
AP[®] Art History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] ART HISTORY

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 4

The works shown are the David Vases, created in China in 1351 C.E.

Describe at least two aspects of the original historical and/or religious context of the David Vases.

Using specific evidence, explain how the original context influenced the choice of both the materials and the imagery of the David Vases.

Using specific contextual evidence, explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction.

Scoring Criteria

Task		Points
1	Accurately describes ONE aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases.	1 point
2	Accurately describes ANOTHER aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases.	1 point
3	Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of the materials of the David Vases.	1 point
4	Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of the imagery of the David Vases.	1 point
5	Accurately uses specific contextual evidence to explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction.	1 point
Total Possible Score		5 points

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Question 4 (continued)

Scoring Notes

1	<p>Accurately describes ONE aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The works were created during a time of stability under the Mongol Empire, which promoted trade along the Silk Road.• The works were made when China was under the rule of the Mongols, during the Yuan dynasty.• The works were conceived as an offering/dedication to be placed in a Chinese Daoist temple (in Xingyuan) Note: Buddhist temple according to Gardner’s 15th edition.• In China at the time, there was an intermixing of religious practices including Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.• The works were commissioned by a wealthy Chinese patron, Zhang Wenjin. An inscription around the necks of the vases includes information about the patron and a dedication of the vases (together with a now missing incense burner) to the temple in the hope to receive protection and blessing of the patron’s family.• Also among the inscriptions are references to a general recently deified as a god to whom the altar set is offered in exchange for this new god’s protection.• The works were made in southern China (Jingdezhen/Jiangxi), the center of Chinese porcelain production.• Vases like these were created to appeal to a variety of consumers in different markets; many were exported.• The shapes of the vases were modeled after ritual bronzes that could also be used as temple offerings.
2	<p>Accurately describes ANOTHER aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases.</p> <p>See above.</p>
3	<p>Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of the materials of the David Vases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The works are made of porcelain, a type of high-fired ceramic with special properties (being hard, white, with a translucent appearance) developed in China.• Porcelain production was an established artistic tradition within China and Chinese porcelain a popular export good by the time the David Vases were created.• Cobalt, the mineral used to create the blue pigment in blue-and-white porcelain like the David Vases, was imported to China from present-day Iran.• Chinese blue-and-white porcelain was developed during the Yuan dynasty as a result of the connection of China with markets in the Middle East.• Precious materials, such as the porcelain and the cobalt blue underglaze make this a status object that represented the wealth of the patron.• The use of cobalt to create the coloring was also found in Middle Eastern ceramic traditions; Chinese blue-and-white porcelain appealed to the demands created by Middle Eastern markets.

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Question 4 (continued)

4	<p>Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of the imagery of the David Vases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The vases are decorated with animals including dragons and phoenixes, which are auspicious and complementary symbols (the yin and the yang), commonly found on Chinese ceremonial and imperial objects.• Trade with India influenced the elephant head handles.• Religious contextual imagery correlates elephants in Buddhist art to a symbol of strength.• Dragon and phoenix communicate power in Chinese culture, and would have reinforced the patron's status, as well as invoked prosperity.• Vine and floral motifs were inspired by Islamic or Iznik ceramics, here depicted in new forms such as plantain leaves and traditional Chinese flowers such as peonies.
5	<p>Accurately uses specific contextual evidence to explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combined elements of cobalt blue from the Middle East with porcelain found in China create the distinctive blue-and-white wares that are only possible with trade along the Silk Road.• With expansion of the Mongol empire, artists in China added exotic animals including the elephant into their design choices along with traditional Chinese creatures.• Blending of Middle Eastern cobalt blue pigments and motifs with Chinese sacred symbols demonstrate the influence of secular trade on religious objects through the Silk Road and Mongol Empire.• The connections of the Chinese blue-and-white porcelain in Middle Eastern markets and its later global appeal (such as the stylistic and technical influence in 17th century delftware) shows the cross-cultural connections of Chinese porcelain production.• The purchase of the vases as part of an extensive collection of Chinese ceramics in the 20th century by European collector Sir Percival David exhibits the continued global appeal of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain from this time.

4. The works shown are the David Vases, created in China in 1351 C.E.

Describe at least two aspects of the original historical and/or religious context of the David Vases. *power of Yuan Dynasty*

Using specific evidence, explain how the original context influenced the choice of both the materials and the imagery of the David Vases. *importance of porcelain in export; dragons and phoenixes represent yin and yang, traditional Chinese*

Using specific contextual evidence, explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction. *Iranian about 5th c. BCE*

The David Vases, created in Yuan Dynasty China in 1351 of porcelain and cobalt-blue underglaze reflect their time and culture. The Yuan Dynasty in China was a dynasty of Mongolian rulers, most notably ~~Kublai~~ Kublai Khan. While the Mongols kept their own distinct traditions wherever they were in their vast Eurasian empire, they also assimilated with great aptness to the culture and traditions of their conquered lands, specifically in the area of adopting the religions of these lands. Thus, Yuan Dynasty rulers adopted the Confucianist and Daoist principles of their Chinese subjects. In addition, the Yuan Dynasty saw a huge influx of Silk Road trade. Named for its trade of silk from China all the way to Europe, the Silk Trade fostered much of China's economic activities, so objects such as silks and porcelains, which were favored by Europeans, saw great increases in production toward demand.

