

✓ **A Writer's Checklist: Revising a Draft**

- ✓ Is the title of the essay informative and interesting? (p. 147) Is it in the proper form? (pp. 260–61).
- ✓ Is the opening paragraph interesting, and by its end does it focus on the topic? (pp. 177–80)
- ✓ Is the work of art identified as precisely as possible (artist, material, location, date, and so on)? (pp. 262, 303) Are photocopies of works of art included?
- ✓ Is the point (thesis) stated soon enough—perhaps even in the title—and is it kept in view? (pp. 16, 100–01, 144, 225–27)
- ✓ Is the organization reasonable and clear? (pp. 17–18, 145–46, 254) Does each point lead into the next without irrelevances?
- ✓ Is each paragraph unified by a topic sentence or topic idea? (pp. 170–71) Do transitions connect the paragraphs? (pp. 172–74).
- ✓ Are generalizations and assertions about personal responses supported by evidence—by references to concrete details in the work? (pp. 29–30)
- ✓ Are the sentences concise, clear, and emphatic? Are needless words and inflated language eliminated? (pp. 156–58, 161–63)
- ✓ Is the concluding paragraph conclusive without being repetitive? (pp. 180–82)
- ✓ Are the dates and quotations accurate? Is credit given to sources? (pp. 279–83)
- ✓ Are quotations introduced adequately, so that the reader understands why each one is offered? (pp. 256–57)
- ✓ Are the long quotations really necessary? Can some be shortened (using ellipses to indicate omissions) or summarized in my own words? (p. 275)
- ✓ Are the titles of works of art—other than architecture—underlined? (p. 274)
- ✓ Are footnotes and bibliographic references in the proper form? (pp. 283–303)
- ✓ Has the essay been proofread? (p. 304) Are spelling and punctuation correct?

✓ **Additional Checklists**

- ✓ Basic Matters, p. 36
- ✓ Writing a Comparison, p. 129
- ✓ Writing a Review, p. 136
- ✓ Peer Review, p. 150
- ✓ Revising Paragraphs, p. 181
- ✓ Successful Electronic Searching, p. 238
- ✓ Evaluating Web Sites, p. 243
- ✓ Electronic Documentation, p. 245
- ✓ Reviewing a Revised Draft, p. 258

A Short Guide to Writing about Art

SEVENTH EDITION

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New York Boston San Francisco
London Toronto Sydney Tokyo Singapore Madrid
Mexico City Munich Paris Cape Town Hong Kong Montreal

within this comment: After the initial mistake, the person recognizes the object for what it really is.

EXPRESSING OPINIONS: THE WRITER'S "I"

The study of art is not a science, but neither is it the expression of random feelings loosely attached to works of art. You can—and must—come up with statements that seem true to the work itself, statements that almost seem self-evident (like Clark's words about Rembrandt) when the reader of the essay turns to look again at the object.

Of course works of art evoke emotions—not only nudes, but also, for example, the sprawled corpse of a rabbit in a still life by Chardin, or even the jagged edges or curved lines in a nonobjective painting. It is usually advisable, however, to reveal your feelings not by continually saying "I feel" and "this moves me," but by pointing to evidence, by calling attention to qualities in the object that shape your feelings. Thus, if you are writing about Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* (see page 30), instead of saying, "My first feeling is one of violence and unrest," it is better to call attention (as John Golding does, in *Cubism*) to "the savagery of the two figures at the right-hand side of the painting, which is accentuated by the lack of expression in the faces of the other figures." Golding cites this evidence in order to support his assertion that "the first impression made by the *Femmes d'Alger* . . . is one of violence and unrest." The point, then, is not to repress or to disguise one's personal response but to account for it and to suggest that it is not eccentric and private. Golding can safely assume that his response is tied to the object and that we share his initial response because he cites evidence that compels us to feel as he does—or at least evidence that explains why we feel this way. Here, as in most effective criticism, we get what has been called "persuasive description." It is persuasive largely because it points to evidence, but also because most of us have been taught—rightly or wrongly—to respect the authority of an apparently detached point of view.

Most instructors probably would rather be alerted to the evidence in the work of art than be informed about the writer's feelings, but to say that a writer should not keep repeating "I feel" is not to say that "I" cannot be used. Nothing is wrong with occasionally using "I," and noticeable avoidances of it—"it is seen that," "this writer," "the author," "we," and the like—suggest an offensive sham modesty. Further, in accordance



Pablo Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)*. Paris (June–July 1907). Oil on canvas, 8' × 7'8" (243.9 × 233.7 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest. Photograph © 1999 The Museum of Modern Art, New York. © 1999 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society/ARS, New York.

with the current view that we *cannot* be objective, some writers think it is only fair to inform the reader of their biases, and of how they came to hold their present views. But does highly confessional writing work, or does it turn the reader off? Most of us who read about art want to learn about art, not about the writer's life, and we may even feel that abundant autobiographical passages are excrescences. Like someone else's pencilled notes in library books, abundant personal annotations are likely to strike a reader as arrogant and unintentionally trivial.

Finally, it must be admitted that the preceding paragraphs make it sound as if writing about art is a decorous business. In fact, it is often a loud, contentious business, filled with strong statements about the decline of culture, revolution, pornography (or a liberating sexuality), the destruction of the skyline, fraud, new ways of seeing. In 1846 Charles

Baudelaire called for a criticism that was "partial, passionate, and political," and much of what is written today fits this description. Examining the conflicting critical assumptions and methodologies will be part of your education, and if you find yourself puzzled you will also find yourself stimulated. An energetic conversation about art has been going on for a long time, and it is now your turn to say something.

What Writing about Art Is: A Very Short View

Most writing about art seeks to do one or both of two things:

- **to inform** ("This picture was painted in 1980"; "The anchor in the picture symbolizes hope"; "Conceptual Art favors intellectual over visual pleasure")
- **to persuade** ("This early picture is one of her best"; "Despite the widespread view that the anchor symbolizes hope, I will argue that here the anchor has no symbolic meaning"; "Most exhibitions of Conceptual Art are tedious because there is so little sensuality, so little visual pleasure")

Recall Auden's comments on the function of criticism (page 11), where he said that a critic might "introduce" him to a work of which he had been unaware (here information would be dominant) or might "convince" him that he had undervalued a work (here persuasion would be dominant). Most writing, of course, seeks both to inform *and* to persuade—Kenneth Clark's paragraph (page 13) interpreting a painting by Rembrandt certainly tries to do both—though one purpose or the other usually dominates.

Whether you are chiefly concerned with informing or with persuading (and the two purposes are often indistinguishable, because writers usually want to persuade readers that the information is significant), you ought to be prompted by a strong interest in a work or a body of work. This interest usually is a highly favorable response to the material (essentially, "That's terrific"), but an unfavorable response ("Awful!") or a sense of bafflement ("Why would anyone care for that?") may also motivate writing. We can guess that Kenneth Clark, puzzled by the fact that "Nowhere else has Rembrandt made himself look so debosched," set his mind to work and came up with some tentative explanations. In any case, stimulated by a work, you put words onto paper, perhaps first by jotting down observations in no particular sequence. Later you will organize them for the benefit of an imagined reader, offering what the novelist D. H. Lawrence calls "a reasoned account of the feelings" produced by a

work. Don't be embarrassed if a work produces strong feelings in you, pleasant (van Gogh wanted the picture of his bedroom to induce restful feelings in the viewer) or unpleasant (Damien Hirst says he wants his work to make viewers feel "uncomfortable").

The principle known as Occam's razor is sharp ("Entities ought not to be multiplied, except from necessity"); indeed we ought not to multiply entities needlessly, but here necessity compels us to go a bit beyond the categories of information and persuasion. Most academic writing about art, such as the material that you will read in courses in art history, is chiefly *analytic*, which is to say that it is concerned with the relationships (for instance of the parts to the whole within a work, or of historical causes and effects), and indeed your instructors probably will ask you to write papers that are largely analytic. The next chapter is devoted entirely to analysis, but writing about art includes a range of kinds of writing:

- **description**, such as might be given if one is reporting a stolen object ("Giovanni da Bologna's *Mercury* [page 33] is a bronze statue, 69 inches tall, of a male who is nude except for his hat; his hat and his heels are winged, and he holds a staff with wings at the top.")
- **interpretation** ("A youthful male figure with winged sandals and a winged hat can be identified as Mercury, a messenger of the gods.")
- **analysis** of the internal relationships—the structure—of the work ("The slender outstretched limbs suggest flight, but the sense of motion is countered by the strong vertical of the body and the left leg, which makes the figure seem stable.")
- **personal report**, or what might be called "confession," a report of one's immediate response and perhaps of later responses ("Unlike some sculpture which is interesting only when viewed from the front, *Mercury* is equally interesting when viewed from the sides and the rear.")
- **evaluation** ("The work is masterfully executed not only by the sculptor but also by the craftsmen who cast the image.")

To take a brief example: Ellen Johnson in a classic essay on Jackson Pollock (1912–56) in *Studio International* (June 1973), in speaking of *Blue Poles* calls attention to "the bam-bam-bam of the bright red, blue and yellow, flung and dripped along with the white, black and aluminum, to the powerful beat of the blue poles as they swing across the canvas." We get



Giovanni da Bologna,
Mercury, 1580.
Bronze, 69" (Alinari;
National Museum,
Florence/Art
Resource, NY)

description (the information about the colors of the painting), but surely we also get personal report—the writer's response—when Johnson speaks of the "bam-bam-bam" of the bright colors. The entire sentence implies a favorable evaluation.

Again, your instructors will probably ask you to write papers that are chiefly analytic, though some description, personal report, and evaluation almost surely will be implicit (if not explicit) in your analyses.

Caution:

- Bear in mind that **prolonged description** will probably become boring, especially if you include a reproduction of the work of art in your essay: "On the table there is a white tablecloth; at the left is a pitcher, and to the right of the pitcher are six pieces of fruit, including two lemons, two red apples, one green apple and one pear. The background consists of a wall, partly obscured by drapery." Why, your reader will rightly wonder, are you bothering to tell me all this, when I can see if for myself, at a glance? (On the other hand, readers welcome a description that calls attention to what is *not* evident in a reproduction, such as a view of a sculpture from a different angle, or a description of the texture of the brush strokes in a painting.)
- As for a **prolonged personal report**, it will be of little interest unless you can connect your responses with your reader's. An excellent way to connect responses, and perhaps even to create them in the reader, is to point to *evidence* in the work. We have already seen (page 29) an example: In talking about Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger*, John Golding does not merely say "My first feeling is one of violence and unrest"; rather, he points to "the savagery of the two figures on the right-hand side of the painting." We can look at the picture, and examine the evidence; if we agree, we understand why Golding says he experiences violence and unrest. Or we can look and disagree; perhaps we will want to reply to Golding that he confuses an unfamiliar form of sensuous beauty with savagery, but at least we know where Golding stands, why he takes his position, and we know why we are taking a different position.

