The Evaluation of Artwork Worksheet

1) Description - The first step when looking at artwork is to study and describe exactly what you see. Complete the following tasks:

a. Describe the size and medium (the actual materials an artist uses) of the artwork.
b. List the subject, object, and details in the artwork.
c. Identify the elements of art used. (line, value, shape and form, color, texture).
d. List the principles of design and how they were used in the artwork. (balance, movement, emphasis, variety, unity, pattern)

Note: A piece of art, architecture, or sculpture may include one element of art and one principle of design or it may include all of them together.

2) Analysis - The second step in criticism is to analyze the artwork. Focus on the way the elements and principles are used. Complete the following tasks:

a. Discuss which element and principle of design is the most dominant.
b. Discuss how the shapes, colors, and textures are repeated and emphasized.
c. Summarize how line and value are used in the artwork.
d. Analyze what type of balance (principle of design) is created in the artwork (symmetrical, asymmetrical, or radial).

3) Interpretation - The third step is to guess or try to interpret what the artist is saying through his or her artwork. Complete the following tasks:

a. Describe the message the artist is trying to convey to the viewer. This is the most difficult step because there is sometimes not enough information to decipher what the artist is trying to convey in the mood or meaning.
b. Describe how the message is conveyed through the use of the elements of art and the principles of design. (Refer to steps 1 and 2.) For example, you may interpret the use of dark colors as conveying a sense of hopelessness.
c. Identify past experiences and feelings that the artwork evokes within you.
d. Summarize the specific facts that support your feelings for the artwork. (Remember, the facts must be related to the information the artist chooses to support in the title, media, and subject matter.)

4) Judgment - The final step in critically examining artwork is your judgment on the success of the art. Judging artwork has two levels. One level takes into consideration the artistic merit of the work and how well the work meets specific criteria such as technique, application of elements, and principles of design. The other level is completely personal based upon your opinion of how well you like the particular piece of art. Complete the following tasks:

a. Decide whether your opinion of a work of art is based on the way the artwork looks, the artist's message, or both.
b. Explain your opinion of the artwork on both levels of judgment.
c. Summarize the specific reasons why you think the artwork does or does not have artistic merit (based on the information in the first three steps).
d. Summarize the specific reasons why you like or dislike the artwork.