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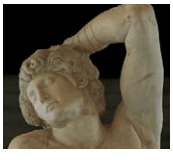

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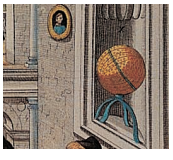

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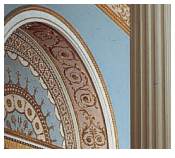

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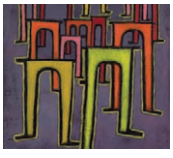

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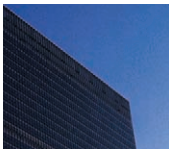

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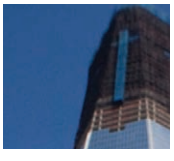

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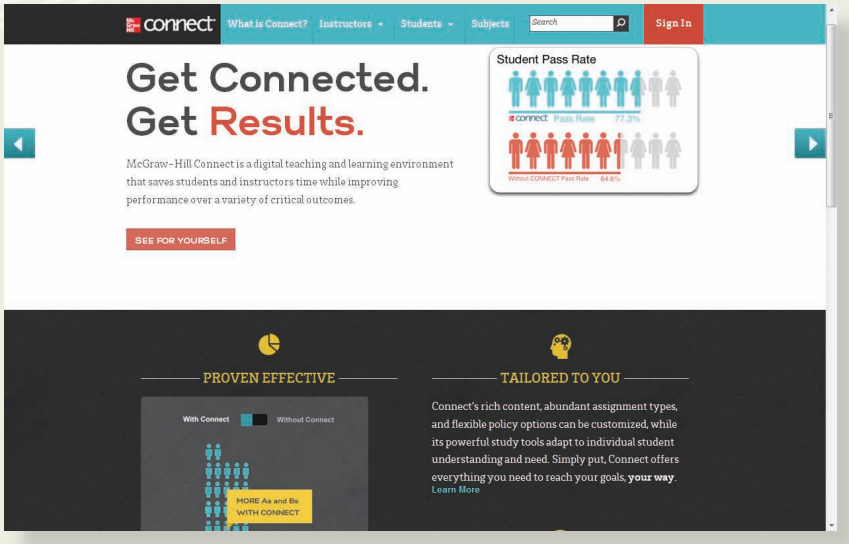
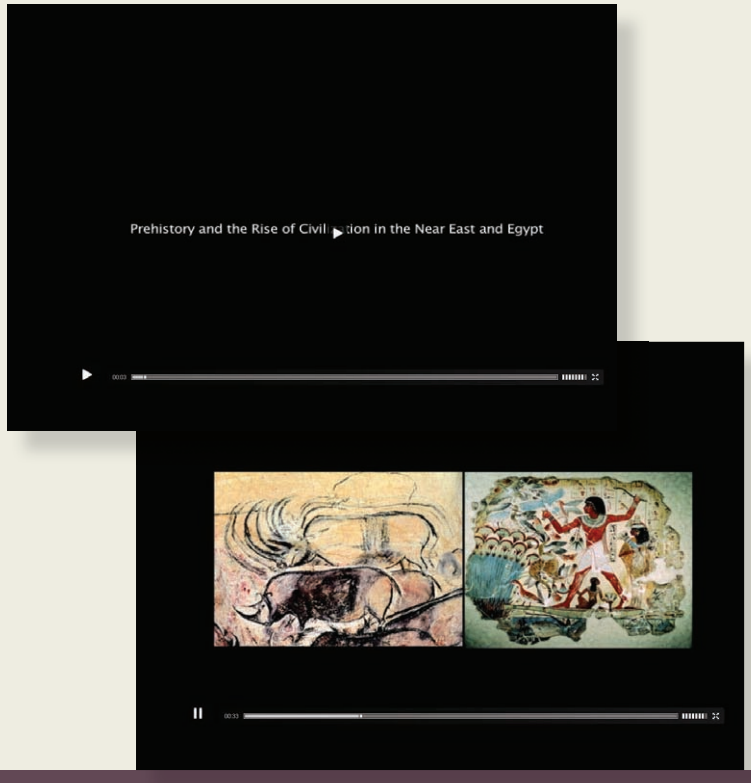
Experience Humanities and Connect® Humanities



The humanities are alive. We see the great pyramids in contemporary design, we hear Bach in hip-hop and pop music, and we feel ancient religious themes and philosophies in our impassioned contemporary dialogues. *Experience Humanities* invites students to take note of the continual evolution of ideas and cross-cultural influences to better understand the cultural heritage of the West, and to think critically about what their legacy will be for future generations.

Together with Connect® Humanities, a groundbreaking digital learning solution, students not only experience their cultural heritage, but develop crucial critical reading, thinking, and writing skills that will prepare them to succeed in their humanities course and beyond.

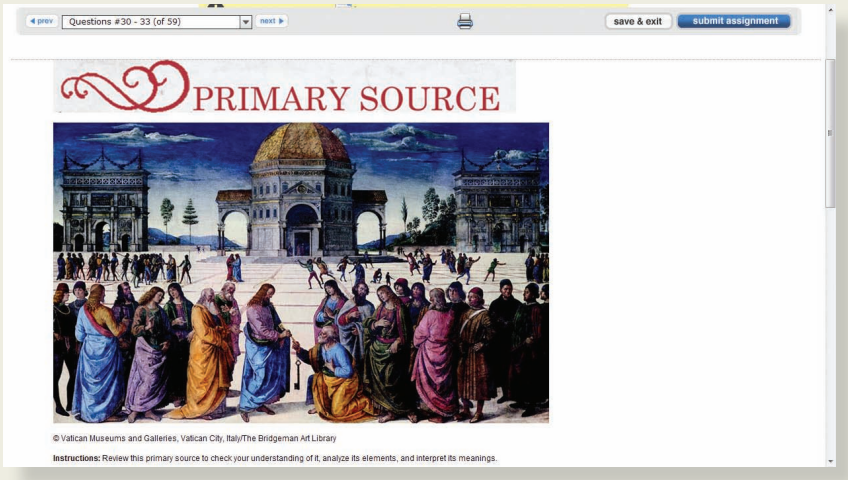


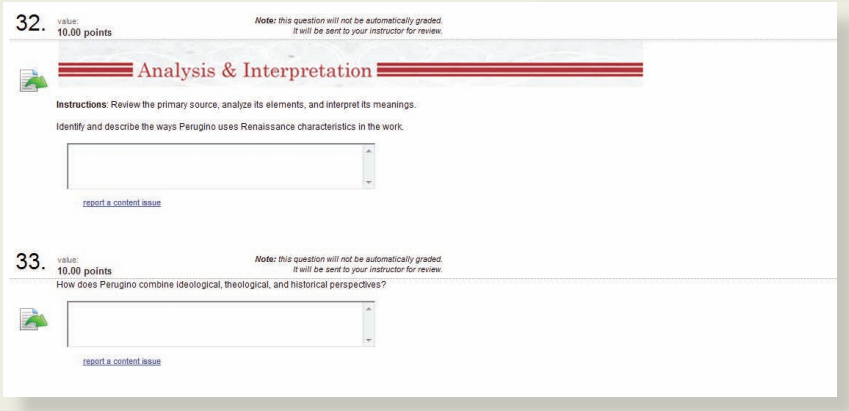
Connect to Engage

Dynamic video previews of each chapter immerse students in the sights and sounds of artistic contributions over time and across continents. Key ideas, people, and events that shaped the time period are introduced to provide historical context and prepare students for the discussions to come in each chapter.

