
AP[®] Art History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Free-Response Question 5

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Question 5: Attribution**5 points**

A Point 1	<p>Correctly attributes the work shown to the specific culture from the Indigenous Americas (1000 BCE–1980 CE) in which it was created.</p> <p>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work was created by the Maya. • The work was created by the culture who built Yaxchilán. 	1 point
B Point 2	<p>Accurately uses specific visual evidence to justify the attribution by describing ONE relevant similarity between the work shown and another work of the same type created by the same culture.</p> <p>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a relief carving, which was common in art of this culture. • The stele is made of (lime)stone like similar works found at Mayan cities/Yaxchilán. • The work uses Mayan glyphs/inscriptions. • The figure wears an elaborate costume similar to Lady Xook. • The figure is depicted in profile view like in other Mayan carvings/lintels. • As in other Mayan works, the figure performs a bloodletting ritual. • There is a vision/visionary figure appearing above the human figure. • The figure at the top has a serpent-like form. • The shape of the stele recalls similar works used on architectural structures/to decorate lintels. 	1 point
C Point 3	<p>Accurately uses specific visual evidence to justify the attribution by describing ANOTHER relevant similarity between the work shown and another work of the same type created by the same culture.</p> <p>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another example from those listed in Part B. 	1 point

D Point 4	<p>Accurately uses specific visual and/or contextual evidence to explain ONE way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of the culture in which it was created.</p> <p>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To reinforce the cultural values of the Maya, the work included glyphs/inscriptions that provided information about Mayan rulers.• By depicting the ruler's connection to ancestors/the divine, the work reinforced the beliefs of the Mayan culture.• The representation of a bloodletting ritual reinforces the important role of Mayan royalty in religious ceremonies.• The sculpture's skilled carving reinforced the Mayan belief that the ruler was a powerful/elite patron.• To reinforce the cultural values about the Mayan ruler, the sculpture was placed in a temple to demonstrate the royalty's relationship with the gods.• The inscriptions explained when the ritual occurred, which reinforced Mayan beliefs about the ruler's right to reign.• To reinforce the cultural importance of the Mayan elite, the figures' garments/jewelry demonstrate their wealth/social status.• By depicting an elite female figure engaged in a ritual, the sculpture reinforces the importance of women in Mayan society.	1 point
E Point 5	<p>Accurately uses specific visual and/or contextual evidence to explain ANOTHER way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of the culture in which it was created.</p> <p>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Another example from those listed in Part D.	1 point

This work can be attributed to the Mayan Culture, and is similar to the the art found at the Yaxchilan complex.

This work can be attributed to the Mayans due to the Mayan glyphs around the edges of the piece. This can also be seen around the depictions of Lady Xoc at Yaxchilan, and are distinct to the Mayan Culture. They come in groups of 4-7 and have distinct, pictorial meanings.

This work can also be attributed the Mayan culture because of the subject matter. It depicts a royal woman of the court consulting a spirit, who has the body of a dragon and the head of a warrior. This is almost identical to the depictions of Lady Xoc and the Warrior from Yaxchilan. They both use this subject matter to reference their bloodletting practices, in which they would purposefully bleed to create visions/hallucinations to reach the spirit world.

This work would have reinforce the values of the Mayan culture through its depiction of a royal lady of the court. She is shown wearing an elaborate headdress and valuable jewelry, showing her high status. Depicting her connection with the spirits on behalf of the Mayan civilization would have reinforced her high role in society, as well as the high role that other women played in court.

This work also reinforces the belief in bloodletting that the Mayans had. The figure is holding a bloodletting bowl and talking to a spirit, showing that she has connected with the spirit world. Mayans had rituals of bleeding themselves or eating hallucinogenic cactus' to create visions. They believed that this helped them connect with the spirits, and they used this to seek guidance.

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This piece of art can be attributed to the Mayan culture from the Indigenous Americas. A piece that is from the same culture and similar visuals is the stone relief carvings. These carvings look extremely similar and are made of the same material of stone. On the stone relief carvings their written language is also depicted on the piece just how it is depicted on this one. The people who are placed on here look the same as the other pieces from their culture. The biggest similarity that I see is the creatures who are coming out from the Mayan people or are directly under or next too. This piece of art may have reinforced values and beliefs in a couple differnt ways. It could have reinforced the language that they use by putting it on this piece of stone and carving it. It also could have reinforced beliefs that the Mayan people have power like no others because of the creatures.

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This work can be attributed to the specific culture of the Aztec people. This piece can be attributed to these people as in this piece you can see the narrative being told with engraving, similarly in the Temple Mayor the stone as the bottom depicts a narrative being told with engraving, both are also engraved into stone and similarly that attributes the following pieces. The piece likely took a large span of time to create as tools in the past were very basic and primitive in comparison to the modern day and the stone it was engraved in shows the permanence that the narrative of the stone is intended to convey, which is why it may have reinforced the values it was created in and trying to display with permanence due to the labor and material it was made in.

Question 5

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

Overview

NEW for 2025: The question overviews can be found in the *Chief Reader Report on Student Responses on AP Central*.

Sample: 5A

Task A (Point 1): 1

Task B (Point 2): 1

Task C (Point 3): 1

Task D (Point 4): 1

Task E (Point 5): 1

Score: 5

Task A: Correctly attributes the work shown to the specific culture from the Indigenous Americas (1000 BCE–1980 CE) in which it was created. (1 point)

The response earned the point by correctly attributing the work to “the Mayan culture.” The response goes on to correctly state that it “is similar to the the art found at the Yaxchilan complex,” but this is not necessary to earn the point.

