



## Art History, Art Criticism & Aesthetics

**Art History.** A record of the visual arts, incorporating information, interpretations, and judgments about art objects, artists, and conceptual influences on developments in the visual arts.

You will come across the terms style, school, and movement endlessly in art history. But just what is the difference between them?

**Style.** Style is a term that can refer to several aspects of art. Style can mean the technique(s) used to create the artwork. Pointillism, for example, is a method of creating a painting by using small dots of color and allowing color blending to occur within the viewer's eye. Style can refer to the basic philosophy behind the artwork, for example the “art for the people” philosophy behind the Arts and Crafts movement. Style can also refer to the form of expression employed by the artist or the characteristic appearance of artworks.

**School.** A school is a group of artists who follow the same style, share the same teachers, or have the same aims. They are typically linked to a single location.

Schools of art from the middle-ages until the eighteenth century are typically named for the region or city around which they are based. The apprentice system, through which new artists learned the trade ensured that styles of art were continued from master to apprentice.

**Movement.** A group of artists who have a share a common style, theme, or ideology towards their art. Unlike a school, these artists need not be in the same location, or even in communication with each other. Pop Art, for example, is a movement which includes the work of David Hockney and Richard Hamilton in the UK, and also Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, and Jim Dine in the US.

### **Words you should know:**

\***Abstract.** Artwork in which little or no attempt is made to represent images realistically, and objects are often simplified or distorted.

**Artifact.** An object representing a particular culture or stage of technological development.

**Art Media.** Broad categories for grouping works of visual art according to the art materials used.

**Composition.** The ordered arrangement of the elements of art according to the principles of design.

**Concept.** An idea

**Contemporary.** Modern; current; coming into being during the same period of time.

**Content.** Meaning and significance; events, physical detail, and information in a work of art.

**Culture.** Socially transmitted behaviors, arts, beliefs, institutions and all products of human work and thought, considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community or population.

**Decorative.** Ornamental; beauty over function.

**Design.** An artwork that has a planned arrangement of elements and principles.

**Dominance.** The importance of the emphasis of one aspect in relation to all other aspects of a design.

**Focal Point.** The first part of a work to attract the attention of the viewer.

**Function/Functional.** Purpose of an art work; designed chiefly from the point of view of use.

**Genre.** The representation of people, subjects and scenes from everyday life.

**Icon.** Symbol or image.

**Medium (Media).** Material(s) used to create works of art.

**Mixed Media.** Two or more media used in one artwork.

**Motif.** Unit that is repeated in visual rhythm.

**Pattern.** Decorative visual repetition.

**Portfolio.** A body of finished work.

**Repetition.** Technique for creating rhythm and unity in which a motif appears again and again.

**Symbol.** Lines, shapes and colors used to represent something else.

**Technique.** A specific way to create artwork, often by following a step-by-step procedure.

**Three Dimensional.** 3-D form – measured by height, width, and depth.

**Two Dimensional.** 2-D shape- measured by height and width.

## **Art Criticism & Aesthetics**

**Aesthetics.** A branch of philosophy that focuses on the nature of beauty, the nature and value of art, and the inquiry processes and human responses associated with those topics.

**Art Criticism.** Describing and evaluating the media, processes, and meanings of works of visual art, and making comparative judgments.

**Critique.** Evaluating, judging, synthesizing, analyzing.

**Judgment.** In art criticism, determining the degree of artistic merit. In art history, determining the contribution of a work of art to the history of art.

**Rubric.** A guide for judgment or assessment; a description of expectations.

## **Visual Art Components**

*Production* – visual art making.

*Aesthetics* – relating to value, beauty and theory.

*Criticism* – the process of judging visual art works and/or their narratives.

*History* – recordings of the past.

## **Art history questions**

### **Word Bank for matching**

(A) Aesthetics (B) Concept (C) Decorative (D) History (E) Focal Point

(F) Icon (G) Medium /Media (H) Mixed Media (I) Critique (J) Pattern

(K) Production (L) Portfolio (M) Rubric (N) Symbol (O) Two Dimensional

1. \_\_\_\_\_ An idea
2. \_\_\_\_\_ A body of finished work.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluating, judging, synthesizing, analyzing
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Ornamental; beauty over function
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Material(s) used to create works of art
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Lines, shapes and colors used to represent something else
7. \_\_\_\_\_ 2-D -shape- measured by height and width
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Two or more media used in one artwork.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Symbol or image
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Unit that is repeated in visual rhythm
11. \_\_\_\_\_ recordings of the past
12. \_\_\_\_\_ The first part of a work to attract the attention of the viewer
13. \_\_\_\_\_ visual art making
14. \_\_\_\_\_ relating to value, beauty and theory
15. \_\_\_\_\_ A guide for judgment or assessment; a description of expectations

### **True or False**

1. **True or False** Pointillism is a school of art
2. **True or False** *Schools of art* are typically linked to a single location
3. **True or False** *Criticism* is the process of judging visual art works
4. **True or False** *Aesthetics* is a branch of philosophy that focuses on the nature of beauty
5. **True or False** Pop Art is an art movement.