Connect to Analyze

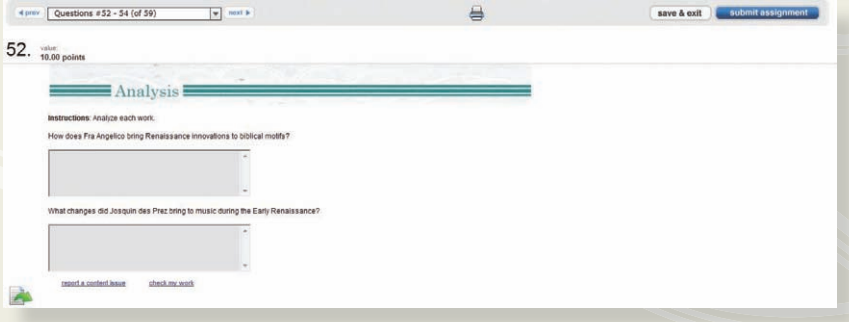
Cultural artifacts come to life in Connect Humanities. Interactive assessments guide students through the process of analyzing art, literature, music, and other primary source documents from each chapter to build critical reading and analysis skills.





Connect to Experience

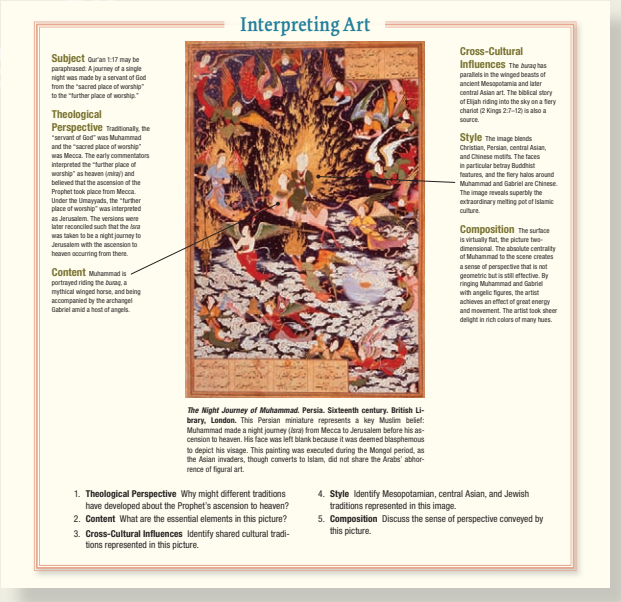
Interdisciplinary activities challenge students to explore connections across artistic genres, and begin to develop and express informed opinions on how ideas evolve over time and across cultures.



Experience Humanities Features

Interpreting Art

Twenty-three Interpreting Art examples focus on a great work of art (painting or sculpture) or architecture, using a set of six call-outs that highlight both formal qualities (how it *is* a work of art) and historical context (how it *reflects* the historical moment). Students who master this feature will be able to apply the approach to understanding any work of art that they encounter.



Industrialism: The Shrinking Globe After its beginnings in England in the 1700s (see Chapter 18), industrialism started to take root in France in the 1830s, and a short time later Belgium entered the industrial age. For the next forty years, Belgium and France were the chief economic powers on the Continent, with factory and railway systems radiating from Paris and Brussels to Vienna and Milan by 1871. The expansion of rail lines meant that factories no longer needed to be near coal mines or clustered in urban areas. Inventions in communications, such as the telegraph, made it easier for industrialists to take advantage of distant resources and markets, and in 1866 engineers laid a transatlantic telegraph cable, linking Europe and America. Further shrinking of the globe occurred with the founding of national postal systems. The United Kingdom led the way (1839), cre-

Global Encounter

In Chapter 11 in Volume I and in most chapters in Volume II, this feature shows the West interacting with the rest of the world. These encounters, which show cultural influences flowing in either direction, are highlighted in the text in two different ways: either as a shaded section or denoted by a symbol.

The West and Islam: The Ottoman Empire in Retreat, 1700–1830

After the Treaty of Karlowitz, in 1699 (see Chapter 15), by which Ottoman rule over most of the Christian peoples of the Balkans was ended, the Ottoman Empire was never the same. For centuries, the empire had been the major power in the Middle East and the Arab world. Now, it was a weakened force in the region, racked by internal strife and threatened by western invaders. At home, the battles were now between reformers, who wanted to westernize the Ottoman world, and a renewal movement based on Islamic law. In foreign affairs, the perennial issue was the threat of European states intent on expanding their political and commercial influence across the Middle East and North Africa.

Between 1699 and 1830, Ottoman rulers made a se-

The West and Islam

In seven chapters in volume II, this feature helps students understand the forces at play between the West and Islam. Discussions cover the Ottoman Empire, showing its complicated relations with the West, down to the empire's abolition in 1923 and the consequent rise of a new system of Islamic states.

Legacy

The Western arts and humanities influence not only high culture but also today's mass culture. The Legacy feature draws from sources across the cultural spectrum to help readers recognize that today's culture did not emerge in a vacuum but that it grew from the matrix of the Western tradition.

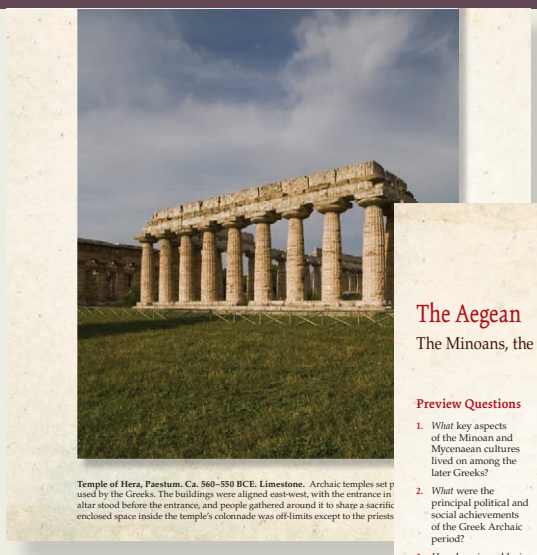
Legacies from Prehistory and Near Eastern and Egyptian Civilization

Today one cannot turn on the news without being deluged with stories about the Near East or the Middle East. There was no "news" in antiquity, but things would have been the same. This old, vast, rich, and complex region has been simultaneously at the root and at the forefront of the West. Greeks, Romans, Muslims, Crusaders, and modern European imperialists have continually warred, traded, and exchanged ideas with the lands of Gilgamesh and the pharaohs. Apart from the vast forces of history, we have inherited much else from these people. Students still go to school to lean their "a, b, c's." High school and college students study circles by means of *pi*. The ancients used lunar calendars and most people today use solar ones. But the ancients gave us sixty-second minutes and sixty-minute hours. The Egyptians remain perennially fascinating. If a museum has a display of mummies, there will be lines at the door. We no longer bury people in pyramids, but the distinguished architect I. M. Pei built a glass one to serve as an entrance to the Louvre Museum in Paris. And in 1986 a rather forgettable rock group, the Bangles, had a hit song called "Walk Like an Egyptian." For a while, lots of young people gallivanted around imitating poses from Egyptian art.

Louvre Pyramid, Paris. 115′ on each side, 70′ high. This glass and steel pyramid designed by I. M. Pei (1917–) opened in 1989 as the main entrance to the Louvre Museum. Pei's pyramid was in part a homage to the precise geometric designs of the great French landscape architect, André LeNotre. And, in part, the pyramid's geometric planes echoed the articulated planes of the Louvre's roof and surrounding buildings.

Chapter Opening

Each chapter opening is organized around a specific artwork—either a painting, a sculpture, or a building. The artwork is carefully selected to embody many of a chapter's themes. The chapter opening sets the stage for a particular cultural period and draws readers into the text.



