

2023



AP[®] Art History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Free-Response Question 6

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Question 6: Continuity and Change**5 points**

(A) Describe ONE visual and/or contextual element of the work shown. **1 point****Examples of acceptable responses include the following:****Visual**

- The angular composition is created by positioning images and shapes along diagonal lines.
- The figures are in groups facing in different directions.
- Bright red is the dominant color in the work.
- Black and white figures, photographs, and text create the subject matter.
- The composition includes images of crowds of people, flags, large speakers, wires, and a pylon.
- The work was created using photomontage.
- There are speakers on a platform with number 5, and placards displaying the letters CCCP (Russian for USSR) dominate the left side of the composition.
- A large-scale portrait of a man (Vladimir Lenin) dominates the upper right corner of the composition.
- An electrical transmission tower occupies the top of the composition's central space.
- The images alternate black, white, and sepia tones.
- The area surrounding the cropped photographs is filled in using a limited range of unmodulated/pure colors (red, grey, beige).

Contextual

- The work was created following the Russian Revolution of 1918.
- The work was created following the institution of a new state economic policy in the Soviet Union.
- The Communist Revolutionary Leader (Lenin) is included as part of the subject matter.
- The work was intended to be reproduced.
- The source materials come from magazines.
- The artist focused her art on serving the ideals of the Soviet Union.
- Published internationally to promote accomplishments of Joseph Stalin and the industrialization of the Soviet Union.
- It is an example of an early 20th-century avant-garde movement (Constructivism).

(B) Describe ANOTHER visual and/or contextual element of the work shown. **1 point****Examples of acceptable responses include the following:**

- One from list in A.
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- (C)** Accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work is characteristic of art in the first half of the twentieth century CE. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses include the following:

- Like other works of the early 20th century, the work emphasizes distinct geometric forms, such as squares, rectangles, and triangles.
- Stepanova, like many artists in the first half of the 20th century, demonstrates an interest in stark contrasts between distinct colors.
- Printed and graphic material from posters, books, magazines, and advertisements is used to combine figurative imagery with areas of pure color and geometric forms.
- The incorporation of multiple media into a single image is characteristic of art in the first half of the 20th century.
- The arrangement of strong diagonal elements and intersecting lines creates a dynamic composition.
- The imagery and composition of the work are typical of Constructivism, which was popular among artists in the early Soviet Union.

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- (D)** Accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work deviates from established traditions of Western visual art. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses include the following:

- Stepanova uses abstraction to express her ideas and political ideology in contrast to earlier works of Western art that utilized realism to convey a message.
 - The layout of the work differs from earlier book illustrations, graphic art, or other forms of reproducible media through Stepanova's use of a diagonal composition.
 - Stepanova combined multiple photos and photographic fragments of varied scale and subject matter into a single image, in contrast to earlier uses of photographic media in the 19th and early 20th centuries.
 - The artist rejects older Western traditions of artmaking established since the Renaissance, such as illusionism, use of a single medium, etc.
 - Unlike earlier Western artists like Hogarth and Daumier who criticized society, Stepanova's work promoted the Soviet state by focusing on the progress experienced by Soviet society.
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- (E)** Uses ONE example of specific contextual evidence to explain how Stepanova’s choices about style OR content in the work represent the ideas and values of the society in which it was made. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses include:

- Stepanova’s goal to promote the success of Soviet rule after the Russian Revolution led her to choose images that highlighted modern technology and the popular support of communism.
- To focus on the industrial advancements of the Soviet Union, the artist embraces modernist forms (e.g., flat planes of color, photography, found images, etc.) and processes (e.g., collage, photomontage).
- To reinforce revolutionary action and change the artist chose a dynamic, angular composition intended to reinforce progress.
- Stepanova used their graphic work in publications that targeted foreign audiences to assert the Soviet Union’s position as a leading international force.

Total for question 6 5 points

● **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Q 1



Q 2



Q 3



Q 4



Q 5



Q 6



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

This work features throngs of people protesting ~~and~~ outside, holding signs in Russian. Powerlines are also depicted behind the face of Vladimir Lenin. To the left, the abbreviation for the Soviet Union is shown (СССР) with megaphones and a platform with more people behind it.

