientific Restoration of Artworks
  - How do artists inspire sensations that are similar to music in their work?
  - How do artist's scientific studies contribute to their work?
  - What kinds of art are influenced by recent technological advancements?

**Art and Illusion**
- Art as an Illusionistic Window
- Illusionism as Trickery
- Illusion and the Transformation of Ideas
  - What are artist’s motivations for using illusionism?

**Art and Rulers**
- Regal Portraits
- Art to Demonstrate Absolute Power
- The Power to Command
- Art and Societal Control
  - How do artists convey power of a ruler?
  - Do royal portraits tell us what a ruler really looked like?

**Art and War**
- Documenting War: Unbiased Fact or Biased Judgment
- Warriors and Scenes of Battle
- The Artist's Response to War
  - With art of war, do artists try to persuade the viewer to support one side of the battle?
  - How do artists use medium of photography to convey a message?

**Art of Social Conscience**
- Art as Social Protest
- Art as the Object of Protest
- Memorials and Remembrance
  - Do you believe artworks should never be censored, or do you think that there are some subjects that should be banned?

**The Body in Art**
- Archetypal Images of Body
- Ideal Proportion
- Notions of Beauty
- Performance Art: The Body Becomes Artwork
- The Body in Pieces
  - What do artists discover through their explorations of the human body?
  - What role does the person represented in the artwork play?

**Art and Gender**
- Gendered Roles
- Feminist Critique
- Blurring the Lines: Ambiguous Genders
  - What obstacles have women faced in being taken seriously as professional artist?

**Expression**
- Making a Self-portrait
- Finding an Artistic Voice
- Borrowing an Image
  - What do artists explore or convey in their self-portraits?
  - How does influence differ from appropriation?
THEMES AND EXAMPLE ARTWORKS*

*Resource taken from Valerie Park’s AP Art History Website.

**Power and Authority**
- Colliseum, Roman
- The Palette of Narmer, Egyptian
- The Stele Naram Sin, Mesopotamia
- The Statue of Marcus Aurelius
- Terracotta Warrior, Emperor Shi Huang Di
- The Colossal Heads of the Olmecs
- Temple of Ramses, Egyptian
- The animal head post of the Vikings
- Larnassu
- Versailles, Austria
- The Great Pyramids, Giza
- The Forbidden City, Beijing, China
- The Great Wall of China
- Lion Gate, Mycenean
- Ishhtar Gate, Mesopotamia
- The Ivory Belt Mask, African
- Equestrian statue of the fly whisk hilt, African
- Bayoux Tapestry
- Citadel of Persepolis
- Hadrian's Wall
- The Palace of Knossos
- The Parthenon
- The Pantheon
- The Altar of Pergamon
- Macchu Pichu
- Empire State Building
- Chrysler Building
- Kneeling Hatshepsut
- The Arch of Constantine
- The Dinner Party
- The Seagram Building
- Eiffel Tower
- The Last Judgement, Michelangelo
- The Capitol Building
- The Houses of Parliament
- The Coronation of Napoleon
- King Louis XIV

**Nature**
- Spring Fresco, Akrotiri, Minoan, 1550 BCE
- Any Chinese Landscape Painting
- Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog, Artist: Caspar David Friedrich, 1818
- The Great Wave, Artist: Hokusai, 1826
- Among the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California, Artist: Albert Bierstadt, 1868
- Starry Night, Artist: Vincent van Gogh, 1889
- Mont Sainte Victoire, Artist: Paul Cezanne, late 19th century
- The Oxbow, Artist: Thomas Cole, 1836
- Ansel Adams
- Spiral Jetty, Artist: Robert Smithson, 1970
- Andy Goldsworthy
- Christo and Jeanne-Claude

**Sacred Spaces**
Architects: Iktinos and Kalikrates, 447 BCE
- Great Stupa, Sanci, India, 3rd century BCE
- Temple of Fortuna Virilis, Rome, Italy, 75 BCE
- Pantheon, Rome, Italy, 118 CE
- Saint Sernin, Toulouse, France, 1070
- Chartes Cathedral, France, 1143
- Saint Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, Begun 1506

**The Human Body**
- David
- Michelangelo
- The Seated Boxer
- Doryphorus
- Polycleitos
- Pieta
- Michelangelo
- Diskobolos
- The Dying Gaul
- Dead Christ
- Mantegna
- Barberini Faun
- Zeus/Poisedon
- David
- Donatello
- David
- Verocchio
- Kritios Boy
- The Creation of Adam
- Michelangelo
- Garden of Earthly Delights
- Bosch
- David
- Bernini
- The Guitar Player
- Picasso
- Ka Aper
- Egyptian
- Vetruvian Man
- da Vinci
- The Kiss
- Gustave Klimt
- The Grand Odalisque
- Ingres
- The Old Market Woman
- Hellenistic Greece
- The Venus of Urbino
- Titian
- Olympia
- Manet
- Nike of Samothrace
- Woman I
- de Kooning
- Les Demoiselle d’Avignon
- Picasso
- Bust Nefertiti
- Portrait of a Lady
- van der Weyden
- Starification Object Series
- Wilk
- The Birth of Venus
- Botticelli
- Madonna with the Long Neck
- Parmigianino
- Abduction of the Sabine Woman
- Adam and Eve (Fall of Man)
- Durer
- Cycladic Figurine
- Luncheon on the Grass
- Manet
**Art History Themes**