Personal report often implies **evaluation** ("We are shocked, but we cannot look away," or, on the contrary, "There is simply nothing here that holds our interest"), and in Chapter 7 we will discuss some critical principles that underlie evaluation. Here it is enough to say that the two commonest sources for judging are (1) a spontaneous response ("This picture of a blind beggar is deeply disturbing"), and (2) principles alleged to be widely though not universally held ("A picture ought to be unified," "A building should not seek to disguise its purpose"). Although personal responses can hardly be argued about in rational terms, they can and must be set forth clearly and interestingly, so that the reader understands why

the writer experiences these responses and why the writer evaluates the work as he or she does.

Again, most writing about art is of a mixed sort. Let's look at part of another paragraph from Ellen Johnson's essay on Jackson Pollock. (For a photograph of Pollock in action, see page 310.) Johnson says that in Pollock's work

the material nature of the paint insistently demands our sensory response to its enormous variety. This is true even when the paint is thin and stains the canvas—becoming one with it—in this sense also the ground is eliminated and the homogeneity of the surface is further emphasized. In some pictures, Pollock enriched the already sensuous surface by adding bits of other matter; *Full Fathom Five* is especially rich in this regard. Several foreign objects are embedded in its oil and aluminum paint; but the thumb tacks, pennies, cigarettes, paint tube tops, matches, etc., are only discovered with very close scrutiny. Lost in the life of the painting, they "suffer a sea-change into something rich and strange." Pollock's grand scale paintings are curiously intimate and public in what they give—and what they ask of us. Being in their actual presence is somewhat like sitting in the front row at a symphony concert—one feels mixed up with the music, physically involved in the very process of making it.

—"Jackson Pollock and Nature,"

in *Studio International* 185:956 (June 1973), 260.

In talking about Pollock's work, Johnson gives us some relatively objective description (she tells us that thumb tacks, pennies, and other objects are embedded in the paint), and she gives us personal report (she tells us what "being in their actual presence is . . . like"). She also gives us analysis (she tells us *how* Pollock gets his effects, for instance by enriching the surfaces), and she gives us evaluation (it is clear that Johnson admires the pictures). The metaphoric work *enriched*—used of a surface that has thumb tacks and pennies stuck to it!—strongly implies a favorable evaluation. By the way, Johnson's quotation ("suffer a sea-change"), comes from a song in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the very song that provided Pollock with his title, *Full Fathom Five*. The quotation thus itself enriches Johnson's writing, lending it weight or authority.

You may want to reread Johnson's paragraph, and evaluate her ways of talking about Pollock. Do you imagine that, if you were standing in the presence of a work by Pollock, her paragraph would help you to

understand and enjoy the work? If the paragraph shows ways of talking that you like, consider incorporating them into your own essay; and if it shows ways of talking that displease you, try to banish them from your own writing.

✓ **Checklist of Basic Matters**

- ✓ Does my paper have a thesis, a point?
- ✓ Do I support my argument with sufficient persuasive detail?
- ✓ Have I kept the needs of my audience in mind—for instance, have I defined unfamiliar terms?
- ✓ Is the paper organized, and is the organization clear to the reader?
- ✓ Have I set forth my views effectively and yet not talked too much about myself?

Later, as has been suggested, you may want to think about the picture in the context of statements made by the artist—for instance, Pollock's "My concern is with the rhythms of nature, the way the ocean moves. I work inside out, like nature." Useful sources include the four collections of comments edited by Herschel B. Chipp, Ellen H. Johnson, Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, and Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, mentioned on page 60.

Finally, remember that making a comparison is one of the most effective ways of seeing things. How does this work differ from that work, and what is the effect of the difference?

A Cautionary Word about Slides and Reproductions in Books and on the World Wide Web. The colors of slides, reproductions in books, and images on the World Wide Web range from pretty accurate to very poor. But even if the color is good, such reproductions give little if any sense of the texture and scale of the original painting. In short, although reproductions can be helpful, they give only a remote idea of the original, losing, for instance, the texture of the paper of a drawing or the three-dimensionality and juiciness of thickly applied oil pigment. Thus, a van Gogh still life of sunflowers seems, in a photograph, to have a flat yellow background but looking at the original one sees that the small, regular brushstrokes give the background a rich texture, almost that of a finely woven basket. If possible, therefore, write only about works that you have actually seen—works that you have actually experienced by standing in their presence. If this is not possible, ask your instructor to recommend the books or websites with the best reproductions of the works that you are writing about.

Sculpture

For what **purpose** was this object made? To edify the faithful? To commemorate heroism? What is expressed through the representation? What, for instance, does the highly ordered, symmetrical form of *King Chefred* (also called Khafre; Egyptian, third millennium BC; see page 63) suggest about the man? What is the relationship of naturalism to idealism or abstraction? (On realism and idealism, see pages 107–14.) If the sculpture represents a deity, what ideas of divinity are expressed? If it represents a human being as a deity (e.g., Alexander the Great as Herakles, or King Chefred as the son of an Egyptian deity), how are the two qualities portrayed?

If the work is a **portrait**, some of the questions suggested earlier for painted portraits (pages 48–49) may be relevant. Consider especially whether the work presents a strong sense of an individual or, on the other



Egyptian, *King Chefred*, ca. 2500 BC. Diorite, 5'6". (Courtesy Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich/Egyptian Museum, Cairo)

hand, of a type. Paradoxically, a work may do both: Roman portraits from the first to the middle of the third century are (for the most part) highly realistic images of the faces of older men, the conservative nobility who had spent a lifetime in public office. Their grim, wrinkled faces are highly individualized, and yet these signs of age and care indicate a rather uniform type, supposedly devoted and realistic public servants who scorn the godlike posturing and feigned spontaneity of such flashy young politicians as Caesar and Pompey. That is, although the model might not in fact have been wrinkled, it apparently was a convention for a portrait bust to show signs of wear and tear, such as wrinkles, thereby indicating that the subject was a hardworking, mature leader. In other societies such signs of mortality may be removed from leaders. For instance, African portrait sculpture of leaders tends to present idealized images. Thus, in Ife bronzes from the twelfth century, rulers show a commanding stance

and a fullness of body, whereas captives (shown in order to say something not about themselves but about their conqueror) may be represented with bulging eyes, wrinkled flesh, and bones evident beneath the skin. In keeping with the tradition of idealizing, commemorative images of elders usually show them in the prime of life.

What does the **pose** imply? Effort? Rest? Arrested motion? Authority? In the Lincoln Memorial, Lincoln sits; in the Jefferson Memorial, Jefferson stands, one foot slightly advanced. Lincoln's pose as well as his face suggest weariness, while Jefferson's pose as well as his faintly smiling face suggest confidence and action. How relevant to a given sculpture is Rodin's comment that "The body always expresses the spirit for which it is the shell"?

Are certain bodily features or forms distorted? If so, why? (In most African equestrian sculpture, the rider—usually a chief or an ancestor—dwarfs the horse, in order to indicate the rider's high status.)

To what extent is the **drapery** independent of the body? Does it express or diminish the **volumes** (enclosed spaces, e.g., breasts, knees) that it covers? Does it draw attention to specific points of focus, such as the head or hands? Does it indicate bodily motion or does it provide an independent harmony? What does it contribute to whatever the work expresses? If the piece is a wall or niche sculpture, does the pattern of the drapery help to integrate the work into the façade of the architecture?

If the sculpture is a bust, what sort of **truncation** (termination of the image) has the sculptor used? Does a straight horizontal line run below the shoulders, or does the bare or draped chest end in a curve? Does the sitter's garment establish the termination? Or is the termination deliberately irregular, perhaps emphasizing the bust as a work of art rather than as a realistic reproduction of the subject?

What do the **medium** and the **techniques** by which the piece was shaped contribute?° Clay is different from stone or wood, and stone or wood can be rough or they can be polished. Would the statue of Chefren (see page 63) have the same effect if it were in clay instead of in highly polished diorite? Because diorite is hard, it requires a great deal of work to carve it; thus, a statue of diorite expressed wealth and enduring power. Can one imagine Daniel Chester French's marble statue of Lincoln, in the Lincoln Memorial, done in stainless steel? What are the associations

of the material? For instance, early in this century welded iron suggested heavy-duty industry, in contrast with bronze and marble, which suggested nobility, the classical world, and great wealth. In the late twentieth century, many sculptors used fragile nontraditional material—in a moment we will discuss such a work by Eva Hesse that uses bed sheets and cord—partly to mock the idea that art is precious and enduring. Perhaps the extreme example is Dieter Roth's sculpture made of dirt and rabbit feces, at Harvard's Busch-Reisinger Museum.

Even more important, what is the effect of the **tactile qualities**; for example, polished wood versus terra cotta? Notice that the tactile qualities result not only from the medium but also from the **facture**; that is, the process of working on the medium with certain tools. An archaic Greek *kouros* ("youth") may have a soft, warm look not only because of the porous marble but because of traces left, even after the surface was smoothed with abrasives, of the sculptor's bronze punches and (probably) chisels.

Consider especially the distinction between **carving**, which is subtractive, and **modeling**, which is additive; that is, the difference between cutting away, to release the figure from the stone, wood, or ivory, and, on the other hand, building up or modeling, to create the figure out of a pliable material such as lumps of clay, wax, or plaster.* Rodin's *Walking Man* (see page 176), built up by modeling clay and then cast in bronze, recalls in every square inch of the light-catching surface a sense of the energy that is expressed by the figure. Can one imagine Michelangelo's *David* (see page 33), carved in marble, with a similar surface? Even assuming that a chisel could imitate the effects of modeling, would the surface thus produced catch the light as Rodin's does? And would such a surface suit the pose and the facial expression of *David*?

Compare *King Chefren* with Giovanni da Bologna's *Mercury* (see page 33). *King Chefren* was carved; the sculptor, so to speak, cut away from the block everything that did not look like Chefren. *Mercury* was modeled—built up—in clay or wax, and then cast in bronze. The massiveness or stability of *King Chefren* partakes of the solidity of stone, whereas the elegant motion of *Mercury* suggests the pliability of clay, wax, and bronze.

What kinds of **volumes** are we looking at? Geometric (e.g., cubical, spherical) or irregular? Is the **silhouette** (outline) open or closed? In

*Media and techniques are lucidly discussed by Nicholas Penny in *The Materials of Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994). Also of use is a brief treatment, Jane Basset and Peggy Fogelman, *Looking at European Sculpture: A Guide to Technical Terms* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 1997).