Temple of Hera, Paestum. Ca. 560–550 BCE. Limestone. Archaic temples set p
used by the Greeks. The buildings were aligned east-west, with the entrance in
altar stood before the entrance, and people gathered around it to share a sacrific
enclosed space inside the temple's colonnade was off-limits except to the priests

2

The Aegean

The Minoans, the Mycenaeans, and the Greeks of the Archaic Age

Preview Questions

1. *What* key aspects of the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures lived on among the later Greeks?
2. *What* were the principal political and social achievements of the Greek Archaic period?
3. *How* do epic and lyric poetry differ from each other?
4. In *what* ways do Greek religion and philosophy differ from each other, and how do both differ from the achievements of the Mesopotamians and Egyptians?

Three significant peoples thrived in the Aegean basin: the Minoans, the Mycenaeans, and then the Greeks. The former two were the first to achieve civilization in Europe from about 2000 to 1200 BCE. On the island of Crete and in southern Greece, these peoples built complex societies only to fall, the Minoans to the Mycenaeans and the Mycenaeans to the Dorians. For about three centuries after 1100 BCE the Greek world was poor, isolated, and a cultural backwater. Then, between about 800 and 500 BCE the Greek world entered the Archaic period. *Archaios* in Greek means "ancient," or "beginning," and this was indeed the beginning of Greek history and culture in the strict sense (Timeline 2.1, Map 2.1). On rocky coasts and rugged islands and peninsulas, the peoples of the Aegean basin coaxed a subsistence living from the thin, stony soil and turned to the sea for trade, conquest, and expansion. From the Bronze Age to the Iron Age, Minoans, Mycenaeans, and Greeks interacted with and learned from the cultures that surrounded them, chiefly those of the Hittites and the Egyptians, but whether it was in systems of writing or forms of sculpture, Aegean peoples were never content merely to borrow. They always adapted, blended, and, finally, superseded the contributions of other cultures. The Greek genius was partly a matter of stunning originality and partly a matter of creative synthesis.

Preview Questions and Summary

Each chapter begins with a series of Preview Questions and ends with a Summary. This twin feature guides students to an understanding of cultural achievements within their historical setting—the thrust of the *Experience Humanities* program—and helps students master the complexities of the humanities story.

SUMMARY

Civilization arose in Europe in the Aegean world in the second millennium BCE, first on the island of Crete and then on the adjacent Greek mainland. The Minoans, peaceful folk and avid traders, built a complex society, erected majestic palaces, and created beautiful artworks. Influenced themselves by the Hittites and Egyptians, they in turn influenced the Myceneans. At several sites in the Peloponnesus the Myceneans, led by kings and warriors—the people we meet in Homer's *Iliad*—also built palaces and created works of art that still dazzle the eye. The identity of the Myceneans is still a little mysterious, but they did speak Greek and bequeathed to the later Greeks religious, mythical, and political ideas. After about 1100 the Greek world plunged into darkness. Around 800 BCE the Archaic period opened and, over the next several generations, the Greek polis took shape and political power, no longer confined to kings and mounted warriors, came to be shared with farmers and merchants. Intercity rivalries and a rising population led many Greeks to leave home and settle in colonies around the Mediterranean shores. The polis was dynamic not only in political life but also in literature and the arts. Epic and lyric poetry flourished. Philosophy, as a rational way of understanding the world, appeared in several places. Sculptors began to capture the human form and to invest it with motion, with life. Builders created flexible, adaptable models.

Learning Through Maps

MAP 3.1 THE ATHENIAN EMPIRE, 431 BCE

This map shows the Athenian and Persian Empires on the eve of the Peloponnesian War. *1.* ***Compare*** *the Athenian and Persian Empires, with respect to size and sea and land configuration. 2.* ***Notice*** *the difference between Athenian and Spartan influence in the eastern Mediterranean. 3.* ***How*** *did the locations of Athens and Sparta influence their respective naval and military policies? 4.* ***In what way*** *did the distance between Sicily and Athens affect the course of the Peloponnesian War? 5.* ***Observe*** *that Macedonia's proximity to Greece helped in its conquest of the late fourth century BCE.*

Learning Through Maps

This feature encourages students to develop geographical skills—highly desirable in this age of globalization. By interacting with map exercises and answering map-related questions, students learn to read maps and understand historical and cultural developments within a specific geographic setting.

Slice of Life features

The Slice of Life boxes offer students the opportunity to hear the voices of eyewitnesses to the historical and cultural events described in the text. These excerpts from primary sources and original documents bring history to life.

SLICE OF LIFE

A College Student's Letter Home

Marcus, Son of Cicero

Cicero's son Marcus, having spent all his money, wrote in 44 BCE to his father's secretary Tiro. Because of the press of public life, Cicero often relied on Tiro to handle his correspondence. Knowing that Tiro will relay a message to his father, Marcus offers assurances that he has mended his ways and describes his schoolwork.

That the rumors, which reach you about me, are gratifying and welcome to you, I have no doubt at all, my dearest Tiro; and I shall make every effort to guarantee that this opinion of me which is springing up more distinctly every day becomes twice as good. For that reason you may with unshaken confidence fulfill your promise of being the trumpeter of my reputation. For the errors of my youth have caused me such grief and agony that not only do my thoughts shrink from what I have done, but my very ears shrink from hearing it talked about.

I must tell you that my close attachment to Cratippus is not so much that of a pupil as that of a son. For not only do I attend his lectures with enjoyment, but I am greatly fascinated also by the charm of his personality. I spend whole days with him, and often a part of the night. Indeed, I implore him to dine with me as often as possible. Now that we have become so intimate, he often strolls in upon us when we least expect him and are at dinner, and throwing to the wind all austerity as a philosopher, he bandies jokes with us in the most genial manner possible.

As to Bruttius, why should I mention him at all? There is never a moment when I allow him to leave my side. He leads a simple and austere life, but that the same time he is a most delightful man to live with. For there is no ban upon merry talk in our literary discussions and our daily joint researches. I have hired lodgings for him next door, and, as far as I can, alleviate his penury out of my own narrow means.

Besides all this I have begun to practice declaiming in Greek with Cassius; but I like practicing in Latin with Bruttius.

I beg of you to see that a secretary is sent to me as quickly as possible—best of all a Greek; for that will relieve me of a lot of trouble in writing out lecture notes.

Interpreting This Slice of Life

1. *How* was education conducted in Greece and Rome?
2. *How* credible does Marcus's letter to his father strike you?
3. *Compare and contrast* the life of a typical student today with that of Marcus.

Why Study Cultural History?

A Letter from the Authors

To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child.

—CICERO, FIRST CENTURY BCE

Anyone who cannot give an account to oneself of the past three thousand years remains in darkness, without experience, living from day to day.

—GOETHE, NINETEENTH CENTURY CE

The underlying premise of this book is that some basic knowledge of the Western cultural heritage is necessary for those who want to become educated human beings in charge of their own destinies. If people are not educated into their place in human history—five thousand years of relatively uninterrupted, though sometimes topsy-turvy, developments—then they are rendered powerless, subject to passing fads and outlandish beliefs. They become vulnerable to the flattery of demagogues who promise heaven on earth, or they fall prey to the misconception that present-day events are unique, without precedent in history, or superior to everything that has gone before.

Perhaps the worst that can happen is to exist in a limbo of ignorance—in Goethe's words, "living from day to day." Without knowledge of the past and the perspective it brings, people may come to believe that their contemporary world will last forever, when in reality much of it is doomed to be forgotten. In contrast to the instant obsolescence of popular culture, the study of Western culture offers an alternative that has passed the unforgiving test of time. Long after today's heroes and celebrities have fallen into oblivion, the achievements of our artistic and literary ancestors—those who have forged the Western tradition—will remain. Their works echo down the ages and seem fresh in every period. The ancient Roman writer Seneca put it well when he wrote, in the first century CE, "Life is short but art is long."

