

Metropolitan Museum Assignment

Dr. Horton / ARTH101

Due: December 2nd, upload to Brightspace.

1. **Visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art:** Visiting the museum is part of the assignment. Attach some sort of “proof” that you went to the museum to your assignment, such as a selfie with the art. Plan on spending at least 2 hours in the museum.

Location: 1000 Fifth Avenue (83rd Street and Fifth Avenue in Manhattan)

Hours: Sunday-Tuesday, 10-5 / Friday and Saturday 10-9, Closed Wednesday

Tickets: Take your QC ID to any admissions desk to get a ticket. Admission for students from NYC is “pay what you wish.” (Donate \$0.25 or \$1...)

The website, <https://www.metmuseum.org>, has lots of helpful info about directions, etc. There is free WiFi.

2. Assignment: **Complete 4, 1-page responses to the questions below.** You do not need to write an Intro/Conclusion. Just list the question you are answering and then answer it. You will turn in about 4 pages of writing altogether.

Grab a map when you enter, and ask the helpful guards / museum staff as you move through the museum.

The questions will ask you to visit 4 sections of the museum:

- Egyptian (first floor, on the “right” when you enter the Great Hall)
- Greek and Roman (first floor, on the “left” when you enter the Great Hall)
- Islamic (second floor, above the Greek and Roman galleries)
- Arts of Asia (second floor, above the Egyptian galleries)

QUESTION 1 – Egyptian galleries OR complete this question with an object in the Special Exhibition “Divine Egypt” on the second floor.

Find a work that intrigues you from the Egyptian galleries.

- Photograph it with your phone.
- Compare your photo(s) with the actual object.
- When you look at the photo compared to the object, what is ‘lost in translation’?
- How does the object look different on a screen compared to in the museum?
- Think about scale, light, color, placement, other objects nearby...all the factors that compromise context.

(If you’d like to see Hatshepsut’s statues from class, look in Gallery 131.)

QUESTION 2 – Greek and Roman galleries.

Find a work that intrigues you from the Greek and Roman galleries.

- Choose a work that has a long label (more than just the basic info, at least a paragraph of text).
- At first, ignore the label and just look at the object.
- Formulate 3 questions that you would like to know about the object.
- Then read (and reread) the label. Did it answer your questions? If not, what questions did it answer?
- How successful was the label at increasing your understanding of the work? Explain why.
- Outline the questions you would address if you were writing the label. (You don’t have to answer the questions; just formulate lines of inquiry.)

QUESTION 3 –Islamic Art galleries. Find Gallery 462 or 455.

(Real Name: Arts of the Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia)

- Find a seat in front of a manuscript painting in **Gallery 462 or 455**. Choose any painting in these galleries that appeals to you.
- Make yourself look at the painting for at least 5 minutes. (This will feel like a loooong time. That’s OK! Set a timer if you need to.)
- Write down little lists, taking note of what you notice:
 - At first, what drew you to the painting?
 - After 1 minute of looking closely
 - After 5 minutes, how does your impression change over time?
 - Does the painting look different as the light shifts, or as you (mentally) zoom in on one part of another? Are there parts that you didn’t notice at first, that come into focus later?
- Reflect on the process of slow-looking and how it changes your view of the chosen painting.

(Many objects in these galleries will be familiar from class. Take some time to look around.)

QUESTION 4 –Arts of Asia galleries. Find Gallery 206 (it’s the first gallery in this section.)

This gallery contains many statues of Bodhisattvas. In some ways, they are very similar. Notice the elaborate clothes and jewelry, for example. But they are carved in dramatically different sizes.

Use the Accession Number** to locate three Bodhisattva statues in Gallery 206, all with the title *Bodhisattva*, probably *Avalokitesvara*:

- (39”, small) 29.100.32a,b
 - (73”, medium) 42.25.3a, b
 - (13.5’, large) 65.29.4
- Compare and contrast the three works. (Notice materials, carving, decoration, pose...)
 - Pay particular attention to the differences in scale (size).
 - If you were to see these three statues on your phone, in class on the screen, or on the museum’s website what would you “not see” or understand about them?

**Accession Numbers are ID numbers for museum objects. Look for them on the labels, near where the titles, dates, etc. are listed. The first number indicates the year an object entered the museum 42 = 1942; the second number indicates when the object entered the museum in that year (42.25 = 25th item in 1942).

You can search for an object on metmuseum.org by entering the Accession Number in the Search bar at the top of the website.