**Propaganda**
- Augustus of Primaporta
- Coronation of Napoleon
- Liberty Leading the People
- The Column of Trajan
- The Last Judgement
- The Raft of Medusa
- The Arch of Constantine
- The Third of May
- Otto III

**Violence in Art**
- Abduction of the Sabine Woman
  Artist: Geovanni da Bologna
  1579
  (Romans capturing a Sabine woman)
- Garden of Earthly Delights
  Artist: Hieronymous Bosch
  1505
  (people being tormented by demons)
- Judith Slaying Holofernes
  Artist: Artemesia Gentileschi
  1614
  (Judith beheading Holofernes)
- Martyrdom of Saint Philip
  Artist: Jose de Ribera
  1639
  (raising of Philip on a cross)
- Death of Marat
  Artist: Jacques-Louis David
  1793
  (Marat dead in a bloody bath)
- Third of May, 1808
  Artist: Francisco Goya
  1814
  (murder of Spanish civilians by French military)
- A Harvest of Death, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, July 1863
  Artist: Timothy O’Sullivan
  1863
  (dead Union soldiers at Gettysburg 1863)
- Guernica
  Artist: Pablo Picasso
  1937
  (Spanish civilians/animals/soldiers affected in time of war)

**Women in Art**
- Pieta
  Rome, Italy
  Artist: Michelangelo
  15th century
- Portrait of a Lady
  Artist: van der Weyden
  15th century
- Birth of Venus
  Artist: Botticelli
  15th century
- Mona Lisa
  Artist: Leonardo da Vinci
  16th century
- Venus of Urbino
  Artist: Titian
  16th century
- Ecstasy of Saint Teresa
  Artist: Bernini
  17th century
- Judith Slaying Holofernes
  Artist: Gentileschi
  17th century
- Evening Bell at the Clock
  Artist: Suzuki Harunobu
  18th century
- The Swing
  Artist: Fragonard
  18th century
- Saying Grace
  Artist: Chardin
  18th century
- Self Portrait
  Artist: Vigee-Lebrun
  19th century
- Le Grande Odalisque
  Artist: Ingres
  1814
- Olympia
  Artist: Manet
  1863
Art History Themes

- **The Bath**  
  Artist: Mary Cassatt  
  1892

- **Le Demoiselle de Avignon**  
  Artist: Pablo Picasso  
  1907

- **Nude**  
  Artist: Edward Weston  
  1925

- **Migrant Mother**  
  Artist: Dorothea Lange  
  1935

- **The Two Fridas**  
  Artist: Frida Kahlo  
  1939

**Portraits**

- **Arnolfini and his Bride**  
  Artist: van Eyck  
  16th century

- **Las Meninas**  
  Artist: Diego Velazquez  
  16th century

- **Olympia**  
  Artist: Manet  
  1863

- **Mona Lisa**  
  Artist: da Vinci  
  16th century

- **Otto III**  
  Artist: Otoonian  
  16th century

- **Hatshepsut**  
  Artist: Thutmose  
  15th century

- **Man in the Red Turban**  
  Artist: van Eyck  
  16th century

- **The Equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius**  
  Artist: Roman  
  17th century

- **David**  
  Artist: Michelangelo  
  15th century

- **Portrait of a Lady**  
  Artist: van der Weyden  
  16th century

- **Bust of Nefertiti**  
  Artist: Amarna Period, Egyptian  
  17th century

- **Head of a Patrician**  
  Artist: Ingres  
  17th century

- **Self Portrait**  
  Artist: Le Brun  
  17th century

- **Sarcophagus of Lars Pulena**  
  Artist: Roman  
  17th century

- **Allegory of the Art of Painting**  
  Artist: Vermeer  
  17th century

**Domestic Space**

- **Venus of Urbino**  
  Artist: Titian  
  17th century

- **Allegory of the Art of Painting**  
  Artist: Vermeer  
  17th century

- **Vanitas Still Life**  
  Artist: Claesz  
  17th century

- **The Bath**  
  Artist: Mary Cassatt  
  17th century

- **Las Meninas**  
  Artist: Diego Velasquez  
  17th century

- **The Daughters of Edward Boit**  
  Artist: John Singer Sargent  
  Late 19th century

- **The Red Room**  
  Artist: Henri Matisse  
  Early 20th century

- **The Bedroom**  
  Artist: Vincent van Gogh  
  Late 19th century

- **Monticello**  
  Architect: Thomas Jefferson  
  1772

- **Tassel House**  
  Architect: F.L. Wright  
  1937

- **Casa Mila**  
  Architect: Antonio Gaudi  
  1907

**Roman Pompeian houses, Italy**  
2nd century BCE

- **Palazzo Rucellai**  
  Architect: Leon Battista Alberti  
  1446

- **Palladio, Villa Rotunda**  
  Architect: Thomas Jefferson  
  1772

- **Falling Water**  
  Architect: F.L. Wright  
  1937

- **Casa Mila**  
  Architect: Antonio Gaudi  
  1907