In the light of this political and economic context, the David Vases were very representative of their culture. Their material, porcelain, ^{was} in high demand not only within China but in Europe as well, so artisans were encouraged to perfect the craft, keeping to the production of objects such as those, which display mastery of the medium of porcelain. In addition, the imagery of the David Vases also reflected by context. Since Yuan Dynasty rulers embraced traditional Chinese philosophy and iconography, artists were free to create works containing traditional Chinese symbolism. In this work, the dragons represent yang, the male force of Chinese duality, while the accompanying phoenix represents yin, the female element. Yin and yang together represent harmony.

ance in the Chinese, which is a key idea in the Chinese philosophy of Daoism. China, Mongolia further represent power, ~~power~~ suggesting the role of Kublai Khan and the Yuan Dynasty's power and influence.

The main exemplification is that the David Vases provide cross-cultural interaction in the trade necessary to obtain their materials. While the materials used for ceramic bases can be found in China, the pigment for the vases' cobalt blue comes from Iran, in the Middle East. Prized by the Chinese for its beautiful color, much cobalt blue pigment was imported to China from the road, this cross-cultural encounter facilitated by the Pax Mongolica created by the Yuan Dynasty and neighboring Muslim empires.

4. The works shown are the David Vases, created in China in 1351 C.E.

Describe at least two aspects of the original historical and/or religious context of the David Vases.

Using specific evidence, explain how the original context influenced the choice of both the materials and the imagery of the David Vases.

Using specific contextual evidence, explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction.

China is one of the oldest civilizations still in China's civilization and cultural history is extremely old, making it rich in tradition and culture. It was also a great imperial power throughout much of history. In the 19th century, China was at the East End of the Silk Road, one of the most important trade routes in human history.

The Silk Road influenced the materials used in the David Vases. The wealth as well as materials gained from the Silk Road enabled Chinese artists to create lavish and decorative vases such as these.

The Dragon motifs relates to the rich traditional culture of China in which

Dragons have always been important symbols of imperial China.

Materials such as porcelain and the blue and white used to make this vase exemplify the cross-cultural interaction that the Silk Road brought.

4. The works shown are the David Vases, created in China in 1351 C.E.

Describe at least two aspects of the original historical and/or religious context of the David Vases.

Using specific evidence, explain how the original context influenced the choice of both the materials and the imagery of the David Vases.

Using specific contextual evidence, explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction.

The David Vases have several images printed among the sculpture. There are dragons which were very symbolic in the Chinese culture. The small flies and flames at the bottom of the vases symbolize the power of the Holy Spirit and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. There are flowers and birds to represent the importance of nature in the Chinese culture at the time the vases were originally made.

The vase being made of ceramics, clay, and the lapis lazuli are symbolic materials because they come directly from the earth. The vases show importance of the earth and that is what it is made of.

David Vases show cross cultural interaction because dragons, birds, and certain plants from China and the Chinese culture are in direct correlation with images from the Roman Catholic religion most commonly found and practiced in Europe.

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Question 4

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain grammatical errors.

Overview

The question asked students to describe the original historical or religious context of the David Vases, a work from South, East and Southeast Asia (300 B.C.E.–1980 C.E.) and then explain how context influenced both the materials and imagery. Students then needed to use contextual evidence to explain how the David Vases exemplified cross-cultural interaction. The intent of the question was to have students situate a work, its material, and imagery within its specific historical, religious, and cultural context.

Sample: 4A

Score: 5

Task 1: Accurately describes ONE aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases. (1 point)

The response earned the point by accurately stating that the works were “created in the Yuan dynasty.” The response provides additional historical context by describing the Yuan as a “dynasty of Mongolian rulers.” Additionally, the response specifically mentions the Mongol ruler, Kublai Khan.

Task 2: Accurately describes ANOTHER aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases. (1 point)

The response earned the point by accurately stating that the Mongols kept their “distinct traditions” throughout the “Eurasian empire,” assimilating “with great adeptness to the culture and traditions of their conquered lands,” more specifically in “adopting the religions of these lands.” This accurate statement would be sufficient to earn the task point; however, the response goes on to discuss the Mongol adoption of the Confucian and Daoist principles of their Chinese subjects. Although it already earned tasks one and two for historical or religious context, the response continues with additional context in discussing how the Yuan dynasty saw “a huge influx of Silk Road trade,” and how this “fostered much of China’s economic activities,” so “objects such as silks and porcelains, which were favored by Europeans, saw great increases in production to meet demand.”