When people realize that the rich legacy of Western culture is their own, their view of themselves and the times they live in can expand beyond the present moment. They find that they need not be confined by the limits of today but can draw on the creative insights of people who lived hundreds and even thousands of years ago. They discover that their own culture has a history and a context that give it meaning and shape. Studying and experiencing their cultural legacy can help them understand their place in today's world.

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE WEST

The subject of this text is Western culture, but what exactly do we mean, first, by "culture" and, second, by the "West"? *Culture* is a term with several meanings, but we use it here to mean the artistic and intellectual expressions of a people, their creative achievements. By the *West* we mean that part of the globe that lies west of Asia and Asia Minor and north of Africa, especially Europe—the geographical framework for much of this study.

The Western tradition is not confined exclusively to Europe as defined today, however. The contributions of peoples who lived beyond the boundaries of present-day Europe are also included in Western culture, either because they were forerunners of the West, such as those who created the first civilizations in Mesopotamia and Egypt, or because they were part of the West for periods of time, such as those who lived in the North African and Near Eastern lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea during the Roman and early Christian eras. Regardless of geography, Western culture draws deeply from ideals forged in these lands.

When areas that had been part of the Western tradition at one time were absorbed into other cultural traditions—as happened in the seventh century in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and North Africa when the people

embraced the Muslim faith—then they are generally no longer included in Western cultural history. Because of the enormous influence of Islamic civilization on Western civilization, however, we include both an account of Islamic history and a description and appreciation of Islamic culture. In this edition, we have added a feature called The West and Islam to show the difficult relations between these two worldviews over the centuries. Different in many ways from our own, the rich tradition of Islam has an important place in today's world.

After about 1500, with voyages and explorations reaching the farthest parts of the globe, the European focus of Western culture that had held for centuries began to dissolve. Starting from this time, the almost exclusively European mold was broken, and Western values and ideals began to be exported throughout the world, largely through the efforts of missionaries, soldiers, colonists, and merchants. Coinciding with this development and further complicating the pattern of change were the actions of those who imported and enslaved countless numbers of black Africans to work on plantations in North and South America. The interplay of Western culture with many previously isolated cultures, whether desired or not, forever changed all who were touched by the process.

The Westernization of the globe that has been going on ever since 1500 is perhaps the dominant theme of our time. What human greed, missionary zeal, and dreams of empire failed to accomplish before 1900 has been achieved since through modern technology, the media, and popular culture. The world today is a global village, much of it dominated by Western values and styles of life. In our time, Westernization has become a two-way interchange. When artists and writers from other cultures adopt Western forms or ideas, they are not only Westernizing their own traditions but also injecting fresh sensibilities and habits of thought into the Western tradition. The globalization of culture means that a South American novel or a Japanese film can be as accessible to Western audiences as a European painting, and yet carry with it an intriguingly new vocabulary of cultural symbols and meanings.

HISTORICAL PERIODS AND CULTURAL STYLES

In cultural history, the past is often divided into historical periods and cultural styles. A historical period is an interval of time that has a certain unity because it is characterized by the prevalence of a unique culture, ideology, or technology, or because it is bounded by defining historical events, such as the death of a military leader like Alexander the Great or a political upheaval like the French Revolution. A cultural style is a combination of features of artistic or literary expression, execution, or performance that defines a particular school or era. A historical period may have the identical time frame as a cultural style, or it may embrace more than one style simultaneously or two styles successively. Each chapter of this survey focuses on a historical period and includes significant aspects of culture—usually the arts, architecture, literature, religion, music, and philosophy—organized around a discussion of the relevant style or styles appropriate to that time.

The survey begins with prehistory, the era before writing was invented, setting forth the emergence of human beings from an obscure past. After the appearance of writing in about 3000 BCE, the Western cultural heritage is divided into three sweeping historical periods: ancient, medieval, and modern.

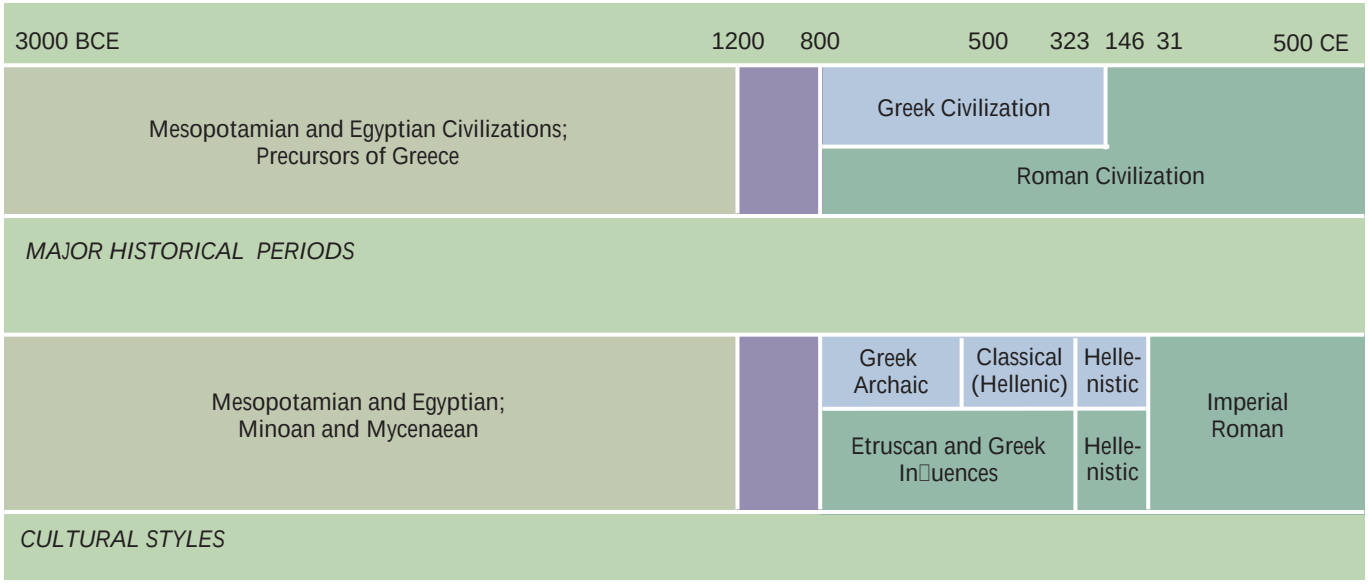
The ancient period dates from 3000 BCE to 500 CE (Timeline 1). During these thirty-five hundred years the light of Western civilization begins to shine in Mesopotamia and Egypt, shines more brightly still in Greece and Rome, from the eighth century BCE, until it begins to dim with the collapse of the Roman Empire in 500 CE. Coinciding with these historical periods are the cultural styles of Mesopotamia; Egypt; Greece, including Archaic, classical (or Hellenic), and Hellenistic styles; and imperial Rome.

The medieval period, or the Middle Ages, covers events between 500 and 1500 CE, a one-thousand-year span that is further divided into three subperiods (Timeline 2). The early Middle Ages (500–1000) is typified by frequent barbarian invasions and political chaos so that civilization itself is threatened and barely survives. No single international style characterizes this turbulent period, though several regional styles flourish. The High Middle Ages (1000–1300) is a period of stability and the zenith of medieval culture. Two successive styles appear, the Romanesque and the Gothic, with the latter dominating culture for the rest of the medieval period. The late Middle Ages (1300–1500) is a transitional period in which the medieval age is dying and the modern age is struggling to be born.

The modern period begins in about 1400 (there is often overlap between historical periods) and continues today (Timeline 3). With the advent of the modern period, a new way of defining historical changes starts to make more sense—the division of history into movements, the activities of large groups of people united to achieve a common goal. The modern period consists of waves of movements that aim to change the world in some specific way.