*"Modeling" is also used to refer to the treatment of volumes in a sculpture. Deep modeling, characterized by conspicuous projections and recesses, for instance in drapery, creates strong contrasts in highlights and shadows. On the other hand, shallow modeling creates a relatively unified surface.

Michelangelo's *David*, David's right side is said to be closed because his arm is extended downward and inward; his left side is said to be open because the upper arm moves outward and the lower arm is elevated toward the shoulder. Still, although the form of *David* is relatively closed, the open spaces—especially the space between the legs—emphasize the potential expansion or motion of the figure. The unpierced, thoroughly closed form of *King Chefred*, in contrast to the open form of *Mercury*, implies stability and permanence.

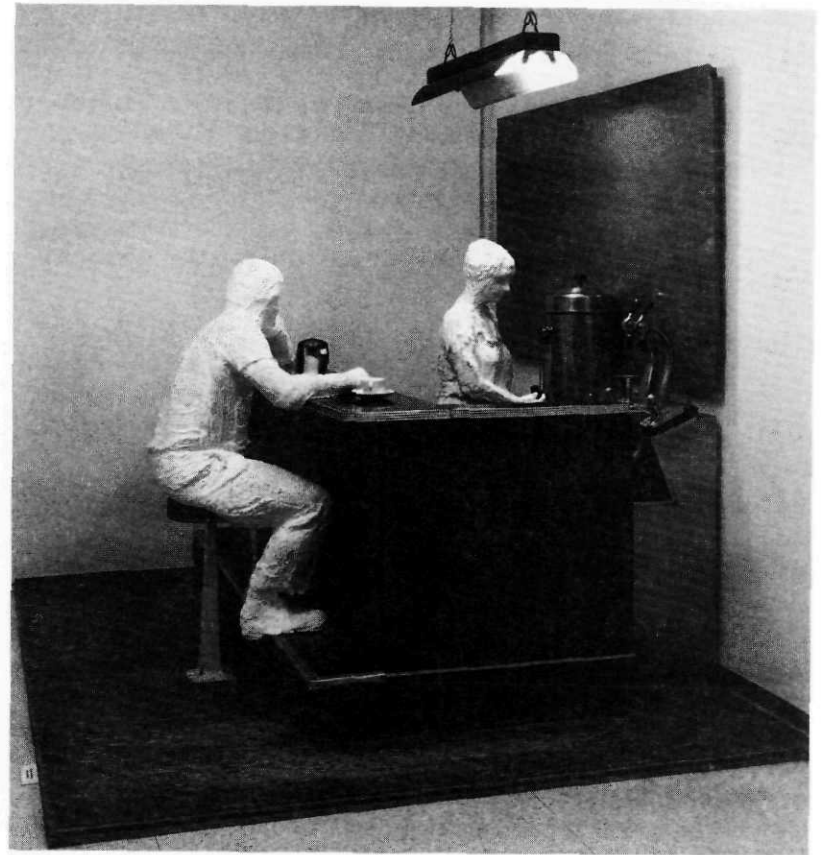
What is the effect of **color**, either of the material or of gilding or paint? Is color used for realism or for symbolism? Why, for example, in the tomb of Urban VIII, did Gian Lorenzo Bernini use bronze for the sarcophagus (coffin), the pope, and Death, but white marble for the figures of Charity and Justice? The whiteness of classical stone sculpture is usually regarded as suggesting idealized form (though in fact the Greeks tinted the stone and painted in the eyes), but what is the effect on the emotional resonance of the whiteness of George Segal's plaster casts (see page 67) of ordinary figures in ordinary situations, in this instance of a man sitting on a real stool and a woman standing beneath a real fluorescent light and behind a real counter, set off by a deep-red panel at the back wall? Blankness? Melancholy?

What is the **scale** (size in relation to something else, usually to the subject in real life, or to the viewer)? Obviously the impact of a larger-than-life image differs from the impact of a miniature.

What was the original **location** or **site** or physical context (e.g., a pediment, a niche, a public square)?

Is the **base** a part of the sculpture (e.g., rocks, or a tree trunk that helps to support the figure), and, if so, is it expressive as well as functional? George Grey Barnard's *Lincoln—the Man*, a bronze figure in a park in Cincinnati, stands not on the tall classical pedestal commonly used for public monuments but on a low boulder—a real one, not a bronze copy—emphasizing Lincoln's accessibility, his down-to-earthness. Almost at the other extreme, the flying *Mercury* (see page 33) stands tiptoe on a gust of wind, and at the very extreme, Marino Marini's *Juggler* is suspended above the base, emphasizing the subject's airy skill.

Notice, too, that some sculpture does not have a base. George Segal's *The Diner* is an example of what has come to be called "environmental sculpture," an image or images placed within a specific location. Talking about his own work, Segal said: "What was considered revolu-



George Segal, *The Diner*, 1964–66. Plaster, wood, chrome, laminated plastic masonite, and fluorescent lamp 93 $\frac{3}{4}$ " $\times$ 144 $\frac{1}{4}$ " $\times$ 96". Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; gift of the T. B. Walker Foundation, 1966. © George Segal/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

tionary about it was taking sculpture off the old plywood box and making it the center of a specifically constructed installation."

Where is the best place (or where are the best places) to stand in order to experience the work? Do you think that the sculpture is intended to be seen from multiple views, all of which are equally interesting and important? Or is the work strongly oriented toward a single viewpoint, as is the case with a sculpture set within a deep niche? If so, are frontality, rigidity, and stasis important parts of the meaning? Or does the image

seem to burst forward from the niche?^{*} Keep in mind, too, the effect of the location of the work; a free-standing sculpture placed in the middle of a room may seem more active than a sculpture placed against a wall.

How close do you want to get? Why?

A Note on Nonobjective Sculpture. Until the twentieth century, sculpture used traditional materials—chiefly stone, wood, and clay—and was representational, imitating human beings or animals by means of masses of material. Sometimes the masses were created by cutting away (as in stone and wooden sculpture), sometimes they were created by adding on (as in clay sculpture, which then might serve as a model for a work cast in bronze), but in both cases the end result was a representation.

Twentieth-century sculpture, however, is of a different sort. For one thing, it is often made out of industrial products—Plexiglas, celluloid, cardboard, brushed aluminum, galvanized steel, wire, and so forth—rather than made out of traditional materials, notably wood, stone, clay, and bronze. Second, instead of representing human beings or animals or perhaps ideals such as peace or war or death (ideals that in the past were often represented allegorically through images of figures), much twentieth-century sculpture is concerned with creating spaces. Instead of cutting away (carving) or building up (modeling) material to create representational masses, the sculptors join material (**assemblage**) to explore spaces or movement in space. Unlike traditional sculpture, which is usually mounted on a pedestal, announcing that it is a work of art, something to be contemplated as a thing apart from us, the more recent works we are now talking about may rest directly on the floor or ground, as part of the environment in which we move, or they may project from a wall or be suspended by a wire.

In a moment we will look at a work using nontraditional materials, but first let's consider a bit further this matter of nonrepresentational sculpture. Think of a traditional war memorial—for instance, a statue of a local general in a park, or the Iwo Jima Monument representing marines raising an American flag—and then compare such a work with Maya Lin's *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, dedicated in 1982 (see page 69). Lin's pair of 200-foot granite walls join to make a wide V, embracing a gently sloping plot of ground. On the walls, which rise from ground level to a

^{*}Many older works of sculpture were placed relatively high, for example in temples and cathedrals. Sometimes the sculptors took account of this placement, elongating the torsos and enlarging the heads so that the figures look "natural" when seen from below. If such a sculpture is placed at eye-level, it may seem ineptly carved.

Architecture

You may recall from Chapter 1 (page 11) Auden's comment that a critic can "throw light upon the relation of art to life, to science, economics, religion, etc." Works of architecture, since they are created for use, especially can be considered in the context of the society that produced them. As the architect Louis Sullivan (1856–1924) said, "Once you learn to look upon architecture not merely as an art, more or less well or badly done, but as a social manifestation, the critical eye becomes clairvoyant, and obscure, unnoted phenomena become illumined."

The Roman architect Vitruvius suggested that buildings can be judged according to their

- *utilitas* (function, fitness for their purpose, utility)
- *firmitas* (firmness, structural soundness)
- *venustas* (beauty, design)

Utilitas gets us thinking about how suitable (convenient, usable) the building is for its purposes. Does the building work, as (say) a bank, a church, a residence, a school? *Firmitas* gets us thinking about the structure and the durability of the materials in a given climate. *Venustas* gets us thinking about the degree to which it offers delight. Much (though not all) of what follows is an amplification of these three topics.

What did the client want? What was or is the **purpose** of the building? For instance, does it provide a residence for a ruler, a place of worship, or a place for legislators to assemble? Was this also its original purpose? If not, what was the building originally used for? Consider Le Corbusier's maxim, "A house is a machine for living in" (*Une maison est une machine-à-habiter*). All architecture is designed to help us to live—even a tomb is designed to help the living to cope with death, perhaps by assuring them that the deceased lives in memory. Churches, museums, theaters, banks, zoos, schools, garages, residences, all are designed to facilitate the business of living.

Does the building appear today as it did when constructed? Has it been added to, renovated, restored, or otherwise changed in form?

What does the building say? "All architecture," wrote John Ruskin, "proposes an effect on the human mind, not merely a service to the human frame." One can distinguish between function as housing and function as getting across the patron's message. A nineteenth-century bank said, by means of its bulk, its bronze doors, and its barred windows,

that your money was safe; it also said, since it had the façade of a Greek temple, that money was holy. A modern bank, full of glass and color, is more likely to say that money is fun. Some older libraries look like Romanesque churches, and the massive J. Edgar Hoover FBI building in Washington, D.C., with its masses of precast concrete, looks like a fortress, uninviting, menacing, impregnable—the very image of the FBI.

What, then, are the architectural traditions behind the building that contribute to the building's expressiveness? The Boston City Hall (see page 77), for all its modernity and (in its lower part) energetic vitality, is tied together in its upper stories by forceful bands of windows, similar in their effect to a classical building with columns. (Classical façades, with columns, pediments, and arches, are by no means out of date. One can see versions of them, often slightly jazzed up, as the entrances to malls and high-style retail shops that wish to suggest that their goods are both timeless and in excellent taste.)

