



In-Gallery, Self-Guided Tour

Preamble. This situates the assignment within the context of the course and reminds students of what they have been working on in anticipation of the assignment.

As we have seen throughout the course of the semester, the story of Adam and Eve can be used to grapple with many different ethical issues that are at the heart of what it is to be human. As artists have expanded, elaborated, and explained the story and its characters, they have raised ethical questions—questions about the nature of innocence and guilt, about the relations of men, women, and animals, or about the ethics of creation (to name just three examples)—that have themselves given rise to a vast corpus of literary and visual material for ethical reasoning. To help us unlock the debates and the ethical potential of various works of art, we developed the skills of careful reading and close visual analysis. We looked at reasons why artists would create art in response to the story of Adam and Eve, ways that careful reading and close visual analysis provided opportunities for creating new work, and the ways various authors and artists made ethical arguments, comparing some of them to modern, “scientific” attempts to address these issues.

Goals/objectives. Here in the preamble, you should remind students of how the previous work in the course addresses the course goals.

Scaffolding. Remind students how what they have done throughout the semester has prepared them for this assignment.

Justification. This explains why the particular genre of assignment you’ve chosen is the best way for you and your students to measure how well they’ve met the learning objectives associated with this segment of the course.

For this capstone assignment, you will use these skills and engage with this wealth of material to make your own ethical argument.

Goals/objectives. This assignment asks students to **create an original argument**. “Creating” is a higher order activity than applying, understanding, or remembering, and is the appropriate activity based on the goals of the course and the fact that this is the capstone assignment.

Mission. This explains the assignment in broad brush strokes, giving students a general sense of the project you are setting before them.

You will do this by working with a group to create an in-gallery handout for a self guided mini-tour (for examples see: fig. 1 & 2) .

Your handout will present an ethical argument by guiding the visitor through a custom itinerary of images, objects, and literary passages, explaining how they come together to shed light on one of the fundamental issues raised by the Adam and Eve story. The culmination of this assignment will be a public event at our class's exhibition, where your handouts will be available to visitors. The challenge of this assignment is not just to make an argument but to translate it into a form that people who have not taken the class can understand.

Genre. This is a **creative or non-traditional assignment**.

The chosen format should play a role in the meaning that students are supposed to create. In this course, creating a handout for a gallery tour allows students to create an ethical argument by linking images and texts.

This prompt clearly explains to students the intended **audience** for their assignment. This assignment also includes an **act of public teaching** that allows for feedback from sources other than the instructor.

Tasks. This outlines what students are supposed to do at a more granular level: for example, how to start, where to look, etc. If written well, this part of the assignment prompt ought to function as a kind of rubric for students, helping them to decide for themselves whether they are completing the assignment successfully.

Submission format. This tells students, in appropriate detail, how to submit their work. For example, should the assignment be a five-page paper? And saved in .docx or .pdf format? Should it be uploaded to the course website? Is it due by Tuesday at 5:00pm?

Important: In this regard, this section of the assignment prompt, which combines detailed tasks with information on how to submit each piece of the assignment, acts like a "pre-rubric".

To prepare for this event, you will need to do the following:

1. By the end of the section on October 12th, form a group of three to five. This will be your group for the final project. Your group does not need to finalize the topic for the project in September, but the earlier you decide on a topic, the more time you will have to analyze the information from the course in relation to your topic so that you can pick the best examples for your mini-tour. Make sure that you exchange contact information and put a plan into place as to when you will be able to work together on the project.

Genre: This assignment involves **group work**. There are many benefits to group work. Students can tackle more complex problems, they learn to work together, they can produce more sophisticated work, etc. Having students work in groups does require monitoring and fostering group dynamics. Establishing groups early and giving them frequent opportunities to work together can help build group dynamics.

2. By the end of class on November 12th, submit a brief description of the ethical issue with which your group wishes to engage. In selecting your issue, your group might privilege:
- an ethical issue that has been raised by other artists;
 - an issue that arose when you dealt with the scriptural story (such as when you adopted a verse); or
 - something that has not been addressed because it was not of interest to the artist you have encountered (such as issues of animal rights)

Formative Feedback. This step **offers context** how students can create their own argument in relation to the arguments covered in class. It is an opportunity for the group to work together on a low stakes assignment and to receive feedback on their possible argument.

3. By the end of class on November 19th, submit an annotated list of the images, objects, and texts from which you will consider pulling examples to construct your argument/"itinerary." This list likely will have to be more ample than the final list, as your project's focus may shift somewhat as you develop it.

- At this stage, you will need to select no more than ____ and no fewer than ____ pieces of art that help your group make its ethical argument. The first pieces of art that you should consider are the pieces that you adopted at the beginning of the semester. Some of your pieces of art may raise the ethic question or issue, while others will help to address it. Not all of your adopted art pieces may fit, and it is okay to exclude them. In addition to works from our gallery, it is also okay to include pieces from our field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts.
- You should likewise select no more than ____ and no fewer than ____ passages from the Bible, Milton, and the other texts we have read this semester (including the modern philosophers et al.).
- For each image and passage, you should compose an entry which includes:
 - accurate citation information for each source (using MLA format);
 - a brief summary of the source's argument. Here you will practice conveying in a few sentences what the central claim is of the source—remember, with 4-6 sources in your paper, you won't stop to offer a full-paragraph summary of each one, so you want to convey this central idea concisely;
 - an explanation of how the source will contribute to your argument. This means thinking not just about the ideas that seem useful from the source, but the role that you think the source might play. Those roles include:
 - Establish what's at stake: a source can present or highlight a problem, question or issue that provides a "so what" for

Genre: Group work. Sometimes there are challenges in assessing the work of each individual student in a group project. One way to help address these issues is to build in **opportunities for individual assessment**. This scaffolding assignment is one of those opportunities.

