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# Writing About Art



## Synopsis

For one/two-semester courses in Art History Survey and Art Appreciation, as well as a supplement in Art Studio and Writing Across the Curriculum courses. This straightforward guide prepares students to describe, interpret, and write about works of art in meaningful and lasting terms. Designed as a supplement to Art History survey and period texts, this efficient book features a step-by-step approach to writing--from choosing a work to write about, to essay organization, to research techniques, to footnote form, to preparing the final essay. For beginners as well as more advanced students.

## Book Information

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Prentice Hall; 5th edition (July 17, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0131945602

ISBN-13: 978-0131945609

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (13 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #432,589 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #46 in [Books > Reference >](#)

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## Customer Reviews

It's beyond cliché to say that a book has changed your life, but this little handbook - a supplemental art history text, of all things - ranks with scripture and great literature as one of the most personally beneficial books I've ever read. This may say more about me than the book, of course, but if you are the sort of person who finds it difficult to think about art, let alone talk or write about it, then perhaps this will give you hope. Professor Sayre starts this handbook with a simple thesis: everyone could write about art, if only they knew where to start. To prove his point, Sayre chooses pieces that most laypeople would consider indescribable (like the abstractions of Jackson Pollock) and teaches the reader, slowly but surely, how to really look at the work. With subsequent lessons on choice, composition, and color, even the most "non-artistic" thinkers will begin to see things in a different light... and then Professor Sayre will then teach you how to put those thoughts into words. If you are privileged enough to attend a school where the humanities are still actively

taught, you owe it to yourself to pick up a copy of this book - your papers and grades will doubtlessly improve. But even if your chances of ever taking an art appreciation class are slim, if you have any interest in the subject at all, then I highly recommend this book.

"I know of two books specifically geared toward teaching writing in art history courses. They are Sylvan Barnet's *A Short Guide to Writing About Art* and Henry Sayre's *Writing About Art*. Their strength lies in addressing common problems that students face in the art history classroom. I have found them to be useful guides for viewing assignments and research papers in introductory classes--which is their goal. For classes built around more complex writing, however, the books below are more appropriate."Excerpt from my blog entry *The "Extra" Art History Textbook: A Writing Manual Roundup*: [...]

*Writing About Art* is a quick reference guide that will help anyone interpret what they are seeing in a work of art. The book helps readers learn how to break down compositions into things like color, subject matter, and symbolism, so they can read an artist's intentions and meaning as one would a book. This was a required text for my survey I art history class. I did not however elect to use it that first semester. This reference was definitely an under appreciated resource up until the midterm of my survey II class. I improved a whole letter grade by utilizing the tips and techniques outlined in this book. I was pulling a solid B+ by the end of my first year. I can't tell you how frustrating it is not to be able to break a C average. *Writing About Art* really made a difference in my understanding art and my academic career. It's thin and small for a textbook, easy to overlook and disregard. But the rules laid out in how to process and describe art are universal, and easy to remember. This book has served me well in my classical western, modern, african, venetian, and south pacific art classes, as well as speaking in critiques. I saw a steady rise from that C average to an A. Anyone serious about understanding, learning, writing, or speaking intelligently about art should read this book.

I ordered this book as it was required for an Introduction to Modern Art class I was taking. I really appreciated the user friendly approach the author took. The book literally guides one through the steps of writing a paper from its pre-conception until the birth of the final paper. I would definitely recommend this book for it is not only helpful academically, but an interesting, non-dry read as well!

Got my Book ...In great shape and on time ...The book seems really informativel am a happy camper ... I will know better when I'm done reading ... Then I can compare an old favorite 40 yrOld

text book and see how much, if any, Writing About Art has changed ...Thanks

This book is invaluable. In this very slim volume he shows students how to write about, think about, make choices about, and see art. So far I've found nothing better!

The book came on time with the other one I ordered. The condition was good. It's a great book if you would like to write about art. Very nice.

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