Here is how Eugene J. Johnson sees (or hears) Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building (1954–57):

Austere, impersonal, and lavishly bronzed, it sums up the power, personality, and wealth of the modern corporation, whose public philanthropy is symbolized by the piazza in front, with its paired fountains—private land donated to the urban populace. If the piazza and twin fountains call to mind the Palazzo Farnese in Rome, so be it, particularly when one looks out from the Seagram lobby across an open space to the Renaissance-revival façade of McKim, Mead and White's Racquet Club which quotes the garden façade of Palazzo Farnese! Mies set up a brilliant conversation between two classicizing buildings, bringing the nineteenth and twentieth centuries together without compromise on either part. Mies was in many ways the great classicist of this century. One might say that one of his major successes lay in fusing the principles of the great classical tradition of Western architecture with the raw technology of the modern age.

—"United States of America," in *International Handbook of Contemporary Developments in Architecture*, ed. Warren Sanderson (1981), 506

Notice how Johnson fuses *description* (e.g., "lavishly bronzed") with interpretive *analysis* (he sees in the bronze the suggestion of corporate power). Notice, too, how he connects the building with history (the debt of the piazza and twin fountains to the Palazzo Farnese), and how he connects it with its site (the "conversation" with a nearby building).

We have already seen (pages 25–27) that, like other buildings, **museums and the exhibition spaces** within museums make statements. This is true whether the museum resembles a Greek temple and is entered only after a heavenward ascent up a great flight of steps, or whether it is a Renaissance palace or a modern imitation of one, or whether it is insistently high-tech. (When the Museum of Modern Art opened in New York in 1939, with an entrance consisting of a revolving door on ground level, it was making the radical statement that an art museum was more like a department store than it was like a temple.) In thinking about an exhibition it is usually worth asking oneself what sorts of statements the museum and the exhibition space make. Think about why the material is being presented (consider the difference between titling an exhibition "Festival of Indonesia" and "100 Masterpieces from Indonesia") and why it is presented in this particular way. For instance, is the material presented with abundant verbal information on the walls, perhaps thereby emphasizing the cultural context, or with minimal labels and lots of empty space on the walls, perhaps thereby emphasizing the formal properties and the aesthetic values of each work. (For an examination of many museums built in recent decades, see Victoria Newhouse, *Toward the New Museum*, 1998. Among the topics Newhouse considers are "The Museum as Sacred Space," "The Museum as Entertainment," and "The Museum as Environmental Art.")

Do the forms and materials of the building relate to its neighborhood? What does the building contribute to the **site**? What does the site contribute to the building? Does the building contrast with the site or complement it? How big is the building in relation to the neighborhood, and in relation to human beings; that is, what is the **scale**? A building larger than its neighbors, or elevated above them by a platform, suggests it is of greater importance. The Cambridge City Hall (1889; p. 76), atop a slope above the street, crowns the site and announces—especially because it is in a Romanesque style—that it is a bastion of order, even of piety, giving moral significance to the neighborhood below. The Boston City Hall (1968; p. 77), its lower part in brick, rises out of a brick plaza—the plaza flows into spaces between the concrete pillars that support the building—and seems to invite the crowds from the neighboring shops, outdoor cafés, and marketplace to come in for a look at government of the people by the people, and yet at the same time the building announces its importance.

How do you **approach** the building, and how do you enter it?

Does **form** follow **function**? For better or for worse? For example, does the function of a room determine its shape? Are there rooms with



Cambridge City Hall, 1889. (Photograph by G. M. Cushing. In *Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge, Report Two: Mid-Cambridge* [Cambridge Historical Commission, 1967], 44)

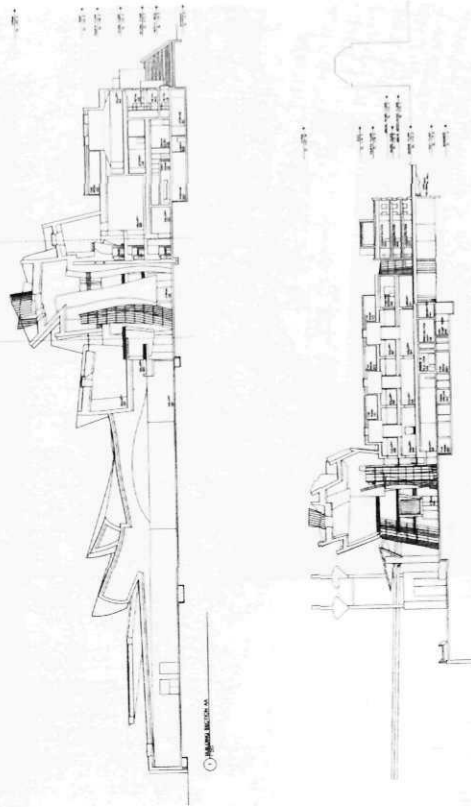
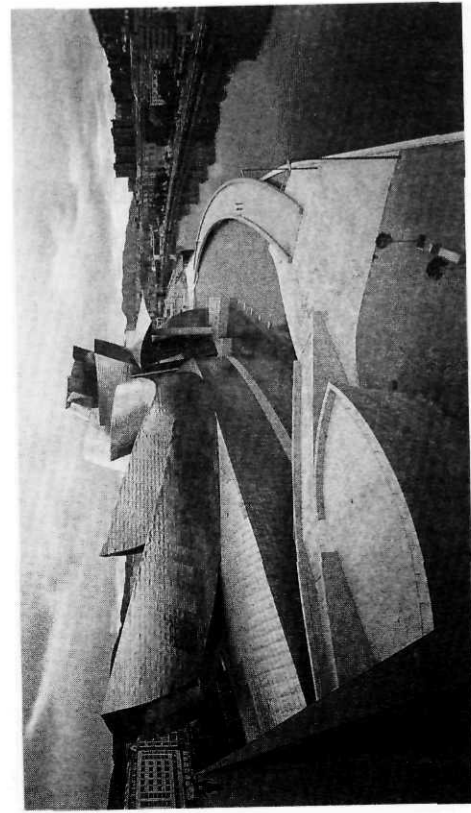
geometric shapes irrelevant to their purposes? Louis Sullivan, in rejecting the nineteenth-century emphasis on architecture as a matter of style (in its most extreme form, a matter of superficial decoration), said, “Form ever follows function.” Sullivan’s comment, with its emphasis on structural integrity—the appearance of a building was to reveal the nature of its construction as well as the nature of its functions or uses—became the slogan for many architects working in the mid-twentieth century. But there were other views. For instance, Philip Johnson countered Sullivan with “forms always follows forms and not function.” In looking at a building, ask yourself if the form serves a **symbolic function**; recall the “lavishly bronzed” Seagram building, which Eugene J. Johnson sees as summing up “the power, personality, and wealth of the modern corporation.”

Equally symbolic or expressive is Eero Saarinen’s Trans World Airlines Terminal at Kennedy Airport, where the two outstretched wings suggest flight. Consider, too, Frank Gehry’s Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (1997) in Bilbao, built by the side of a river in a Basque port city in northern Spain, whose economy was based on shipbuilding. Viewed from across the river, the titanium-sheathed design evokes a ship (see page 78), expressing such ideas as the history of the city, grandeur, and elegance.

What **materials** are used? How do the materials contribute to the building’s purpose and statement? The Bilbao Guggenheim, in addition to using titanium (a material chiefly used in aeronautics), uses a pale Spanish limestone that is used in Bilbao’s old university across the river, and so in its materials the museum embraces the past as well as the present. Or, as another example, take the materials of some American college and university buildings. Adobe works well at the University of New Mexico, but would it be right for the Air Force Academy in Colorado? (The Academy uses different materials—notably aluminum, steel, and



Boston City Hall, City Hall Plaza Center, 1961–68. (Photograph by Cervin Robinson. In *Architecture Boston* [Boston Society of Architects, 1976], 6)



(above) Frank Gehry, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1997. Bilbao. The titanium-sheathed design evokes a ship, an apt form for a building in a city whose economy was largely based on shipbuilding and steel. (Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, exterior view, photograph by David Heald © The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.)
(below) Detail of architect's rendering (Courtesy Frank Gehry)

glass.) Brick buildings in Collegiate Georgian suggest a connection with the nation's earliest colleges; stone buildings in Collegiate Gothic (pointed arches and narrow windows) are supposed to suggest a preindustrial world of spirituality and scholarship.

The idea that *marble*—the material of the Parthenon—confers prestige dies hard: The Sam Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, D.C., is clad in marble veneer (costing many millions of dollars) because marble is thought to suggest dignity and permanence—though in fact marble is a rather soft stone. Marble is highly versatile: White or black marble, common in expensive jewelry shops, can seem sleek or aloof; pink or creamy marble, in a boutique with goods for women, can seem soft and warm. Each building material has associations, or at least potential associations. *Brick*, for instance, often suggests warmth or unpretentiousness and *handcraftsmanship*. *Wood*, like *marble*, is *amazingly* versatile. In its rough-bark state it suggests the great outdoors; trimmed and painted it can be the clapboard and shingles of an earlier America; smooth and sleek and unpainted it can suggest Japanese elegance. *Glass* can be transparent, translucent, or even opaque as in I. M. Pei's John Hancock Building in Boston. The exterior walls of the Hancock building reflect the sky and clouds, thereby animating and softening the building which towers above its neighbors.

Do the exterior walls seem hard or soft, cold or warm? Is the sense of hardness or coldness appropriate? (Don't simply assume that metal must look cold. A metal surface that reflects images can be bright, lively, and playful. Curves and arches of metal can seem warm and "soft.")

Does the material in the interior have affinities with that of the exterior? If so, for better or for worse? (Our experience of an interior brick wall may be very different from our experience of an exterior brick wall.)

Does the **exterior** stand as a massive sculpture, masking the spaces and the activities within, or does it express them? The exterior of the Boston City Hall (see page 77) emphatically announces that the building harbors a variety of activities; in addition to containing offices, it contains conference rooms, meeting halls, an exhibition gallery, a reference library, and other facilities. Are the spaces continuous? Or are they static, each volume capped with its own roof?

What is the function of **ornament**, or of any **architectural statuary** in or near the building? To embellish a surface? To conceal the joins of a surface? To emphasize importance? (The east end of a Christian church, where the altar is, sometimes is more elaborately decorated than the rest of the building.)

Does the interior arrangement of spaces say something—for example, is the mayor's office in the city hall on the top floor, indicating that he or she is above such humdrum activities as dog licensing, which is on the first floor?

In a given room, what is the function of the walls? To support the ceiling or the roof? To afford privacy and protection from weather? To provide a surface on which to hang shelves, blackboards, pictures? If glass, to provide a view in—or out?

What is the effect of the floor (wood, tile, brick, marble, carpet)? Notice especially the effect if you move from a room floored with one material (say, wood) to another (say, carpet).