Creative or non-traditional assignments still require the **use and citation of primary and secondary sources**. In this assignment, students were asked to create an annotated bibliography that they could use as a resource in creating their final tour. The annotations required that students **identify and summarize** important information that would commonly be required on an exam. They also asked student to consider how they would **apply** the piece or art or text to **make their argument**.

Scaffolding. As in a traditional paper, students will need to make an argument. The annotated bibliography provides clear instructions on the types of roles that sources might play in the final assignment and the opportunity to practice using sources before the final project. The students will have the

your project;

- Serve as a lens: a source can offer a theory or concept that gives you a framework or focus for analyzing your evidence and building your argument;
- Provide context: a source can offer background (historical, cultural, etc.) that we need to understand the organization you're focusing on or the issue you're analyzing;
- Cite a supporting expert: you want to offer a claim, and you cite a scholar or researcher who notices the same or similar idea, thereby supporting your claim;
- Provide key terms/concepts: a source offers a central concept or key term that you apply to your own argument;
- Advance our argument: a source provides a new insight that helps establish a main supporting claim to your overall argument; your use of that source should usually agree with and extend the idea or insight, demonstrating its application to your own analysis;
- Provide a complication or counterargument: a source introduces an idea or raises a question that presents a problem for your argument, or an objection to contend with; your response to that complication enriches and adds nuance to your discussion;
- Create a critical conversation: one source offers an idea that another source can respond to, sometimes in a very direct way (i.e. critic A explicitly disagrees with critic B), or by providing a different angle on or approach to the question (i.e. source A offers a new way of thinking about an idea raised in source B, a different "take" on the issue).

opportunity to write longer explanations before turning to write the concise prose needed for their gallery handouts.

Formative Feedback. Students will receive feedback on their use and explanation of sources before rejoining their group to create the final product.

4. Submit your completed tour handout on December 5. Once you have chosen your examples, it will be up to your group how you choose to explain them. You should begin your handout by explaining why you used literature and images to make an argument. For each piece, your group must decide what information do you need to provide to museum visitors so that they can understand how close visual analysis and careful reading lead to ethical insights? What kind of background information on the artists and authors is necessary? Not everyone is fortunate to take the course that you have. How

Genre. The **form** of the assignment is important, as it contributes to the argument that students are making about text and images, but the content also matters. These questions function as a **pre-rubric**.

Genre. Here is a more detailed set of instructions to help

would you translate that information to a friend or family member while visiting an exhibit? Besides explaining each piece, make sure your argument is clearly stated on your tour handout.

students understand the intended audience.

- Each group member also will need to provide a curator's statement of 1–2 pages. This statement should include a reflection not only on how the group's argument relates to one's own, individual experience of the course, but also an assessment of what you as an individual contributed to the overall success of the group project.

Genre. For **creative or non-traditional assignments** we recommend that students submit an artist's statement alongside their creative project—that is, that they produce a brief (1–2 page) analysis and reflection upon their process and product. With an artist's statement in hand, you can worry less about whether a student's technical proficiency (or lack thereof) is getting in the way of your ability to assess their mastery of the content or skills that really mattered to you when you set the assignment.

Examples of in-gallery handouts:

****N.B. your handouts will also include excerpts of text and explanations****

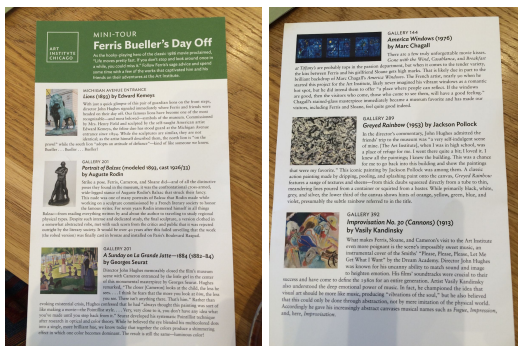


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Images

from: <https://gcottraux.me/tag/mrs-henry-field-florence-lathrop-field/>

<https://jacquibaldridge.format.com/dave-heath#5> (look at the in-gallery handout slide)

In addition to the structural features described in the annotations above, note several other important features of this annotated capstone:

- It addresses students in the second person, i.e. as *you*. Students appreciate instructions which address them directly, which seem to recognize them as equal participants in the course, and which make them a promise.
- It uses teaching resources on campus. The course was given a gallery in the Harvard Art Museum, and the instructors chose to use it.
- The form of the assignment was modified to mimic the work that would go into a final exam. Instead of taking an exam, students had to identify and write about artists and literary passages

in their own annotated bibliographies before coming together to work in a group

- It fulfills the goals of demonstrating the benefits of bringing together the tools - careful visual observation and close reading - of two disciplines
- It fulfills the goal of having students learn to make their own ethical arguments
- It tests the claims of class against something that students can do in the world