Task B: Accurately justifies the attribution by describing ONE relevant visual similarity between the work shown and another work by the same culture. (1 point)

The response earned the point by describing “the Mayan glyphs around the edges of the piece” to justify the attribution. Because the response describes the glyphs as being Mayan, that alone is enough to have earned the point. The response goes on to develop the comparison by indicating the presence of the same type of glyphs “around the depictions of Lady Xoc at Yaxchilan” and noting that they are “distinct to the Mayan culture.” However, this additional context is not necessary to earn the point.

Task C: Accurately justifies the attribution by describing ANOTHER relevant visual similarity between the work shown and another work by the same culture. (1 point)

The response earned the point by describing how the work “depicts a royal woman of the court consulting a spirit, who has the body of a dragon and the head of a warrior” to justify the attribution. “Dragon” is close enough to “snake” to earn the point for a visual similarity. The response could also have earned the point for describing how “[t]his is almost identical to the depictions of Lady Xoc and the Warrior from Yaxchilan” to justify the attribution by noting the similarity of figures at a Mayan site.

Task D: Accurately explains ONE way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of the culture in which it was created by using relevant visual or contextual evidence. (1 point)

The response earned the point by accurately explaining that the “depiction of a royal lady of the court ... is shown wearing an elaborate headdress and valuable jewelry, showing her high status.” The point could also have been earned for accurately explaining how “[d]epicting her connection with the spirits on behalf of the Mayan civilization would have reinforced her high role in society, as well as the high role that other women played in court.”

Question 5 (continued)

Task E: Accurately explains ANOTHER way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of Mayan culture by using relevant visual or contextual evidence. (1 point)

The response earned the point by accurately explaining how “[t]his work also reinforces the belief in bloodletting that the Mayans had. The figure is holding a bloodletting bowl and talking to a spirit, showing that she has connected with the spirit world.”

Sample: 5B

Task A (Point 1): 1

Task B (Point 2): 1

Task C (Point 3): 1

Task D (Point 4): 0

Task E (Point 5): 0

Score: 3

Task A: Correctly attributes the work shown to the specific culture from the Indigenous Americas (1000 BCE–1980 CE) in which it was created. (1 point)

The response earned the point by correctly attributing the work to the “Mayan culture.” The response also adds “from the Indigenous Americas,” which is not necessary to earn the point, nor is it specific enough to earn the point on its own.

Task B: Accurately justifies the attribution by describing ONE relevant visual similarity between the work shown and another work by the same culture. (1 point)

The response earned the point by describing the work as “made of ... stone” to justify the attribution. This is close enough to limestone that is used in similar works at Yaxchilán.

Task C: Accurately justifies the attribution by describing ANOTHER relevant visual similarity between the work shown and another work by the same culture. (1 point)

The response earned the point by describing “relief carvings” to justify the attribution. “Carvings” on its own would not be specific enough to earn the point because relief is a common technique in Mayan sculpture. The response also could have earned the point for describing how “their written language is also depicted on the piece just how it is depicted on this one.” While “written language” alone would be too general, the response correctly attributes the work as Mayan, indicating this reference is to the Mayan language.

Task D: Accurately explains ONE way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of the culture in which it was created by using relevant visual or contextual evidence. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response attempts the task by stating “[t]his piece of art may have reinforced values and beliefs in a couple differnt ways. It could have reinforced the language that they use by putting it on this piece of stone and carving it.” This information is too general. It provides visual evidence but does not make a clear connection to the values or beliefs of Mayan culture.

Question 5 (continued)

Task E: Accurately explains ANOTHER way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of Mayan culture by using relevant visual or contextual evidence. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response attempts the task by stating that “It also could have reinforced beliefs that the Mayan people have power like no others because of the creatures.” This information is too general to earn the point.

Sample: 5C

Task A (Point 1): 0

Task B (Point 2): 1

Task C (Point 3): 0

Task D (Point 4): 0

Task E (Point 5): 0

Score: 1

Task A: Correctly attributes the work shown to the specific culture from the Indigenous Americas (1000 BCE–1980 CE) in which it was created. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response attempts the task by stating “[t]his work can be attributed to the specific culture of the Aztec people,” but this information is inaccurate.

Task B: Accurately justifies the attribution by describing ONE relevant visual similarity between the work shown and another work by the same culture. (1 point)

The response earned the point by accurately describing that “both are also engraved into stone” to justify the attribution. The point was awarded for the reference to “stone.” The word “engraved” alone would not have earned the point since the work is a relief sculpture.

Task C: Accurately justifies the attribution by describing ANOTHER relevant visual similarity between the work shown and another work by the same culture. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response attempts the task by stating “depictes a narritve being told,” but this description is too general to justify the attribution.

Task D: Accurately explains a way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of the culture in which it was created by using relevant visual or contextual evidence. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response attempts the task by stating that the work is “trying to display with permamence due to the labor.” This information is too general to earn the point. It provides contextual evidence but does not make a connection to the values or beliefs of Mayan culture.

Task E: Accurately explains ANOTHER way the work shown may have reinforced the values or beliefs of Mayan culture by using relevant visual or contextual evidence. (0 points)

The response did not earn the point. The response attempts the task by stating “the stone it was engraved in shows the permanence that the narrative of the stone is intended to convey.” This information is too general. It provides visual evidence but does not make a connection to the values or beliefs of Mayan culture.