The first modern movement is the Renaissance (1400–1600), or "rebirth," which attempts to revive the cultural values of ancient Greece and Rome. It is accompanied by two successive styles, Renaissance and

Timeline 1 THE ANCIENT WORLD



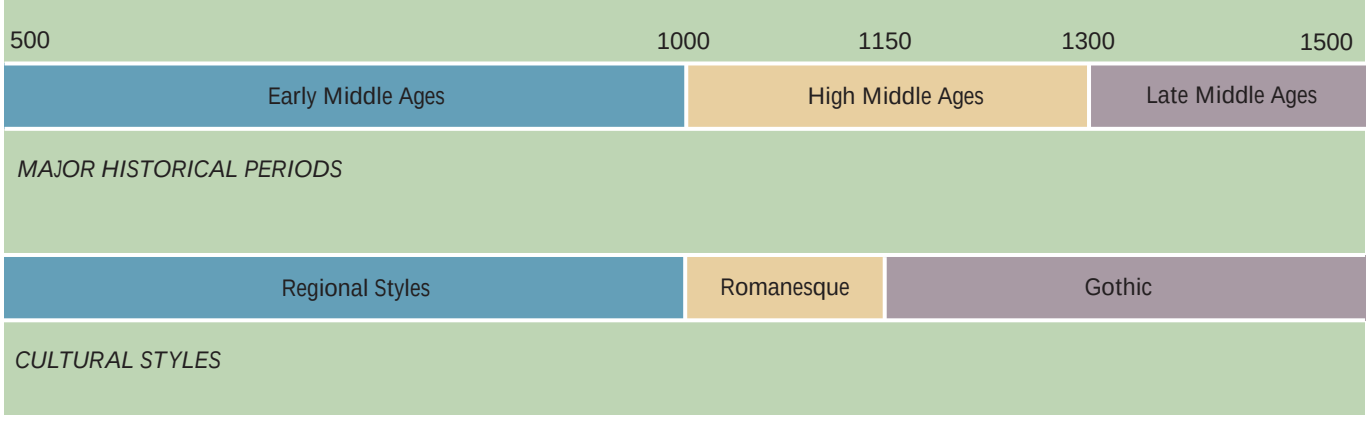
mannerism. The next significant movement is the Reformation (1500–1600), which is dedicated to restoring Christianity to the ideals of the early church set forth in the Bible. Although it does not spawn a specific style, this religious upheaval does have a profound impact on the subjects of the arts and literature and the way they are expressed, especially in the mannerist style.

The Reformation is followed by the Scientific Revolution (1600–1700), a movement that results in the abandonment of ancient science and the birth of modern science. Radical in its conclusions, the Scientific Revolution is somewhat out of touch with the style of its age, which is known as the baroque. This magnificent style is devoted to overwhelming the senses through theatrical and sensuous effects and is associated with the attempts of the Roman Catholic Church to reassert its authority in the world.

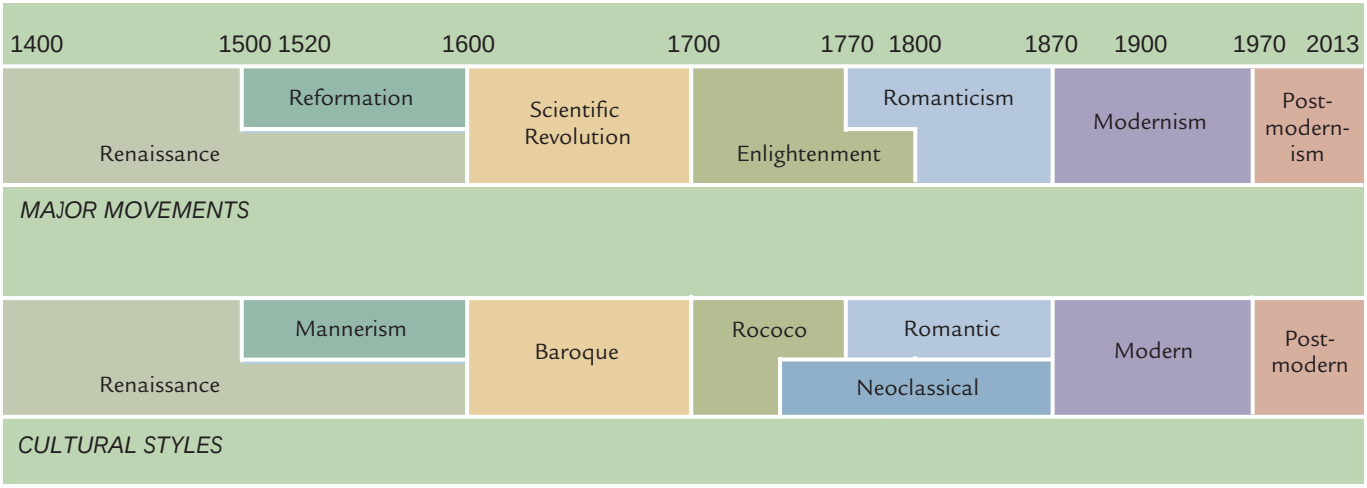
The Scientific Revolution gives impetus to the Enlightenment (1700–1800), a movement that pledges to reform politics and society according to the principles of the new science. In stylistic terms the eighteenth century is schizophrenic, dominated first by the rococo, an extravagant and fanciful style that represents the last phase of the baroque, and then by the neoclassical, a style inspired by the works of ancient Greece and Rome and reflective of the principles of the Scientific Revolution. Before the eighteenth century is over, the Enlightenment calls forth its antithesis, romanticism (1770–1870), a movement centered on feeling, fantasy, and everything that cannot be proven scientifically. The romantic style, marked by a revived taste for the Gothic and a love of nature, is the perfect accompaniment to this movement.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, modernism (1870–1970) arises, bent on destroying every vestige of both the Greco-Roman tradition and the Christian faith and on fashioning new ways of understanding that are independent of the past. Since 1970, postmodernism has emerged, a movement that tries

Timeline 2 THE MEDIEVAL WORLD



Timeline 3 THE MODERN WORLD



to make peace with the past by embracing old forms of expression while adopting a global and multivoiced perspective. Although every cultural period is marked by innovation and creativity, our treatment of them in this book varies somewhat, with more space and greater weight given to the achievements of certain times. We make these adjustments because some periods or styles are more significant than others, especially in the defining influence that their achievements have had on our own era. For example, some styles seem to tower over the rest, such as classicism in fifth-century BCE Greece, the High Renaissance of sixteenth century Italy, and modernism in the mid–twentieth century, as compared with other styles, such as that of the early Middle Ages or the seventeenth-century baroque.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO CULTURAL HISTORY

Our approach to the Western heritage in this book is to root cultural achievements in their historical settings, showing how the material conditions—the political, social, and economic events of each period—influenced their creation. About one-third of each chapter is devoted to an interpretive discussion of material history, and the remaining two-thirds are devoted to the arts, architecture, philosophy, religion, literature, and music of the period. These two aspects of history do not occur separately, of course, and one of our aims is to show how they are intertwined.

As just one example of this integrated approach, consider the Gothic cathedral, that lofty, light-filled house of worship marked by pointed arches, towering spires, and radiant stained-glass windows. Gothic cathedrals were erected during the High Middle Ages, following a bleak period when urban life had virtually ceased. Although religion was still the dominant force in European life, trade was starting to flourish once again, town life was reviving, and urban dwellers were beginning to prosper. In part as testimonials to their new wealth, cities and towns commissioned architects and hired workers to erect these soaring churches, which dominated the landscape for miles around and proclaimed the economic well-being of their makers.

