

Introduction to the History of Art
ARTH 1103
VISUAL ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

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Without performing any outside research, answer the following questions about the Prompt Object provided. Your answers need not be “right” – in many cases, there might not be a correct answer – but whatever you hypothesize in answering the questions below should be supported with “evidence” taken from careful examination of the Prompt Object or otherwise supported with a well-reasoned justification. This is a critical thinking exercise designed to make you look/read closely, not meant to test your ability to guess what the Prompt Object actually is.

1. Describe the Prompt Object in the greatest detail possible, using the Formal Elements terms that we have discussed in class and that are posted on Blackboard (discuss *style* as well as *content*). (c. 500 words)

This painting is very detailed. There's not a big color scheme though, it has very basic colors with the red adding the pop to it. It looked like it took a long time to finish this painting. The artist made sure to add all the trinkets in the room with them. There's a weird object at the foot of the painting, but you can't really make out what it is. I love how the details pop in this painting, it definitely tells you a story. As the saying goes, “A picture has a thousand words” this definitely shows that. It also shows status as well in the picture. You can tell that the people being painted is very wealthy based on their clothing, jewelry, and the objects they have surrounding them. You can really see what kind of fabric they have on as well, such as fur, leather, and silk. You can predict where they are from and what time period they are from as well. Every crinkle, face line, curtain pattern, crease and crevices can be shown in this picture. You can tell these people are either scientists or explorers based on the globe and telescope in the painting. They might also be musicians because of the guitar in the picture as well. You can tell that their profession is something of high status and value. I like how the artists made sure to get every detail on the globe and on the cloth everything is on. It looks like this artist took their time to make sure the painting is completely perfect.

2. What might the Prompt Object be (specifically)? That is, what is its purpose? How was/is it used? Who created it? Who is it for? Why (specifically) do you think so? What evidence/visual details/inferences/comparisons did you use to arrive at this hypothesis? (c. 300 words)

The prompt object is a painting of two seemingly important men. The purpose of the painting was to capture the moment. It may have been an important moment to them that they wanted

it to be painted. It could also be because of their status, maybe they just wanted a painting of themselves because they have the money to actually get a very detailed painting. This painting was used to show possibly new discoveries since they have a globe and a telescope in the painting. They are showing off their possessions and their clothing to show that they are people of high status. A painter created it, probably someone they knew or someone that was recommended to them. It is for the two men in the painting or the family of the men. They probably wanted this portrait somewhere in their house so people can see and be in awe of how well it came out. I think this because during this time period, people of high status and wealth always wanted to get painted. They wanted to show off their wealth by having it capture in a timeless painting. They wanted to show that they are important in this time period and that the work they are doing is beneficial to their people. The painting is showing that they are either explorers or scientists and are studying the world as, in their perspective, grows. They maybe finding new territory and documenting it which is why they have a globe on the desk. This painting shows a lot of history and detail that you can piece together without much thought to it.

3. What information do you expect this object can provide about the past, and is the information this object can provide different from that provided by other types of resources?

This painting definitely shows the exploration era in the 1400s. This was when the Spaniards, Portuguese, and the Europeans were exploring the world and coming across different lands that they didn't know existed. They were finding new ways to trade with these countries and taking different resources from these countries as well. This painting shows many things that could be taken under consideration like the guitar, the globe, telescope and even the fabric they are wearing. This painting shows how people were dressing during this time and what profession they could be in.

4. What informs your responses to the above questions (for example, comparison to contemporary art and culture; outside knowledge; pop culture representations of the past, such as movies, etc.)?

My knowledge on history definitely helped me depict what this painting is trying to portray. I've taken a lot of history classes and learned about this time period in depth. As a black woman, it also helps me put a time period on the painting because of the objects shown in the painting. This was around the time the slave trade was going on or possibly right before it even started. You can find these things out if you are heavy into history.