Is the building inviting? The architect Louis Kahn said, "A building should be a . . . stable and *harboring* thing. If you can now [with structural steel] put columns as much as 100 feet apart you may lose more than you gain because the sense of enclosed space disappears." Is the public invited? The Cambridge City Hall has one public entrance, approached by a flight of steps; the Boston City Hall, its lower floor paved with the brick of the plaza, has many entrances, at ground level. What are the implications in this difference?

"There is no excellent Beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion," said Francis Bacon in the early seventeenth century. Does the building evoke and then satisfy a sense of curiosity?

What is the role of **color**? To clarify form? To give sensuous pleasure? To symbolize meaning? (Something has already been said, on page 79, about the effects of the colors of marble.) Much of the criticism of the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* centered on the color of the stone walls. One critic, asserting that "black is the universal color of shame [and] sorrow," called for a white memorial.

What part does the changing **daylight** play in the appearance of the exterior of the building? Does the interior make interesting use of natural light? And how light is the interior? (The Lincoln Memorial, open only at the front, is somber within, but the Jefferson Memorial, admitting light from all sides, is airy and suggestive of Jefferson's rational—sunny, we might say—view of life. Similarly, the light in a place of worship differs from the light in a classroom.)

As the preceding discussion suggests, architectural criticism usually is based on three topics:

- the building or monument as an envelope (its purpose, structural system, materials, sources of design, history, design [articulation

of the façade, including the arrangement of the windows and doors, ornamentation, color])

- the interior (hierarchy of spaces, flow of traffic, connection with the exterior)
- the site (relationship of the building to the environment)

A fourth topic is

- the architect's philosophy and the place of the building in the history of the architect's work

If you are writing about the first or second of these topics—the building as an envelope or the enclosed spaces through which one moves—you may have only your eyes and legs to guide you when you study the building of your choice, say, a local church or a college building. But if the building is of considerable historical or aesthetic interest, you may be able to find a published *plan* (a scale drawing of a floor, showing the arrangement of the spaces) or an *elevation* (a scale drawing of an external or internal wall). Plans and elevations, often available in printed sources, are immensely useful as aids in understanding buildings. For a helpful introductory discussion of architecture that makes excellent use of plans and elevations, see Simon Unwin, *Analyzing Architecture* (1997).

A few words about the organization of an essay on a building may be useful. Much will depend on your purpose, and on the building, but consider the possibility of using one of these three methods of organization:

1. You might discuss, in this order, *utilitas*, *firmitas*, and *venustas*—that is, function, structure, and design (see page 73).
2. You might begin with a view of the building as seen at a considerable distance, then at a closer view, and then go on to work from the ground up, since the building supports itself this way.
3. You might take, in this order, these topics:
 - the materials (smooth or rough, light or dark, and so on)
 - the general form, perceived as one walks around the building (e.g., are the shapes square, rectangular, or circular, or what? Are they simple or complex?)
 - the façades, beginning with the entrance (e.g., is the entrance dominant or recessive? How is each façade organized? Is there variety or regularity among the parts?)
 - the relation to the site, including materials and scale

landscape painted by a traditional Chinese artist and one painted by van Gogh. But it takes considerable familiarity with van Gogh to be able to say of a work, "Probably 1888 or maybe 1889," just as it takes considerable familiarity with the styles of Chinese painters to be able to say, "This is a Chinese painting of the seventeenth century, in fact the late seventeenth century. It belongs to the Nanking School and is a work by Kung Hsien—not by a follower, and certainly not a copy, but the genuine article."

Style, then, is revealed in **form**; an artist creates form by applying certain techniques to certain materials, in order to embody a particular vision or content. In different ages people have seen things differently: the nude body as splendid, or the nude body as shameful; Jesus as majestic ruler, or Jesus as the sufferer on the cross; landscape as pleasant, domesticated countryside, or landscape as wild nature. So the chosen subject matter is not only part of the content but is also part of that assemblage of distinguishing characteristics that constitutes a style.

All of the elements of style, finally, are expressive. Take ceramics as an example. The kind of clay, the degree of heat at which it is baked, the decoration or glaze (if any), the shape of the vessel, the thickness of its wall, all are elements of the potter's style, and all contribute to the expressive form. But every expressive form is not available in every age; certain visions, and certain technologies, are, in certain ages, unavailable. Porcelain, as opposed to pottery, requires a particular kind of clay and an extremely high temperature in the kiln, and these were simply not available to the earliest Japanese potters. Even the potter's wheel was not available to them; they built their pots by coiling ropes of clay and then, sometimes, they smoothed the surface with a spatula. The result is a kind of thick-walled, low-fired ceramic that expresses energy and earthiness, far different from those delicate Chinese porcelains that express courtliness and the power of technology (or, we might say, of art).

SAMPLE ESSAY: A FORMAL ANALYSIS

The following sample essay, written by an undergraduate, includes a good deal of description (a formal analysis usually begins with a fairly full description of the artwork), and the essay is conspicuously impersonal (another characteristic of a formal analysis). But notice that even this apparently dispassionate assertion of facts is shaped by a **thesis**. If we stand

back from the essay, we can see that the basic argument is this: The sculpture successfully combines a highly conventional symmetrical style, on the one hand, with mild asymmetry and a degree of realism, on the other.

Put thus, the thesis does not sound especially interesting, but that is because the statement is highly abstract, lacking in concrete detail. A writer's job is to take that idea (thesis) and to present it in an interesting and convincing way. In drafting and revising an essay, good writers keep thinking, "I want my readers to see. . . ." The idea will come alive for the reader when the writer supports it by calling attention to specific details—the evidence—as the student writer does in the following essay.

Notice, by the way, that in his first sentence the student refers to "Figure 1," which is a photograph of the work he discusses. (The images in an essay or book are called figures, and they are numbered consecutively.) This illustration originally appeared on a separate page at the end of the paper, but here it has been put before the essay.

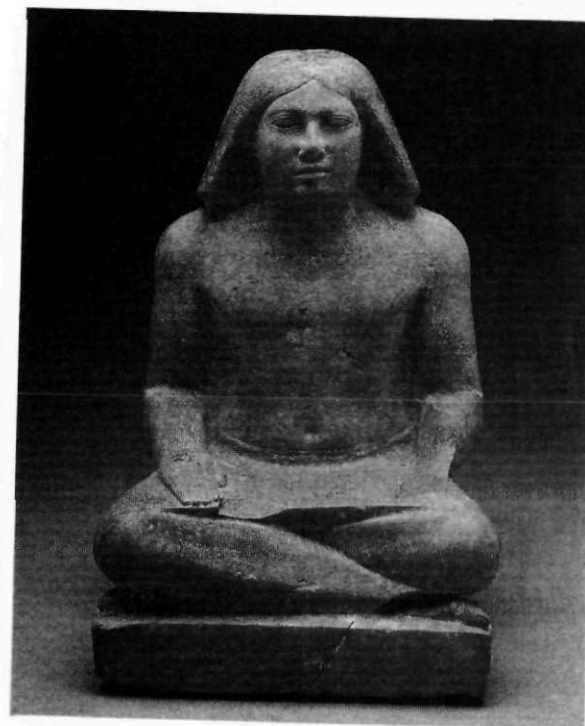


Figure 1. Egyptian, *Seated Statue of Prince Khnumera as a Scribe*, 2548–2524 BC. Yellow limestone, 12". (Courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Harvard-Boston Expedition)

Stephen Beer
 Fine Arts 10A
 September 10, 2001

Formal Analysis: Prince Khunera as a Scribe

Prince Khunera as a Scribe, a free-standing Egyptian sculpture 12 inches tall, now in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (Figure 1), was found at Giza in a temple dedicated to the father of the prince, King Mycerinus. The limestone statue may have been a tribute to that Fourth Dynasty king.¹ The prince, sitting cross-legged with a scribal tablet on his lap, rests his hands on his thighs. He wears only a short skirt or kilt.

The statue is in excellent condition although it is missing its right forearm and hand. Fragments of the left leg and the scribe's tablet also have been lost. The lack of any difference in the carving between the bare stomach and the kilt suggests that these two features were once differentiated by contrasting paint that has now faded, but the only traces of paint remaining on the figure are bits of black on the hair and eyes.

The statue is symmetrical, composed along a vertical axis which runs from the crown of the head into the base of the sculpture. The sculptor has relied on basic geometric forms in shaping the statue on either side of this axis. Thus, the piece could be described as a circle (the head) within a triangle (the wig) which sits atop a square and two rectangles (the torso, the crossed legs, and the base). The reliance on basic geometric forms reveals itself even in details. For example, the forehead is depicted as a small triangle within the larger triangular form of the headdress.

1. Museum label.

On closer inspection, however, one observes that the rigidity of both this geometric and symmetric organization is relieved by the artist's sensitivity to detail and by his ability as a sculptor. None of the shapes of the work is a true geometric form. The full, rounded face is more of an oval than a circle, but actually it is neither. The silhouette of the upper part of the body is defined by softly undulating lines that represent the muscles of the arms and that modify the simplicity of a strictly square shape. Where the prince's naked torso meets his kilt, just below the waist, the sculptor has suggested portliness by allowing the form of the stomach to swell slightly. Even the "circular" navel is flattened into an irregular shape by the suggested weight of the body. The contours of the base, a simple matter at first glance, actually are not exactly four-square but rather are slightly curvilinear. Nor is the symmetry on either side of the vertical axis perfect: Both the mouth and the nose are slightly askew; the right and left forearms originally struck different poses; and the left leg is given prominence over the right. These departures from symmetry and from geometry enliven the statue, giving it both an individuality and a personality.

Although most of the statue is carved in broad planes, the sculptor has paid particular attention to details in the head. There he attempted to represent realistically the details of the prince's face. The parts of the eyes, for example—the eyebrows, eyelids, eyeballs, and sockets—are distinct. Elsewhere the artist has not worked in such probing detail. The breasts, for instance, are rendered in large forms, the nipples being absent. The attention to the details of the face suggests that the artist attempted to render a lifelikeness of the prince himself.

The prince is represented in a scribe's pose but without a scribe's tools. The prince is not actually doing anything. He merely sits. The absence of any open spaces (between the elbows and the

waist) contributes to the figure's composure or self-containment. But if he sits, he sits attentively: There is nothing static here. The slight upward tilt of the head and the suggestion of an upward gaze of the eyes give the impression that the alert prince is attending someone else, perhaps his father the king. The suggestion in the statue is one of imminent work rather than of work in process.

Thus, the statue, with its variations from geometric order, suggests the presence, in stone, of a particular man. The pose may be standard and the outer form may appear rigid at first, yet the sculptor has managed to depict an individual. The details of the face and the overfleshed belly reveal an intent to portray a person, not just an idealized member of the scribal profession. Surely when freshly painted these elements of individuality within the confines of conventional forms and geometric structure were even more compelling.