We adopt an integrated approach to Western culture not just in considering how the arts are related to material conditions but also in looking for the common themes, aspirations, and ideas that permeate the artistic and literary expressions of every era. The creative accomplishments of an age tend to reflect a shared perspective, even when that perspective is not explicitly recognized at the time. Thus, each period possesses a unique outlook that can be analyzed in the cultural record. A good example of this phenomenon is classical Greece in the fifth century BCE, when the ideal of moderation, or balance in all things, played a major role in sculpture, architecture, philosophy, religion, and tragic drama. The cultural record in other periods is not always as clear as that in ancient Greece, but shared qualities can often be uncovered that distinguish the varied aspects of culture in an era to form a unifying thread.

A corollary of this idea is that creative individuals and their works are very much influenced by the times in which they live. This is not to say that incomparable geniuses—such as Shakespeare in Renaissance England—do not appear and rise above their own ages, speaking directly to the human mind and heart in every age that follows. Yet even Shakespeare reflected the political attitudes and social patterns of his time. Though a man for the ages, he still regarded monarchy as the correct form of government and women as the inferiors of men.

A CHALLENGE TO THE READER

The purpose of all education is and should be self-knowledge. This goal was first established by the ancient Greeks in their injunction to "Know thyself," the inscription carved above the entrance to Apollo's temple at Delphi. Self-knowledge means awareness of oneself and one's place in society and the world. Reaching this goal is not easy, because becoming an educated human being is a lifelong process, requiring time, energy, and commitment. But all journeys begin with a single step, and we intend this volume as a first step toward understanding and defining oneself in terms of one's historical and cultural heritage. Our challenge to the reader is to use this book to begin the long journey to self-knowledge.

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We are grateful to many people for their help and support in this revision of *Experience Humanities.* Roy Matthews and DeWitt Platt continue to appreciate the many insightful comments of students and former students at Michigan State University over the years. Tom Noble is grateful to his thousands of students for all they have taught him over thirty-eight years. He is also pleased, and humbled, at being asked to lend a hand in crafting another new edition of a wonderful and successful book.

This edition is built on the mutual respect and friendship we three authors forged when we became a writing team in the previous edition. Once again, we are grateful to Art Pomponio for his reasonable responses, calming voice, and steady guidance as we met various deadlines. To our McGraw-Hill handlers, we are especially grateful to Nancy Crochiere for her smart leadership. From the start of this project, Nancy was on top of things, ably answering our many questions or helping us to find quick solutions to issues outside her sphere. Great job, Nancy! We also praise Susan Trentacosti, Lead Project Manager, for her skill in guiding us through the production process. We profited from the splendid work of Robin Sand, our Photo Researcher, and Jenna Caputo, our Literary Researcher. The finalizing of this revision was complicated by the impact of Hurricane Sandy, but the production team never wavered in its ability to prevail against the fallout from that storm. To Laura Wilk, we give a shout-out for her lead role in helping us transform our project in *Experience Humanities.* Thanks, Laura.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REVIEWERS

This edition continues to reflect many insightful suggestions made by reviewers. The current edition has benefited from constructive and thorough evaluations offered by the faculty listed below. We believe that, because of the changes their reviews inspired, we have produced a better, more usable textbook. Reviewers, we salute you! The reviewers include the following:

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Readings to Accompany *Experience Humanities*

The selections of primary source materials are arranged chronologically to follow the twenty-three chapters of the text, and are divided into two volumes. Volume I covers ancient Mesopotamia through the Renaissance; Volume II, the Renaissance into the twenty-first century. This anthology gives students access to our literary and philosophical heritage, allowing them to experience firsthand the ideas and voices of the great writers and thinkers of the Western tradition.

A Humanities Primer

How to Understand the Arts

INTRODUCTION

We can all appreciate the arts. We can find pleasure or interest in paintings, music, poems, novels, films, and other art forms, both contemporary and historical. We don't need to know very much about art to know what we like, because we bring ourselves to the work: What we like has as much to do with who we are as with the art itself.

Leonardo da Vinci. *The Virgin of the Rocks.*

Many of us, for example, will respond positively to a painting like Leonardo da Vinci's *The Virgin of the Rocks.* The faces of the Madonna and angel are lovely; we may have seen images like these on Christmas cards or in other commercial reproductions. We respond with what English poet William Wordsworth calls the "first careless rapture," which activates our imaginations and establishes a connection between us and the work of art. However, if this is all we see, if we never move from a subjective reaction, we can only appreciate the surface, the immediate form, and then, perhaps subconsciously, accept without question the values it implies. We appreciate, but we do not understand.

Sometimes we cannot appreciate because we do not understand. We may reject Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon,* for it presents us with images of women that we may not be able to recognize. These women may make us uncomfortable, and the values they imply may frighten us rather than please or reassure us. Rather than rapture, we may experience disgust; but when we realize that this painting is considered a groundbreaking work, we may wonder what we're missing and be willing to look deeper. (*The Virgin of the Rocks* and *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* are discussed in the text on pages 317–318 and pages 551–552, respectively.)

To understand a work of art (a building, a poem, a song, a symphony), we need to keep our "rapture" (our emotional response and connection) but make it less "careless," less superficial and subjective, less restricted to that which we recognize. We need to enrich our appreciation by searching for a meaning that goes beyond ourselves and which involves understanding:

- The intent or the goal of the artist
- The elements of form present in the work
- The ways in which the various elements contribute to the artist's goal

- The context within which the artwork evolved
- The connections of the work to other works

APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE, ART, AND MUSIC

To analyze a work of art, we want to identify the intent of the work, and we want to evaluate its execution. Thus, we can examine the formal elements of the work—an approach known as formalism—and we can explore its context—known as contextualism.

Formalism

A formal analysis is concerned with the aesthetic (artistic) elements of a work separate from context. This type of analysis focuses on medium and technique:

- A formal analysis of a painting, sculpture, or architectural structure examines its line, shape, color, texture, and composition, as well as the artist's technical ability within the medium used; it is not concerned with anything extraneous to the work itself.
- A formal analysis of a literary work, such as a short story or novel, explores the relationships among theme, plot, characters, and setting, as well as how well the resources of language—word choice, tone, imagery, and symbol—are used to support the other elements.
- A formal analysis of a film explores theme, plot, characters (as developed both verbally and nonverbally), and setting, as well as how the resources of cinematography—camera techniques, lighting, sound, editing, and costumes—support the other elements.

A formal analysis of *The Virgin of the Rocks* examines the artist's use of perspective, the arrangement of figures as they relate to each other and to the grotto that surrounds them, the technical use of color and line, and the dramatic interplay of light and shadow (known as *chiaroscuro*). The same technical considerations are explored in a formal analysis of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.* That the two paintings were completed in 1483 and 1907, respectively, is important only in terms of the technology and mediums available to the artists. In a formal analysis, time and place exist only within the work.

Contextualism

Unlike formalism, contextualism requires that a work be understood in its time and place. Contextual analysis focuses on what is outside the work:

- The artistic, social, cultural, historical, and political forces, events, and trends
- The artist's intent and motives in creating the work
- How the work fits in with other works of the same genre of the same or different eras
- How the work fits in with the rest of the artist's body of work

A contextual analysis of the da Vinci and Picasso paintings would include information about where and when each painting was completed, the conditions from which it arose, the prevailing artistic styles of the times, the life circumstances of the artists, and so on. The paintings alone do not provide enough information for contextual inquiry. Similarly, contextual analysis of a novel by Dostoyevsky would consider both his personal circumstances and the conditions in Russia and Europe when he wrote. A contextual analysis of a chorale and fugue by Bach would include information on Bach's life, his religious beliefs, and the political climate of Germany in the eighteenth century.

