

2024



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# AP<sup>®</sup> Art History

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

### **Inside:**

#### **Free-Response Question 3**

- Scoring Guidelines**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

**Question 3: Visual Analysis****5 points**

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**(A)** Accurately describes ONE specific visual characteristic of *Tar Beach*. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses include the following:**

- The image is brightly colored.
- A group of figures are seated at a table.
- There are figures sleeping or lying down.
- Figures are flying in the sky.
- The work depicts a city.
- It is a fabric quilt.
- There is a flowered border.
- The clothing is detailed.
- The viewer can see the detailed food and drink objects on the table.
- A large bridge dominates the left middle and background of the image.
- There is writing on the surface.

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**(B)** Accurately describes ANOTHER specific visual characteristic of *Tar Beach*. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses include the following:**

- One from list in A.

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**(C)** Accurately uses specific visual evidence to explain how the artist creates spatial depth. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses include the following:**

- Diagonal lines suggest perspectival depth.
  - The upturned roof contributes to a sense of intuitive (tipped) perspective.
  - The closer objects are bigger.
  - The objects in the foreground are larger.
  - Objects that are far away are smaller.
  - The objects in the background are smaller.
  - The artist places things that are farther away higher up in the work.
  - Closer objects are placed lower in the work.
  - Items that are closer overlap items that are farther away.
  - Items that are farther away are overlapped by closer items.
  - Small squares create a frame around the central image.
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- (D)** Accurately uses specific visual evidence to explain how the work tells or communicates a story. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses include the following:**

- The written text tells a story.
- Two of the figures are depicted multiple times to indicate different scenes in a story (a continuous narrative).
- The figures use animated gestures that indicate their actions and activities.
- The image is detailed and encourages the viewer to create meaning/build a narrative.
- A variety of activities take place in the image, suggesting different events.

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- (E)** Accurately uses visual or contextual evidence to explain why *Tar Beach* deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses include the following:**

- Ringgold challenged hierarchies of materials/style/presentation through her choices of medium/subject matter/technique.
- Ringgold challenged expectations of 20th century art by choosing to combine traditions of European painting with story quilts that focused on African-American characters.
- Ringgold challenged earlier traditions of art by presenting a story that depicts people of color as the main characters.
- Ringgold used quilting (a traditional artform associated with women’s domestic crafts) to demonstrate its artistic value was comparable to earlier paintings and other media used by male artists.
- Ringgold’s choice of subject matter/materials connects to feminist and civil rights concerns in contrast to earlier works.
- Because Ringgold learned to quilt from her mother, her story quilts had a personal meaning for her in contrast to universal meaning that is characteristic of Modernism.

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**Total for question 3 5 points**

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.

Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold ~~depression~~ depicts a contemporary urban scene. A black family of four sits around a seemingly square table with their hands out stretched towards each other. They are situated just above the floral frame ~~at the~~ <sup>work</sup> ~~bottom~~ on the bottom. At the top of the work are three flying figures, two of which wear identical dresses. Among these people is a man standing ~~on~~ at the top of the tallest building and nine different paragraphs of small writing. The sky that provides a backdrop is blue with illuminated dots as stars.

~~The~~ Ringgold communicates depth by layering her ~~her~~ figures. ~~For~~ for example, the boy at the table covers the girl's bottom half to communicate that he is closer to the viewer than she. ~~Similarly~~ ~~the~~ similarly, the buildings and structures in the middle of the work overlap each other and ascend in ~~height~~ height and size. The buildings closest to the viewer are unobstructed while those in the back are missing their lower halves ~~and~~.

Not only does the work tell a story through the use of repeating figures (the girl and boy on the blanket mirror one of the girls and the boy in sky)

Page 8

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.

but also through written elements. With the inclusion of different blurbs or text Ringgold is able to directly communicate her vision through words.

Tar Beach deviates from ~~the~~ 20<sup>th</sup> century artistic conventions through its materiality. The use of quilting, which was seen as a domestic and "low" art separates it from the artistic norms. Ringgold is trying to assert that just because quilting is typically done by women and viewed as a "domestic" art doesn't mean it can't be viewed as "high art" like paintings or sculptures of the time.

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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.

In Tar Beach, one visual characteristic is the quilted patterning the piece is on, and the flowery border of the work, as well as the bright coloring on the cloth. Another visual characteristic is the realism, which depicts an ordinary family in their everyday life. The artist creates spatial depth by overlapping the buildings in the background. For example, you can only see half of the ice cream factory because it is the farthest away, and therefore is covered by the closer buildings. To add, the bridge in the background is twisted to show the distance between its start and finish. The middle of the bridge meets at one point, and the point of the rooftop the family's ~~start~~ eating on makes the perspective look more stretched so they're closer. The work communicates the story literally by ~~with~~ having its storyline on the material itself. The story narrates from left to right and is numbered according to the timeline. Tar Beach deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century by incorporating a story about a dream while ~~is~~ representing regular life events. Faith Ringgold establishes the first story of a family eating dinner, and then ~~the~~ physically narrates the story of the children's dream using incorporated writing.

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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.