Task 3: Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of materials of the David Vases. (1 point)

The response earned the point because it accurately describes the “material, porcelain,” as being in high demand “not only within China but in Europe as well” and continues that because of this, artists were “encouraged to perfect the craft” displaying a “mastery of the medium of porcelain.”

Task 4: Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of imagery of the David Vases. (1 point)

The response earned the point by accurately explaining, with the use of specific evidence, how the historical context of the David Vases influenced their imagery. The response explains that Yuan dynasty rulers “embraced traditional Chinese philosophy and iconography,” and that the “artists were free to create works containing traditional Chinese symbolism.” It goes on to provide visual evidence of how this aspect of the historical context influenced the David Vases by stating that “the dragons represent yang, the male force of Chinese duality, while the accompanying phoenix represents yin, the female element.” The response continues to explain that the yin and yang together representing “harmony and balance in the universe, which is a key idea in the Chinese

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Question 4 (continued)

philosophy of Daoism.” Additionally, the response also states that “the dragons further represent power, suggesting the power of Kublai Khan and the Yuan dynasty’s power and influence.” While this additional piece of information was not required to earn this point, it enhances the overall quality of the response.

Task 5: Accurately uses specific contextual evidence to explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction. (1 point)

The response earned the point by accurately using contextual evidence to explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction: The response states that the “pigment for the vases cobalt blue underglaze comes from Iran, in the Middle East,” and that the “cobalt blue pigment,” which was “[p]rized by the Chinese for its beautiful color,” was therefore “imported to China from the silk road.” The response additionally includes this happening in a “cross-cultural encounter facilitated by the Pax Mongolia created by the Yuan dynasty and neighboring Mongol denizens.” While this second example is not needed to receive the point, it enhances the quality of the response.

Sample: 4B

Score: 3

Task 1: Accurately describes ONE aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases. (1 point)

The response earned this point by accurately describing China as being at “the East seat of the Silk road,” and “one of the most important trade routes in human history.”

Task 2: Accurately describes ANOTHER aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases. (0 points)

No point was earned. The response makes no attempt to describe another aspect of the historical or political context of the David Vases.

Task 3: Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of materials of the David Vases. (0 points)

No point was earned. Although the response attempts to discuss the “materials gained from the Silk Road,” and how it “enabled Chinese artists to create lavish and decorative vases such as these,” it does not give a specific material to earn this task point. If the response had also addressed the material cobalt, for example, in addition to the Silk Road reference and Chinese artists, the response would earn the task point.

Task 4: Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of imagery of the David Vases. (1 point)

The response earned this point by accurately stating that “[d]ragon motifs relates to the rich traditional culture of China,” and that “[d]ragons have always been important symbols of imperial China.” Either of these statements would have earned the task point.

Task 5: Accurately uses specific contextual evidence to explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction. (1 point)

The response earned this point by accurately stating that “[m]aterials such as porcelain and the blue material/dye used to make this vase exemplify the cross cultural interaction that the Silk Road brought.”

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Question 4 (continued)

Sample: 4C

Score: 1

Task 1: Accurately describes ONE aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases. (0 points)

No point was earned. The response makes no attempt to describe one aspect of the historical or religious context of the David Vases.

Task 2: Accurately describes ANOTHER aspect of the historical OR religious context of the David Vases. (0 points)

No point was earned. The response makes no attempt to describe aspects of the historical or religious context of the David Vases.

Task 3: Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of materials of the David Vases. (0 points)

No point was earned. The response attempts to address the task by stating that the work was “made of ceramics, clay, and the lapis lazuli”; however, ceramics and clay are not specific enough (the response would have had to identify the material as porcelain), and lapis lazuli is inaccurate. In addition, the response also provides inaccurate contextual evidence by stating that the materials are symbolic “because they come directly from the earth.”

Task 4: Accurately uses specific evidence to explain how the original context influenced the choice of imagery of the David Vases. (1 point)

The response earned the task point by accurately stating that the works have “dragons which were very symbolic in the Chinese culture.” Later, the response also notes the inclusion of “flowers and birds to represent the importance of nature in Chinese culture.” This statement would also earn the task point for the original context influencing the choice of imagery.

Task 5: Accurately uses specific contextual evidence to explain how the David Vases exemplify cross-cultural interaction. (0 points)

No point was earned. The response attempts to discuss cross-cultural interactions by stating that “dragons, birds, and certain plants from China and the Chinese culture are in direct correlation with images from the Roman Catholic religion most commonly found and practiced in Europe.” However, although appropriately describing the visual imagery of the works and their association with China, the connection to the Roman Catholic Church is not accurate.