An Integrated Approach

In a strictly contextual analysis of an artwork, the work itself can sometimes be lost in the exploration of context. In a strictly formal analysis, important knowledge that can contribute to understanding may remain unknown. The most effective analyses, therefore, combine and integrate the two approaches, examining the formal elements of the work and exploring the context within which it was created. A work of art, whether a poem or a painting, a cathedral or a cantata,

Pablo Picasso. *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.*

is a complex entity, as are the relationships it fosters between the artist and the art and between the art and its audience. The integrative approach recognizes these relationships and their complexity. This is the approach to artistic and cultural analysis most frequently used in *Experience Humanities.*

A Variety of Perspectives

Many students and critics of culture are also interested in looking at things from a particular perspective, a set of interests or a way of thinking that informs and influences their investigations and interpretations. Common perspectives are the psychological, the feminist, the religious, the economic, and the historical.

- A *psychological* perspective looks for meaning in the psychological features of the work, such as sexual and symbolic associations—in effect, a kind of retroactive psychological analysis of the artist. This perspective might also examine the facial expressions, gestures, and body positions of Mary and the angel in *The Virgin of the Rocks,* or it might be interested in da Vinci's attitudes toward women and his relationship with them.
- A *feminist* perspective examines the art itself and the context in which it arises from a woman's point of view. This perspective also asks how the work depicts women, what it says about women and their relationships in general, and how it may or may not reflect a patriarchal society. Many critics have discussed the apparent hatred of women that seems evident in Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.* At the same time, the work, in its size (8 feet by 7 feet 8 inches) and in the unblinking attitude of its subjects, suggests that these women have a kind of raw power. Feminist critics focus on such considerations.
- A *religious* perspective is often appropriate when a work of art originates in a religious context. The soaring spires and cruciform floor plans of medieval cathedrals reveal religious meaning, as do Renaissance paintings depicting biblical characters. Religious analyses look to the use of symbolism, the representation of theological doctrines and beliefs, and intercultural connections and influences for meaning.
- An *economic* perspective on a work of art focuses on its economic content—the roles and relationships associated with wealth. Often drawing upon Marx's contention that class is the defining consideration in all human relationships and endeavors, an economic analysis examines both purpose and content: the artwork created as a display of power by the rich, as a depiction of people of different classes, and as an indicator of the distribution of wealth.
- Perhaps the most encompassing of all perspectives is the historical, because it includes explorations of psychological, religious, and economic issues, as well as questions about class and gender in various times and places. Historical analysis requires an understanding of the significant events of the time and how they affect the individual and shape the culture. *Experience Humanities* most often takes a historical perspective in its views of art and culture.

The Vocabulary of Analysis

Certain terms and concepts are fundamental to the analysis of any artwork:

- **Audience** is the group for whom a work of art, architecture, literature, drama, film, or music is intended. The audience may be a single person, a small group of people, or a special group with common interests or education.
- **Composition** is the arrangement of constituent elements in an individual work. In music, composition also refers to the process of creating the work.
- **Content** is the subject matter of the work; content can be based on mythology, religion, history, current events, personal history, or almost any idea or feeling deemed appropriate by the artist.
- **Context** is the setting in which the art arose, its own time and place. Context includes the political, economic, social, and cultural conditions of the time; it can also include the personal conditions and circumstances that shape the artist's vision.
- A **convention** is an agreed-upon practice, device, technique, or form. A sonnet, for example, is a fourteen-line poem with certain specified rhyme schemes. A poem is not a sonnet unless it follows this formal convention. A convention of the theater is the "willing suspension of disbelief": we know that the events taking place before our eyes are not real, but we agree to believe in them for the duration of the play.
- **Genre** is the type or class to which a work of art, literature, drama, or music belongs, depending on its style, form, or content. In literature, for example, the novel is a genre in itself; the short story is another genre. In music, symphonies, operas, and tone poems are all different genres.
- The **medium** is the material from which an art object is made—marble or bronze, for example, in sculpture, or watercolors or oils in painting. (The plural of *medium* in this sense is often *mediums;* when *medium* is used to refer to a means of mass communication, such as radio or television, the plural is *media.*)
- **Style** is the combination of distinctive elements of creative execution and expression, in terms of both form and content. Artists, artistic schools, movements, and periods can be characterized by their style. Styles often evolve out of existing styles, or

in reaction to styles that are perceived as worn out or excessive.

- **Technique** refers to the systematic procedure whereby a particular creative task is performed. For example, a dancer's technique is the way he or she executes leaps and turns; a painter's technique is the way he or she applies paint to a canvas with broad, swirling brushstrokes.
- The **theme** is the dominant idea of a work, the message or emotion the artist intends to convey. The theme, then, is the embodiment of the artist's intent. In a novel, for example, the theme is the abstract concept that is made concrete by character, plot, setting, and other linguistic and structural elements of the work.

These general concepts and terms are supplemented by the more specific terms that will be introduced in the following literary, artistic, and musical sections.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary analysis begins with a consideration of various literary genres and forms. A work of literature is written either in **prose,** the ordinary language used in speaking and writing, or in **poetry,** a more imaginative and concentrated form of expression usually marked by meter, rhythm, or rhyme. Prose is often divided into nonfiction (essays, biography, autobiography) and fiction (short stories, novels).

In literature, *genre* refers both to form—essay, short story, novel, poem, play, film script, television script—and to specific type within a form—tragedy, comedy, epic, and lyric.

- **Tragedy,** according to Aristotle, must have a tragic hero—a person of high stature who is brought down by his or her own excessive pride *(hubris);* this person doesn't necessarily die at the end, but whatever his or her greatness was based upon is lost.
- **Comedy** is a story with a complicated and amusing plot; it usually ends with a happy and peaceful resolution of any conflicts.
- An **epic** poem, novel, or film is a relatively long recounting of the life of a hero or the glorious history of a people.
- A **lyric** poem is a short, subjective poem usually expressing an intense personal emotion.
- **Theme** is the message or emotion that the author wishes to convey. In an essay the theme is articulated as the thesis: the idea or conclusion that the essay will prove or support. In a novel, story, or play, we infer the theme from the content and the development of ideas and imagery.
- **Plot,** in fiction, is the action of the story. There may be a primary plot that becomes the vehicle by which the theme is expressed, with subplots related to secondary (or even tertiary) themes. Plot can be evaluated by how well it supports the theme.
- **Characters** provide the human focus, the embodiment, of the theme; they act out and are affected by the plot. The protagonist, or primary character, of the work is changed by the dramatic action of the plot and thus is a dynamic character; static characters remain unchanged throughout the story. An antagonist is a character in direct opposition to the protagonist. Some characters are stock characters, representing a type rather than an individual human being.
- The **setting** is the background against which the action takes place. It can include the geographical location, the environment (political, social, economic) in which the characters live, the historical time in which the action takes place, and the culture and customs of the time, place, and people.
- The **narrator** tells the story or poem from his or her point of view. The narrator is not necessarily identical with the author of the work. The narrator (or **narrative voice**) can be examined and analyzed like any other element of the work. When a narrator seems to know everything and is not limited by time or place, the work has an omniscient point of view. Such a narrator tells us what everyone is thinking, feeling, and doing. When the story is told from the perspective of a single character who can relate only what he or she knows or witnesses, the work has a first-person point of view. Such a narrator is limited in his or her understanding. Thus, we need to consider the narrator in order to judge how accurate or complete the narrative is.

A literary analysis of a drama, whether a play for the stage or a film script, will consider not only the elements already mentioned—theme, plot, character, setting, language, and so on—but also the technical considerations specific to the form. In theater, these would include the work of the director, who interprets the play and directs the actors, as well as stage design, light and sound design, costumes, makeup, and so on. In film, technical considerations would include direction, editing, cinematography, musical score, special effects, and so on.