Behind the Scene: Beer's Essay, from Early Responses to Final Version

This essay is good because it is clear and interesting, and especially because it helps the reader to see and enjoy the work of art. Now let's go backstage, so to speak, to see how Stephen Beer turned his notes into an effective final draft.

Beer's Earliest Responses. After studying the object and reading the museum label, Beer jotted down some ideas on 4 × 6-inch index cards. What historical information does the label provide? (Beer recorded the material on a note card.) Can the sculpture be called realistic? Yes and no. (Beer put his responses, in words, on the cards.) What is the condition of the piece? (Again he put his responses into writing, on cards.) A day later, when he returned to work on his paper, stimulated by another look at the artwork and by a review of his notes, Beer made additional jottings.

Organizing Notes. When the time came to turn the notes into a draft and the revised draft into an essay, Beer reviewed the cards and he added further thoughts. Next, he organized the note cards, putting together into a packet whatever cards he had about (for instance) realism, and putting

together, into another packet, whatever cards he had about (again, for instance) background material. Reviewing the cards in each packet, and on the basis of this review discarding a few cards that no longer seemed useful and moving an occasional card to a different packet, Beer started to think about how he might organize his essay.

As a first step in settling on an organization, he arranged the packets into a sequence that seemed reasonable to him. It made sense, he thought, to begin with some historical background and a brief description, then to touch on Egyptian sculpture in general (but he soon decided *not* to include this general material), then to go on to some large points about the particular piece, then to refine some of these points, and finally to offer some sort of conclusion. This organization, he felt, was reasonable and would enable his reader to follow his argument easily.

Preparing a Preliminary Outline. In order to get a clearer idea of where he might be going, Beer then keyboarded—following the sequence of his packets—the gist of what at this stage seemed to be the organization of his chief points. In short, he prepared a map or rough outline so that he could easily see, almost at a glance, if each part of his paper would lead coherently to the next part.

Beer realized that in surveying his outline he might become aware of points that he should have included but that he had instead overlooked.

A tentative outline, after all, is not a straitjacket that determines the shape of the final essay. To the contrary, it is a preliminary map that, when examined, helps the writer to see not only pointless detours—these will be eliminated in the draft—but also undeveloped areas that need to be worked up. As the handwritten additions in Beer's outline indicate, after drafting his map he made some important changes before writing a first draft:

Background: Egypt to Boston;
 free-standing, 12" limestone;
 Giza overall view: sitting, hands on thighs
~~General remarks on Egyptian sculpture~~
 condition:
 some parts missing
 paint almost all gone
 symmetry (geometry?)
 square (body)
 circle in a triangle (head)
 two rectangles

} description

variations in symmetry

body varied ← face not really a circle (oval)

smaller variations (face, ^{navel,} forearms)

realism (yes and no) ← Pose:

conclusion, summary (?): Static? Active? Both?

geometric but varied

individualized (??)

combination



Constantin Brancusi,
*Torso of a Young
Man*, 1924. Polished
brass, 18"; with
original wood base
58½". (The
Hirshhorn Museum
and Sculpture
Garden, Smithsonian
Institution, gift of
Joseph H. Hirshhorn,
1966. Photographer,
Lee Stalsworth)

the essence of things. . . . It is impossible for anyone to express anything essentially real by imitating its exterior surface." The real or essential form represented in this instance is both the young man of the title and also the phallus.

The idea underlying works that are said to be idealized usually is the idea of beauty. Thus, tradition says that Raphael, seeking a model for the beautiful mythological Galatea, could not find one model who was in all respects beautiful enough, so he had to draw on several women (the lips of one, the hair of another, and so on) in order to paint an image that expressed the ideally beautiful woman. Examples of idealized images of

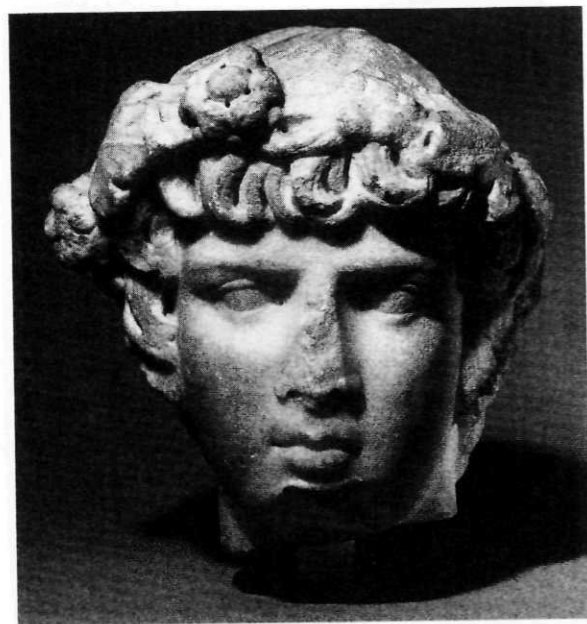
male beauty are provided by many portrait heads of Antinous (also Antinoös), the youth beloved by the Roman emperor Hadrian. Writing in the *Bulletin* of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Elizabeth J. Milleker calls attention to the combination of "actual features of the boy" and "an idealized image" in such a head (see page 110):

This head is a good example of the sophisticated portrait type created by imperial sculptors to incorporate what must have been actual features of the boy in an idealized image that conveys a godlike beauty. The ovoid face with a straight brow, almond-shaped eyes, smooth cheeks, and fleshy lips is surrounded by abundant tousled curls. The ivy wreath encircling his head associates him with Dionysos, a guarantor of renewal and good fortune.

—Metropolitan Museum of Art *Bulletin* (Fall 1997): 15

Realism has at least two meanings in writings about art: (1) a movement in mid-nineteenth century Western Europe and America, which emphasized the everyday subjects of ordinary life, as opposed to subjects drawn from mythology, history, and upperclass experience; (2) fidelity to appearances, the accurate rendition of the surfaces of people, places, and things. In our discussion of realism, we will be concerned only with the second definition. *Naturalism* is often used as a synonym for *realism*; thus, a work that reproduces surfaces may be said to be realistic, naturalistic, or illusionistic; *veristic* is also used, but less commonly. The most extreme form of realism is *trompe-l'oeil* (French: deceives the eye), complete illusionism—the painted fly on the picture frame, the waxwork museum guard standing in a doorway, images created with the purpose of deceiving the viewer. But of course most images are not the exact size of the model, so even if they are realistically rendered they do not deceive. When we look at most images, we are aware that we are looking not at reality (a fly, a human being) but at the product of the artist's gaze at such real things. Further, the medium itself may prohibit illusionism, an unpainted stone or bronze head, however accurate in its representation of cheekbones, hair, the shape of the nose, and so forth, cannot be taken for Abraham Lincoln.

Idealism, like realism, has at least two meanings in art: (1) the belief that a work conveys an idea as well as appearances and (2) the belief—derived partly from the first meaning—that it should convey an idea that elevates the thoughts of the spectator, and it does this by presenting an image, let's say of heroism or of motherhood, loftier than any real object that we can see in the imperfect world around us. (Do not confuse *idealism* as it is



Roman, *Portrait*
Head of Antinoös,
 AD 130–38. Marble,
 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". (The
 Metropolitan
 Museum of Art. Gift
 of Bronson Pinchot,
 in recognition of his
 mother, Rosina Asta
 Pinchot, 1996.
 1996.401)

used in art with its everyday meaning, as in “despite her years, she retained her idealism,” where the word means “noble goals.”) The story of Raphael’s quest for a model for Galatea (mentioned on page 108) is relevant here, and somewhat similarly, the Hadrianic sculptors who made images of Antinous, as the writer in the Metropolitan Museum’s *Bulletin* said, must have had in mind not a particular youth but the idea of “godlike beauty.”

By way of contrast, consider Sir Peter Lely’s encounter with Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), the English general and statesman. Cromwell is reported to have said to the painter, “Mr. Lely, I desire you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all; but remark [i.e., take notice of] all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything as you see me.” Cromwell was asking for a realistic (or naturalistic, or veristic) portrait, not an idealized portrait like the sculpture of Antinous. What would an idealized portrait look like? It would omit the blemishes. Why? Because the blemishes would be thought to be mere trivial surface details that would get between the viewer and the artist’s *idea* of Cromwell, Cromwell’s essence as the artist perceives it—for instance, the nobility that characterized his statesmanship and leadership.

What distinguishes the idealizing artist from the ordinary person, it is said, is the artist’s imaginative ability to penetrate the visible (the surface) and set forth an elevating ideal.

In short, *realism* is defined as the representation of visual phenomena as exactly—as realistically—as the medium (stone, bronze, paint on paper or canvas) allows. At the other extreme from illusionism we have idealism, for instance in the representation of the torso of a young man by a column. A realistic portrait of Cromwell will show him as he appears to the eye, warts and all; an idealized portrait will give us the idea of Cromwell by, so to speak, airbrushing the warts, giving him some extra stature, slimming him down a bit, giving him perhaps a more thoughtful face than he had, setting him in a pyramidal composition to emphasize his stability, thereby stimulating our minds to perceive the nobility of his cause.

Both realism and idealism have had their advocates. As a spokesperson for realism we can take Leonardo, who in his *Notebooks* says that “the mind of the painter should be like a looking-glass that is filled with as many images as there are objects before him.” Against this view we can take a remark by a contemporary painter, Larry Rivers: “I am not interested in the art of holding up mirrors.” Probably most artists offer the Aristotelian combination of imitation and harmony. The apparently realistic (primarily mimetic) artist is concerned at least in some degree with a pattern or form that helps to order the work and to give it meaning, and the apparently idealistic artist—even the nonobjective artist who might seem to deal only in harmonious shapes and colors—is concerned with connecting the work to the world we live in, for instance, to our emotions. An artist might deliberately depart from surface realism—mimetic accuracy—in order to “defamiliarize” or “estrangle” our customary perceptions, slowing us down or shaking us up, so to speak, in order to jostle us out of our stock responses, thereby letting us see reality freshly. Although this idea is especially associated with the Russian Formalist school of the early twentieth century, it can be traced back to the early nineteenth-century Romantic writers. For instance, Samuel Taylor Coleridge praised the poetry of William Wordsworth because, in Coleridge’s words, it removed “the film of familiarity” that clouded our usual vision.