In the artwork *Tar Beach*, it shows a very calm nighttime scene where a group of people are sitting together at a table while two kids lie on a blanket looking up at the sky. In the sky, we can see three kids flying towards ~~each~~ each other and a man standing on top of a tall building. The artist creates spatial ~~depth~~ depth in this artwork by drawing all the buildings together except for the bridge. This allows every building in the artwork to blend in with ~~each~~ each other. The work communicates a story by depicting the buildings in the ~~background~~ background as a community of African Americans and their culture. For example, each of the buildings have the colors of the African flag. Not only that but some of the people in the painting are wearing traditional African clothing. This artwork deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century because not a lot of artworks in the 20th century show their traditional colors or culture.

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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.

### Question 3

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

#### Overview

Responses were expected to demonstrate primarily the art historical thinking skill of visual analysis, applied to an unknown work of art. To be awarded all five score points, the response needed to successfully accomplish the following tasks:

- Describe visual characteristics of the selected artwork, *Tar Beach* by Faith Ringgold.
- Use visual evidence to explain how the artist creates spatial depth.
- Use visual evidence to explain how the work tells or communicates a story.
- Explain why *Tar Beach* deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century by using visual or contextual evidence.

#### Sample: 3A

**Score: 5**

#### **Task A: Accurately describe ONE specific visual characteristic of *Tar Beach*. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by observing that “A black family of four sits around a seemingly square table with their hands out stretched towards each other.”

#### **Task B: Accurately describe ANOTHER specific visual characteristic of *Tar Beach*. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by offering several specific examples of visual evidence, including “floral frame of the work,” “At the top of the work are three flying figures,” “Among these people is a man standing frontal at the top of the tallest building,” “nine different paragraphs of small writing,” and “The sky that provides a backdrop is blue with illuminated dots as stars.” Any one of these comments would have earned the point.

#### **Task C: Accurately use specific visual evidence to explain how the artist creates spatial depth. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by explaining that “Ringgold communicates depth by layering her her figures,” indicating that overlapping forms create the illusion of spatial depth.

#### **Task D: Accurately use specific visual evidence to explain how the work tells or communicates a story. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by explaining that Ringgold included text in the work to narrate the imagery, stating “With the inclusion of different blurbs of text Ringgold is able to directly communicate her vision through words.”

The response attempts to further explain how the work tells a story by noting that “Not only does the work tell a story through the use repeating figures (the girl and boy on the blanket mirror one of the girls and the boy in sky),” but this did not earn the point because the explanation is too general to indicate the identification of a continuous narrative.



### Question 3 (continued)

**Task E: Accurately use visual or contextual evidence to explain why *Tar Beach* deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by stating that “The use of quilting, which was seen as a domestic and ‘low’ art separates it from the artistic norms,” arguing that “Ringgold is trying to assert that just because quilting is typically done by women and viewed as a ‘domestic’ art doesn’t mean it can’t be viewed as ‘high art’ like paintings or sculptures of the time.”

**Sample: 3B**

**Score: 4**

**Task A: Accurately describe ONE specific visual characteristic of *Tar Beach*. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by describing a “flowery border.”

**Task B: Accurately describe ANOTHER specific visual characteristic of *Tar Beach*. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by describing the “bright coloring” of the work. The response would have also earned this point by noting “Another visual characteristic is the realism, which depicts an ordinary family in their everyday life,” which accurately describes what is taking place in the scene.

**Task C: Accurately use specific visual evidence to explain how the artist creates spatial depth. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by stating that “The artist creates spatial depth by overlapping the buildings in the background.”

The response further attempts to describe spatial depth in the work by noting that “the bridge in the background is twisted to show the distance between its start and finish,” but this description is too general to describe intuitive (or tilted) perspective.

**Task D: Accurately use specific visual evidence to explain how the work tells or communicates a story. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by noting that “The work communicates the story literally by having its storyline on the material itself. The story narrates from left to right and is numbered according to the timeline.” This statement accurately emphasizes the fact that the written text in *Tar Beach* tells a sequential story.

**Task E: Accurately use visual or contextual evidence to explain why *Tar Beach* deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century. (0 points)**

The response attempts this point by stating that the artist incorporates “a story about a dream while representing regular life events,” but this does not explain why Ringgold deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century.

### Question 3 (continued)

**Sample: 3C**

**Score: 2**

**Task A: Accurately describe ONE specific visual characteristic of Tar Beach. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by describing “a group of people” that “are sitting together at a table.”

**Task B: Accurately describe ANOTHER specific visual characteristic of Tar Beach. (1 point)**

The response earned this point by describing “three kids flying towards each other” and “a man standing on top of a tall building,” both of which are accurate visual descriptions of the work.

**Task C: Accurately use specific visual evidence to explain how the artist creates spatial depth. (0 points)**

The response attempts this point by stating that “The artist creates spatial depth in this artwork by drawing all the buildings together except for the bridge,” but this explanation is too general and does not specify how the specific placement of objects within the picture plane indicates spatial depth.

**Task D: Accurately use specific visual evidence to explain how the work tells or communicates a story. (0 points)**

The response attempts this point by arguing that “The work communicates a story by depicting the buildings in the background as a community of African Americans and their culture,” noting the colors used in each of the buildings, but this does not accurately explain how the work communicates a story.

**Task E: Accurately use visual or contextual evidence to explain why *Tar Beach* deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century. (0 points)**

The response attempts this point by arguing that “not a lot of artworks in the 20th century show their traditional colors or culture,” but this does not explain why Ringgold deviates from earlier artistic traditions in the 20th century.