This work is constructivist, which was part of more modern art movements that deviated from traditional art forms. The angular composition of collaged newspaper clippings are similar to ~~Constructivism~~, another modern art movement. ~~The awkward angles and diagonals~~ The awkward angles and diagonals direct the viewers attention towards certain objects (Lenin's face). The abstract and unbalanced composition was also typical during this time.

This work deviates from established traditions of western Art by first incorporating photography. This medium was a relatively new technological innovation, and as a photomontage, it uses photographs of real events. The lack of traditional techniques such as atmospheric perspective, tenebrism, and single-point perspective are absent, in favor of awkward angles and planes of intertwined events to ~~illustrate a narrative.~~ ~~illustrate a narrative.~~

The artist's choice to depict leaders of the Soviet Union and signs/supporters of the regime were done to glorify the political, social, and economic achievements made by the Soviet state during the first five year plan. Soviet society was communist in ideology, stressing the needs of the many and embracing programs such as collectivization. ~~Stefanovna~~ ~~Stefanovna~~ Stefanovna was a proponent of this ideology, and she included references to it as propaganda for the Soviet state. For example, the powerlines draw lines to Lenin, signifying that the economic and infrastructure progress were direct achievements of the Soviet leadership, which in turn, promised the people.

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Use a pen with black or dark blue ink only. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q5 Q6

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Varvara Stepanova ~~is~~ creates a collage of photographic images using a color palette of mainly red, ~~and~~ black, and white to express nationalism, and uses hierarchical scale to depict the followers of the Five-Year-Plan facing towards ~~the~~ ~~the~~ the larger figure head as their leader. Art ~~is~~ in the first half of the 20th century includes the popularization of photography, and a shift toward more modern art forms. ~~She~~ The Results of the First-Five-Year plan uses photography ~~to~~ ^{combined} with some color blocking in the background to depict a more modern-styled collage. It deviates from traditional Western art by being a collage. Typically, photographs were not used with mixed media in Western art. The ~~work~~ ^{work} was created as a piece of political propaganda, so she chooses to depict the current political leader, after the formation of the USSR, much larger than the rest of the subjects. Military personnel and other subjects face toward him right below to show their support and dedication. Varvara also uses red, white and black to ~~express~~ ^{express} nationalism to the viewer as they are typical national colors - all in support of the USSR.

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Use a pen with black or dark blue ink only. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

● **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Q 1



Q 2



Q 3



Q 4



Q 5



Q 6



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

This piece shows crowds of people, some in protest, some in support, and some just seemingly confused. In the background it also shows power lines and electrical towers. This piece is characteristic of art in the first half of the 20th century as it is simply propaganda. A lot of art during this time was propaganda in opposition or support of ~~all~~ all the things going on in the world during that time. This work deviates from established traditions of Western visual art as it ~~is~~ ~~is~~ ~~is~~ it was one of the first pieces of ~~art~~ constructivism widely spread. The artist took images from current events and put them all together to form a new meaning. The artist's choice of content in the work represents the ideas and values of the society it was made in by it being propaganda that accurately displayed what was going on. ~~The~~ people wanted the truth... so the artist gave them the truth!

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Use a pen with black or dark blue ink only. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

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Question 6

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

Overview

Responses were supposed to demonstrate primarily the art historical thinking skill of identifying and analyzing artistic traditions, as well as visual and contextual analysis. To be awarded all five score points, the response needed to successfully accomplish the following tasks:

- Describe two visual or contextual characteristics of Varvara Stepanova’s *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*.
- Explain how the work is characteristic of art of the first half of the twentieth century CE
- Explain how the work deviates from established traditions of Western visual art.
- Explain how the artist’s choices about style or content in the work represent the ideas and values of Russian society at the time it was made.