Somewhere near the middle of the spectrum, between artists who offer highly mimetic representations and at the other extreme those who offer representations that bear little resemblance to what we see, we have the sculptor, hypothesized by Kenneth Clark, who saw the head as an ovoid and said to himself, “Now it looks as if it would last.” Here the

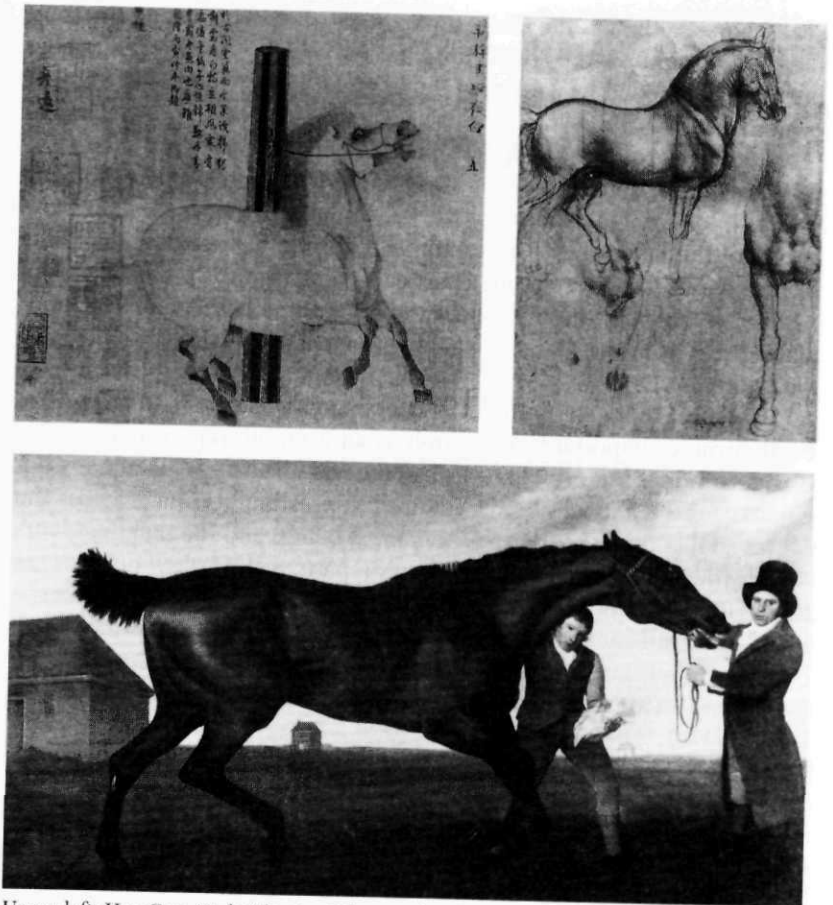
A RULE FOR WRITERS:

There is nothing wrong with using the words *realistic* and *idealized* in your essay, but keep in mind that it is not a matter of all-or-nothing; there are degrees of realism and degrees of idealization.

“idea” that shapes the features of the head (for instance, bringing the ears closer to the skull) is the idea of perfection and endurance, stability, even eternity, and surely some such thoughts cross our minds when we perceive works that we love. One might almost write a history of art in terms of the changing proportions of realism and idealism during the lifetime of a culture.

It is easy to find remarks by artists setting forth a middle view. In an exhibition catalog (1948), Henri Matisse said, “There is an inherent truth which must be disengaged from the outward appearances of the object to be represented. . . . Exactitude is not truth.” And most works of art are neither purely realistic (concerned only with “exactitude,” realistic description) nor purely idealistic (concerned only with “an inherent truth”). Again we think of Aristotle’s combination of the impulse to imitate and the impulse to create harmony. We might think, too, of a comment by Picasso: “If you want to draw, you must first shut your eyes and sing.” We can probably agree that *Prince Khunera as a Scribe* (page 101) shows a good deal of idealism, but it also shows realistic touches. Stephen Beer’s analysis calls attention to its idealized quality, in its symmetry and its nearly circular head, but he also says that the eye is rendered with “descriptive accuracy.” Or look at Michelangelo’s *David* (page 38). It is realistic in its depiction of the veins in David’s hands, but it is idealized in its color (not flesh color but white to suggest purity), in its size (much larger than life, to convey the ideal of heroism), and in its nudity. Surely Michelangelo did not think David went into battle naked, so why is his David nude? Because Michelangelo, carving the statue in part to commemorate the civic constitution of the Florentine republic, wanted to convey the ideas of justice and of classical heroism, and classical sculptures of heroes were nude. We can, then, talk about Michelangelo’s idealism, and—still talking of the same image—we can talk about his realism.

Consider the three pictures of horses shown on page 113. Han Gan’s painting (upper left) is less concerned with accurately rendering the appearance of a horse than with rendering its great inner spirit, hence the head and neck that are too large for the body, and the body that is too



Upper left: Han Gan, *Night-Shining White*, mid-eighth century. Ink on paper, 11^{3/16}" high. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The Dillon Fund, 1977, 1977, 78)

Upper right: Leonardo da Vinci, *A Horse in Profile to the Right, and Its Forelegs*, c. 1490. Silverpoint on blue prepared surface, 8^{1/2}" 6^{1/8}". (The Royal Collection. © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

Bottom: George Stubbs, *Hambletonian*, 1800. Oil on canvas 82^{1/2}" × 144^{5/8}". (Mount Stewart House and Garden/National Trust Photographic Library)

large for the legs. The legs, though in motion to show the horse's grace and liveliness, are diminished because the essence of the horse is the strength of its body, communicated partly by juxtaposing the arcs of its rump and its (unreal) electrified mane with the stolid hitching post. In brief, the painting shows what we in the West probably would call an ide-

alized horse, although the Chinese might say that by revealing the spirit the picture captures the “real” horse. (It once had a tail, but the tail has been largely eroded by wear, and the vestiges have been obscured by an owner’s seal.)

Leonardo’s drawing (upper right) is largely concerned with anatomical correctness, and we can call it realistic. Still, by posing the horse in profile Leonardo calls attention to the animal’s geometry, notably the curves of the neck, chest, and rump, and despite the accurate detail the picture seems to represent not a particular horse but the essential idea of a horse. (Doubtless the blank background and the absence of a ground-plane here, as in the Chinese painting, contribute to this impression of idealizing.)

George Stubbs’s painting of Hambletonian (bottom), who had recently won an important race, surely is an accurate representation of a particular horse, but even here we can note an idealizing element: Stubbs emphasizes the animal’s heroic stature by spreading its image across the canvas so that the horse dwarfs the human beings and the buildings.

If your instructor asks you to compare two works—perhaps an Egyptian ruler and a Greek athlete, or an Indian Buddha and a Chinese Buddha—you may well find one of them more realistic than the other, but remember, even a highly realistic work may include idealized elements, and an idealized work may include realistic elements.

3

WRITING A COMPARISON

If you really want to see something, look at something else.

—Howard Nemerov

Everything is what it is and not another thing.

—Bishop Joseph Butler

COMPARING AS A WAY OF DISCOVERING

Analysis frequently involves comparing: Things are examined for their resemblances to and differences from other things. Strictly speaking, if one emphasizes the differences rather than the similarities, one is contrasting rather than comparing, but we need not preserve this distinction; we can call both processes *comparing*.

Although your instructor may ask you to write a comparison of two works of art, the *subject* of the essay is the *works*, or, more precisely, the subject is the thesis you are advancing; for example, that one work is later than the other or is more successful. Comparison is simply an effective analytical *technique* to show some of the qualities of the works. We usually can get a clearer idea of what *X* is when we compare it to *Y*—provided that *Y* is at least somewhat like *X*. Comparing, in short, is a way of discovering, a way of learning.

In the words of Howard Nemerov, quoted at the top of this page, “If you really want to see something, look at something else.” But the “something else” can’t be any old thing. It has to be relevant. For example, in a course in architecture you may compare two subway stations (considering the efficiency of the pedestrian patterns, the amenities, and the aesthetic qualities), with the result that you may come to understand both of them more fully; but a comparison of a subway station with a dormitory, no matter how elegantly written, can hardly teach the reader or the writer anything. Nor can a comparison of the House of Commons with the House of Pancakes teach anything, as Judith Stone entertainingly demonstrates in an article in *The New York Times Magazine* (26 February

suggest that this piece is fourteenth-century French and that piece is a modern fake—and also by indicating what your principle of organization will be.

Caution: An essay that uses splitting too rigidly is likely to produce a Ping-Pong effect. There is also the danger that the essay will not come into focus—the point will not be grasped—until the essayist stands back from the seven-layer cake and announces, in the concluding paragraph, that the odd layers taste better. In one's preparatory thinking one may employ splitting in order to get certain characteristics clear in one's mind, but one must come to some conclusions about what these add up to *before* writing the final version.

The final version should not duplicate the thought processes; rather, since the point of a comparison is *to make a point*, it should be organized so as to make the point clearly and effectively. Lumping will often do the trick. After reflection you may decide that although there are superficial similarities between *X* and *Y*, there are essential differences; in the finished essay, then, you probably will not wish to obscure the main point by jumping back and forth from one work to the other, working through a series of similarities and differences. It may be better to announce your thesis, then discuss *X*, and then *Y*.

Whether in any given piece of writing you should compare by lumping or by splitting will depend largely on your purpose and on the complexity of the material. Lumping is usually preferable for long, complex comparisons, if for no other reason than to avoid the Ping-Pong effect, but no hard-and-fast rule covers all cases here. Some advice, however, may be useful:

If you split, in rereading your draft:

- *Ask yourself if your imagined reader can keep up with the back-and-forth movement.* Make sure (perhaps by a summary sentence at the end) that the larger picture is not obscured by the zigzagging.
- *Don't leave any loose ends.* Make sure that if you call attention to points 1, 2, and 3 in *X*, you mention all of them (not just 1 and 2) in *Y*.

If you lump, do not simply comment first on *X* and then on *Y*.

- *Let your reader know where you are going*, probably by means of an introductory sentence.
- *Don't be afraid in the second half to remind the reader of the first half.* It is legitimate, even desirable, to connect the second half of

the comparison (chiefly concerned with *Y*) to the first half (chiefly concerned with *X*). Thus, you will probably say things like "Unlike *X*, *Y* shows . . ." or "Although *Y* superficially resembles *X* in such-and-such, when looked at closely *Y* shows. . . ." In short, a comparison organized by lumping will not break into two separate halves if the second half develops by reminding the reader how it differs from the first half.

Again, the point of a comparison is to call attention to the unique features of something by holding it up against something similar but significantly different. If the differences are great and apparent, a comparison is a waste of effort. (Blueberries are different from elephants. Blueberries do not have trunks. And elephants do not grow on bushes.) Indeed, a comparison between essentially and obviously unlike things will merely confuse, for by making the comparison, the writer implies that there are significant similarities, and readers can only wonder why they do not see them. The essays that do break into unrelated halves are essays that make unconstructive comparisons: The first half tells the reader about five qualities in El Greco; the second half tells the reader about five different qualities in Rembrandt. You will notice in the student essay below that the second half occasionally looks back to the first half.

