

## Introduction to Fine Arts

**Instructor:** Ernie Cervantes

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**Text:** Adams, Laurie. *Exploring the Humanities: Creativity and Culture in the West*. Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006. The instructor will regularly also give out supplementary readings and informational handouts. Attendance and class participation are very important. Students must be prepared to listen carefully in class, take notes and engage in discussions.

**Needed Materials:** A wire-bound notebook or binder.

**Course Description:** An Introduction to Fine Arts is a survey course that covers the major periods in the development of Western Civilization. Important events, artistic movements, philosophies, geography, religion and social history will be examined through the artistic expressions of the societies in question.

Historical understanding will be enhanced through the study of music, literature, theater, art, dance, architecture and film. The students will familiarize themselves with the basic vocabulary of each artistic discipline. As much as possible, students will attend live theater, concerts, dance productions, and visit museums. Therefore, families should be aware that attendance at these events is an important part of the grade and will require a commitment of time beyond the Friday class sessions. Aside from fulfilling course requirements, these also could be great family activities.

**Special Note:** A very small class size is anticipated this year. Consequently, it should be easy to set up field trip experiences in which all enrolled students can participate. The instructor expects to take more out-of-town trips than in previous years -- at least two per semester. Parents will be asked to join the class as often as possible to help supervise. Their presence will also enhance the home schooling portion of the course work. Likewise, parents are always welcome to attend the regular Friday class with the students.

**Assessment:** Students will receive grades for some in-class assignments and activities. Most major test grades are from take-home essays based on concert and museum attendance. Multiple choice, true/false and matching tests also will be given occasionally.

**Grading:** Letter grades will be computed using the school's adopted formula:

A = 93 – 100%	B+ = 87 – 89	C+ = 77 – 79	D+ = 67 – 69	F = Less than
A- = 90 – 92	B = 83 – 86	C = 73 – 76	D = 63 – 66	60% of points
	B- = 80 – 82	C- = 70 – 72	D- = 60 – 62	possible

**Late Work:** Late assignments will be accepted only if the student could not turn them in due to illness, approved school activity, or any other legitimate excused absence. You will have two weeks from the time of your return to complete any missing assignments. Late work will not be accepted from students without a valid excuse.

**Class Schedule:** The class meets on Fridays from 9:20 to 10:35 in the third floor classroom. The instructor will try to release the class promptly at 10:35. However, the instructor also reserves the right to hold the students later under certain circumstances. For example, at least two of our museum visits and one of our concerts are scheduled for Friday mornings. It will also be necessary to stay late on those days when we view important films and filmed performances drama, opera and ballet, if we are to see the entire performance in one sitting. Students will not be asked to stay late unless (1) the students and parents are notified at least one week in advance of the date that the students will be held over, and (2) staying late does not prevent the student attending a 3<sup>rd</sup> period Friday class, such as senior seminar. Since students will attend live theater, concerts, dance productions, and museums, families should be aware that attendance at these events is an important part of the grade and will require a commitment of time beyond the Friday class sessions. Specific times and dates for some of these activities are listed on page 4 following. Others will be available to you as details are finalized.

**Scope and Sequence:**

The topics listed below will be covered throughout the course of the year. The instructor may not cover these topics in the exact order given. Sometimes we will have to change the sequence of our studies to accommodate the available concerts and museum exhibits.

1. Course Introduction
2. Elements of Art
3. Elements of Music
4. The Art of Ancient Greece
5. The Art of Ancient Rome
6. The Spread of Christianity and its impact on art in Western (Medieval) Europe
7. The High Middle Ages
8. Music and Art of the Renaissance
9. Shakespeare: Macbeth
10. Music and Art of the Baroque
11. Neoclassicism and the Enlightenment in Music, Art and Architecture.
12. Romanticism in Music, Art and Literature

13. Ballet
14. The Industrial Revolution and its impact on art in Western Europe
15. Impressionism
16. Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Artistic Movements
17. Music and Art After WWII
18. Contemporary Art
19. Film as Art Form

**A special *caveat* for students of this course and their families:**

In the past, some students of this course and their families have objected to some of the material covered in this class. As stated in the course description, this is

“... a survey course that covers the major periods in the development of Western Civilization. Important events, artistic movements, philosophies, geography, religion and social history will be examined through the artistic expressions of the societies in question.”

The instructor will try to enhance the aforementioned discussions by presenting and commenting upon masterpieces of western art. Of necessity, some of the paintings and sculptures in question deal with the nude figure (e.g. Myron's *Diskobolos*, the Belvedere *Apollo*, Michelangelo's *David*, Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger*). Nudity in art will be particularly prevalent in our study of the Classical and Renaissance style periods.

In addition, the Shakespeare play and the *verismo* opera will deal with violent themes such as murder, torture and political assassination. If the student or parents have objection to any of these themes or subjects, then the student is encouraged to drop the course *now*, before it becomes too late to add another course and the student is short of units.

Finally, parents should be assured that the instructor will only present images or footage of a truly educational nature. Anything of a mature nature is shown strictly for the understanding of the art and the time in which it was created. Gratuitous sex, violence and sensationalism are not parts of the planned curriculum. If you have questions about any materials that the instructor plans to show in the course, please contact him as soon as possible. If you still have reservations after that meeting, you are advised to drop the course.