Sample: 6A

Score: 5

Task A: The response accurately describes ONE visual and/or contextual element of an illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*. (1 point)

The response earned the visual description point by describing elements that are part of the work including “throngs of people,” “power lines,” “megaphones,” or “a platform with more people behind it.”

Task B: The response accurately describes ANOTHER visual and/or contextual element of an illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*. (1 point)

The response earned another visual description point specifically describing the “face of Vladimir Lenin” and “the abbreviation for the Soviet Union is shown (CCCP) with megaphones and a platform with more people behind it” on the left side of the composition in letters the response identifies as Russian.

Task C: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work is characteristic of art in the first half of the twentieth century CE. (1 point)

The response earned a point for visually explaining the Constructivist characteristics that associate this work with art from the early twentieth century CE with phrases, including “angular composition,” “awkward angles and diagonals,” and “abstract and unbalanced composition.” The response could also have earned a point with the “composition of collaged newspaper clippings are similar to Cubism,” if needed.

Task D: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work deviates from established traditions of Western visual art. (1 point)

The response earned a point for visually explaining the lack of “atmospheric perspective, tenebrism, and single-point perspective ... in favor of awkward angles and intertwined events.”

Question 6 (continued)

Task E: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific contextual evidence to explain how Stepanova’s choices about style OR content in the work represent the ideas and values of the society in which it was made. (1 point)

The response earned the point by explaining contextually, “The artist’s choice to depict leaders of the Soviet Union ... glorify the political, social, and economic achievements made by the Soviet State ...”

The point could also have been earned by the discussion of Stepanova’s association with communism and the inclusion of Lenin as a symbol of Soviet leadership and achievement.

Sample: 6B

Score: 4

Task A: The response accurately describes ONE visual and/or contextual element of an illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*. (1 point)

The response earned a point with “a collage of photographic images using a color palette of mainly red, black, and white,” accurately describing the limited range of pure color used in conjunction with manipulated photographs.

Task B: The response accurately describes ANOTHER visual and/or contextual element of an illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*. (1 point)

The response earned another visual description point describing the work shown as using “hierarchical scale to depict the followers of the Five-Year-Plan facing towards the larger figure head as their leader.”

Task C: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work is characteristic of art in the first half of the twentieth century CE. (0 points)

The response earned a point for explaining the use of “photography combined with some color blocking in the background” as evidence of the combination of figurative imagery with areas of pure color and geometric forms.

Task D: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work deviates from established traditions of Western visual art. (1 point)

The response attempts to explain how the work deviates from Western tradition by explaining that the piece is a “collage.” The response elaborates by explaining, “Typically, photographs were not used with mixed media.” This does not earn the point because this information is inaccurate.

Task E: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific contextual evidence to explain how Stepanova’s choices about style OR content in the work represent the ideas and values of the society in which it was made. (1 point)

The response earned a point for explaining that “the work was created as a piece of political propaganda, so she chooses to depict the current political leader ... much larger than the rest of the subjects ... subjects face toward him right below to show their support and dedication”—evidence that demonstrates popular support of Soviet successes.

Question 6 (continued)

Sample: 6C

Score: 2

Task A: The response accurately describes ONE visual and/or contextual element of an illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*. (1 point)

The response earned a point describing “crowds of people” as a visual element of the work.

Task B: The response accurately describes ANOTHER visual and/or contextual element of an illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*. (1 point)

The response earned a point describing “power lines and electrical towers” in the background as another visual element of the work.

Task C: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work is characteristic of art in the first half of the twentieth century CE. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. It attempts to explain that “A lot of art at this time was propaganda”—a contextual statement that does not address the visual characteristics of art in the first half of the twentieth century CE.

Task D: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific visual evidence to explain how the work deviates from established traditions of Western visual art. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response’s reference to Constructivism does not include sufficient visual explanation to earn the point.

Task E: The response accurately uses ONE example of specific contextual evidence to explain how Stepanova’s choices about style OR content in the work represent the ideas and values of the society in which it was made. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response attempts to explain the artist’s choice of specific content unsuccessfully, discussing the work as “propaganda that accurately displayed what was going on.”