SAMPLE ESSAY: A STUDENT'S COMPARISON

This essay, by an undergraduate, discusses one object and then discusses a second. It lumps rather than splits. It does not break into two separate parts because at the start it looks forward to the second object, and in the second half of the essay it occasionally reminds us of the first object.

When you read this essay, don't let its excellence lead you into thinking that you can't do as well. The essay, keep in mind, is the product of much writing and rewriting. As Rebecca Bedell wrote, her ideas got better and better, for in her drafts she sometimes put down a point and then realized that it needed strengthening (e.g., with concrete details) or that—come to think of it—the point was wrong and ought to be deleted. She also derived some minor assistance—for facts, not for her fundamental thinking—from books, which she cites in footnotes.

Brief marginal annotations have been added to the following essay in order to help you appreciate the writer's skill in presenting her ideas.

Rebecca Bedell
FA 232 American Art

*Title is focused
and, in
"Development,"
implies the thesis*

*Opening
paragraph is
unusually
personal but
engaging, and it
implies the
problem the
writer will
address*

*Thesis is clearly
announced*

*Brief description
of the first work*

John Singleton Copley's Early Development:
From Mrs. Joseph Mann to Mrs. Ezekial Goldthwait

Several Sundays ago while I was wandering through the American painting section of the Museum of Fine Arts, a professorial bellow shook me. Around the corner strode a well-dressed mustachioed member of the art historical elite, a gaggle of note-taking students following in his wake. "And here," he said, "we have John Singleton Copley." He marshaled his group about the rotunda, explaining that, "as one can easily see from these paintings, Copley never really learned to paint until he went to England."

A walk around the rotunda together with a quick leafing through a catalog of Copley's work should convince any viewer that Copley reached his artistic maturity years before he left for England in 1774. A comparison of two paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts, Mrs. Joseph Mann of 1753 (Figure 1) and Mrs. Ezekial Goldthwait of ca. 1771 (Figure 2), reveals that Copley had made huge advances in his style and technique even before he left America; by the time of his departure he was already a great portraitist. Both paintings are half-length portraits of seated women, and both are accompanied by paired portraits of their husbands.

The portrait of Mrs. Joseph Mann, the twenty-two-year-old wife of a tavern keeper in Wrentham, Massa-



Figure 1. John Singleton Copley, Mrs. Joseph Mann, 1753. Oil on canvas, 36" × 28 1/4". (Gift of Frederick and Holbrook Metcalf; courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)



Figure 2. John Singleton Copley, Mrs. Ezekial Goldthwait, ca. 1771. Oil on canvas, 50" × 40". (Bequest of John T. Bowen in memory of Eliza M. Bowen; courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

chusetts,¹ is signed and dated J. S. Copley 1753. One of Copley's earliest known works, painted when he was only fifteen years old, it depicts a robust young woman staring candidly at the viewer. Seated outdoors in front of a rock outcropping, she rests her left elbow on a classical pedestal and she dangles a string of pearls from her left hand.

Relation of the painting to its source

The painting suffers from being tied too closely to its mezzotint prototype. The composition is an almost exact mirror image of that used in Isaac Beckett's mezzotint after William Wissing's *Princess Anne* of ca. 1683.² Pose, props, and background are all lifted directly from the print. Certain changes, however, were necessary to acclimatize the image to its new American setting. Princess Anne is shown provocatively posed in a landscape setting. Her blouse slips from her shoulders to reveal an enticing amount of bare bosom. Her hair curls lasciviously over her shoulders and a pearl necklace slides suggestively through her fingers as though, having removed the pearls, she will proceed further to disrobe. But Copley reduces the sensual overtones. Mrs. Mann's bodice is decorously raised to ensure sufficient coverage, and the alluring gaze of the princess is replaced by a cool stare. How-

1. Jules David Prown, *John Singleton Copley* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), I, 110.

2. Charles Coleman Sellers, "Mezzotint Prototypes of Colonial Portraiture: A Survey Based on the Research of Waldon Phoenix Belknap, Jr.," *Art Quarterly* 20 (1957): 407-68. See especially plate 16.

ever, the suggestive pearls remain intact, producing an oddly discordant note.

First sentence of paragraph is both a transition and a topic sentence: the weakness of the painting

The picture has other problems as well. The young Copley obviously had not yet learned to handle his medium. The brush strokes are long and streaky. The shadows around the nose are a repellent greenish purple and the highlight on the bridge was placed too far to one side. The highlights in the hair were applied while the underlying brown layer was still wet so that instead of gleaming curls he produced dull gray smudges. In addition, textural differentiation is noticeably lacking. The texture of the rock is the same as the skin, which is the same as the satin and the grass and the pearls. The anatomy is laughable: There is no sense of underlying structure. The arms and neck are the inflated tubes so typical of provincial portraiture. The left earlobe is missing and the little finger on the left hand is disturbingly disjointed. Light too appears to have given Copley trouble. It seems, in general, to fall from the upper left, but the shadows are not consistently applied. And the light-dark contrasts are rather too sharp, probably due to an overreliance on the mezzotint source.

Concrete details support the paragraph's opening assertion

Transition ("Despite its faults") and statement of idea that unifies the paragraph

Despite its faults, however, the painting still represents a remarkable achievement for a boy of fifteen. In the crisp linearity of the design, the sense of weight and bulk of the figure, the hint of a psychological presence, and especially in the rich vibrant color, Copley has already rivaled and even surpassed the colonial painters of the previous generation.

Transition
("about
seventeen years
later") and
reassertion of
central thesis

In Mrs. Ezekial Goldthwait, about seventeen years later and about four years before Copley went to England, all the early ineptness had disappeared. Copley has arrived at a style that is both uniquely his own and uniquely American; and in this style he achieves a level of quality comparable to any of his English contemporaries.

*Brief description
of the second
picture*

The substantial form of Mrs. Goldthwait dominates the canvas. She is seated at a round tilt-top table, one hand extended over a tempting plate of apples, oranges, and pears. A huge column rises in the right-hand corner to fill the void.

*Biography and
(in rest of
paragraph) its
relevance to the
work*

The fifty-seven-year-old Mrs. Goldthwait, wife of a wealthy Boston merchant, was the mother of fourteen children; she was also a gardener noted for her elaborate plantings.³ Copley uses this fertility theme as a unifying element in his composition. All the forms are plump and heavy, like Mrs. Goldthwait herself. The ripe, succulent fruit, the heavy, rotund mass of the column, the round top of the table—all are suggestive of the fecundity of the sitter.

*The most obvious
characteristic of
the work*

The painting is also marked by a painstaking realism. Each detail has been carefully and accurately rendered, from the wart on her forehead to the wood grain of the tabletop to the lustrous gleam of the pearl necklace. As a painter of fabrics Copley surpasses all his contemporaries. The sheen of the satin, the rough, crinkly surface of the black lace, the smooth,

3. Prown, 76.

translucent material of the cuffs—all are exquisitely rendered.

*"But" is
transitional,
taking us from
the obvious
(clothing) to the
less obvious
(character)*

But the figure is more than a mannequin modeling a delicious dress. She has weight and bulk, which make her physical presence undeniable. Her face radiates intelligence, and her open, friendly personality is suggested by the slight smile at the corner of her lips and by her warm, candid gaze.

*Brief reminder of
the first work, to
clarify our
understanding of
the second work*

The rubbery limbs of Copley's early period have been replaced by a more carefully studied anatomy (not completely convincing, but still a remarkable achievement given that he was unable to dissect or to draw from nude models). There is some sense for the underlying armature of bone and muscle, especially in the forehead and hands. And in her right hand it is even possible to see the veins running under her skin.

*Further
comparison,
again with
emphasis on the
second work*

Light is also treated with far greater sophistication. The chiaroscuro is so strong and rich that it calls to mind Caravaggio's tenebroso. The light falls almost like a spotlight onto the face of Mrs. Goldthwait, drawing her forward from the deep shadows of the background, thereby enhancing the sense of a psychological presence.

*Reassertion of
the thesis,
supported by
concrete details*

Copley's early promise as a colorist is fulfilled in mature works such as Mrs. Goldthwait. The rich, warm red-brown tones of the satin, the wood, and the column dominate the composition. But the painting is enlivened by a splash of color on either side—on the left by Copley's favorite aqua in the brocade of the chair, and on the right by the red and green punctuation

marks of the fruit. The bright white of the cap, set off against the black background, draws attention to the face, while the white of the sleeves performs the same function for the hands.

Summary, but not mere rehash; new details

Color, light, form, and line all work together to produce a pleasing composition. It is pleasing, above all, for the qualities that distinguish it from contemporary English works: for its insistence on fidelity to fact, for its forthright realism, for the lovingly delineated textures, for the crisp clarity of every line, for Mrs. Goldthwait's charming wart and her friendly double chin, for the very materialism that marks this painting as emerging from our pragmatic mercantile society. In these attributes lie the greatness of the American Copleys.

Further summary, again heightening the thesis

Not that I want to say that Copley never produced a decent painting once he arrived in England. He did. But what distinguishes the best of his English works (see, for example Mrs. John Montessor and Mrs. Daniel Denison Rogers)⁴ is not the facile, flowery brushwork or the fluttery drapery (which he picked up from current English practice) but the very qualities that also mark the best of his American works—the realism, the sense of personality, the almost touchable textures of the fabrics, and the direct way in which the sitter's gaze engages the viewer. Copley was a fine, competent painter in England, but it was not the trip to England that made him great.

4. Prown, plates.

[NEW PAGE]

Works Cited

- Prown, Jules David. John Singleton Copley. 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966.
- Sellers, Charles Coleman. "Mezzotint Prototypes of Colonial Portraiture: A Survey Based on the Research of Waldon Phoenix Belknap, Jr." Art Quarterly 20 (1957): 407-68.

✓ Checklist for Writing a Comparison

- ✓ Is the point of the comparison clear? (Examples: to show that although *X* and *Y* superficially resemble each other, they are significantly different; or, to show that *X* is better than *Y*; or, to illuminate *X* by briefly comparing it to *Y*)
- ✓ Are all significant similarities and differences covered?
- ✓ Is the organization clear? If the chief organizational device is lumping, does the second half of the essay connect closely enough with the first so that the essay does not divide into two essays? If the chief organizational device is splitting, does the essay avoid the Ping-Pong effect? Given the topic and the thesis, is it the best organization?
- ✓ If a value judgement is offered, is it supported by evidence?