Let's turn now to a poem by Shakespeare and see how to approach it to enrich our understanding. Identifying a poem's intent and evaluating its execution is called an *explication,* from the French *explication de texte.* An explication is a detailed analysis of a poem's meaning, focusing on narrative voice, setting, rhyme, meter, words, and images. An explication begins with what is immediately evident about the poem as a whole, followed by a more careful examination of its parts.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) was not just a great playwright; he was also a great poet. His works portray human emotions, motives, and relationships that we

recognize today as well as the conditions and concerns of his time. In this sense, they are an example of aesthetic universality, the enduring connection between a work of art and its audience.

Shakespeare's sonnets are his most personal work. Scholars disagree about whether they are generic love poems or are addressed to a specific person and, if the latter, who that person might be. Formally, an English (or Shakespearean) sonnet is a 14-line poem consisting of three 4-line stanzas, or quatrains, each with its own rhyme scheme, and a concluding 2-line stanza, or couplet, that provides commentary on the preceding stanzas. The rhyme scheme in a Shakespearean sonnet is abab cdcd efef gg; that is, the first and third lines of each quatrain rhyme with each other, as do the second and fourth lines, though the rhymes are different in each quatrain. The last two lines rhyme with each other.

The meter of most Shakespearean sonnets is iambic pentameter; that is, each line has five feet, or units ("pentameter"), and each foot consists of an iamb, an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable (as in *alone*). An example of iambic pentameter is "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun"; each foot consists of an unaccented and an accented syllable, and there are five feet. Unrhymed iambic pentameter—the verse of most of Shakespeare's plays—is known as **blank verse.**

Sonnet 130 ("My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun") is a poem that not only illustrates sonnet form but also showcases Shakespeare's wit and his attitude toward certain conventions of his time. The poem was originally written in Elizabethan English, which looks and sounds quite different from modern English. We reproduce it in modern English, as is customary today for Shakespeare's works.

Sonnet 130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks,
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

Because the poet's intent may not be immediately evident, paraphrasing each line or stanza can point the reader to the theme or meaning intended by the poet. Let's begin, then, by paraphrasing the lines:

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
The speaker's lover's eyes are not bright.
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
Her lips are not very red, certainly not as red as coral.
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
Her breasts are mottled in color, not as white as snow.
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
Her hair is black (not blond, as was the conventional beauty standard then, when poets referred to women's hair as "golden wires").
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks,
Her cheeks are not rosy.
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
Her breath doesn't smell as sweet as perfume.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
Her voice doesn't sound as melodious as music.
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.
Although the speaker has never seen a goddess walk, he knows his lover does not float above ground, as goddesses are supposed to do, but walks on the ground, a mortal woman.
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.
His lover is as rare and valuable as any idealized woman glorified by false poetic comparisons.

Remember that to analyze a poem, we ask questions like, What is the theme of the poem, the poet's intent? How does Shakespeare support his point with specific images? From the paraphrased lines it is clear that the narrator is stating that his love is a real woman who walks upon the ground, not an unattainable ideal to be worshiped from afar. Idealized qualities are irrelevant to how he feels about her; the qualities he loves are the ones that make her human.

Closely examining each line of a poem helps to reveal the rhyme scheme (abab cdcd efef gg), the meter (iambic pentameter), and thus the form of the poem (sonnet). Explication of the formal elements of the poem would also include examining the use of language (such as word choice, imagery, comparisons, metaphors), the tone of the narrative voice, and so on.

To understand the context of the poem, we would consider the cultural climate of the time (was "courtly love" a prevalent cultural theme?); common contemporary poetic conventions (were many other poets proclaiming their eternal love for idealized women?); and the political, social, and economic conditions (what roles were open to women in Elizabethan England, and how were they changing? What influence might Queen Elizabeth have had on the poet's point of view? What comments about his society is Shakespeare making?).

Finally, we might consider how honest and accurate we find the emotional content of the poem to be, how relevant its truth. Are Shakespeare's observations germane to today, a time when the mass media present us with a nearly unattainable ideal as the epitome of female beauty?

FINE ARTS ANALYSIS

As with literature, knowledge of a particular vocabulary helps us "speak the language" of art critics. The terms introduced here are in addition to those discussed earlier, such as *medium* and *technique.* They apply to all the visual arts, including drawing and painting, sculpture—the art of shaping material (such as wood, stone, or marble) into three-dimensional works of art—and architecture—the art and science of designing, planning, and building structures, usually for human habitation. In architecture, the critic would also pay attention to the blending of artistry and functionality (how well the structure fulfills its purpose).

- **Representational art** is true to human perception and presents a likeness of the world much as it appears to the naked eye.
- **Perspective** is the appearance of depth and distance on a two-dimensional surface.
- **Abstract art** presents a subjective view of the world, the artist's emotions or ideas; some abstract art simply presents color, line, or shape for its own sake.

The formal elements of visual art include the following:

- **Line** is the mark made by the artist, whether with pencil, pen, or paintbrush. Lines can be straight or curved, thick or thin, light or dark, spare or plentiful.
- **Color** is the use in the artwork of hues found in nature; color can enhance the sense of reality presented in a visual image, or it can distort it, depending on how it is used. The primary colors are red, blue, and yellow, and the secondary colors are orange (a combination of red and yellow), green (a combination of yellow and blue), and purple (a combination of blue and red).
- **Composition** is the artist's arrangement of elements within the artwork. Through the composition the artist leads us to see the artwork in a particular way.
- The **setting** of an artwork is the time and place depicted in a representational work, as defined by visual cues, such as the people, their dress, their activity, the time of day, and the season of the year.

Interpreting Art

The Interpreting Art feature helps students to understand the visual arts and architecture. Drawing on the analytical terms and categories of the fine arts, which are set forth above, this feature serves as a tool to further unify the text. Following an integrative approach to an understanding of a work of art or architecture—blending formal analysis with contextual analysis—our Interpreting Art feature offers a model that students can apply to any work of art, whether in the textbook or when they visit art galleries and museums. To demonstrate this new feature, we offer the example of *Cow's Skull with Calico Roses* by the American artist Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986), painted in 1931.

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

Like literature and art, music has its own vocabulary, and we need to be familiar with it in order to analyze a composition.

- **Sacred music** refers to religious music, such as Gregorian chants, Masses, requiems, cantatas, and hymns.
- **Secular music** is the term used to describe symphonies, songs, operas, dances, and other nonsacred musical works.
- **Vocal music** is music that is sung and generally has lyrics (words).
- **Choral music** is vocal music performed by a group of singers.
- **Instrumental music** is music that is written for and performed on instruments.
- **Form,** in music, means the particular structure or arrangement of elements by the composer in the musical composition. Musical forms include symphonies, songs, concertos, string quartets, sonatas, Masses, and operas.
- **Tone** is a musical sound of definite pitch (pitch is determined by the frequency of the air waves producing the sound). The term *tone* can also refer to the quality of a sound.
- A **scale** is a set pattern of tones (or notes) arranged from low to high (or high to low). The modern Western scale is the familiar do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do, with half steps in between the tones. In other cultures, more or fewer tones may be distinguished in a scale.
- **Tempo** is the rate of speed of a musical passage, usually set or suggested by the composer.
- **Texture** describes the number and nature of the voices or instruments employed and how the parts are combined. In music, a theme is a characteristic musical idea on which a composition is built or developed.
- **Melody** is a succession of musical tones, usually having a distinctive musical shape, or line, and a definite rhythm (the recurrent alternation of accented and unaccented beats).

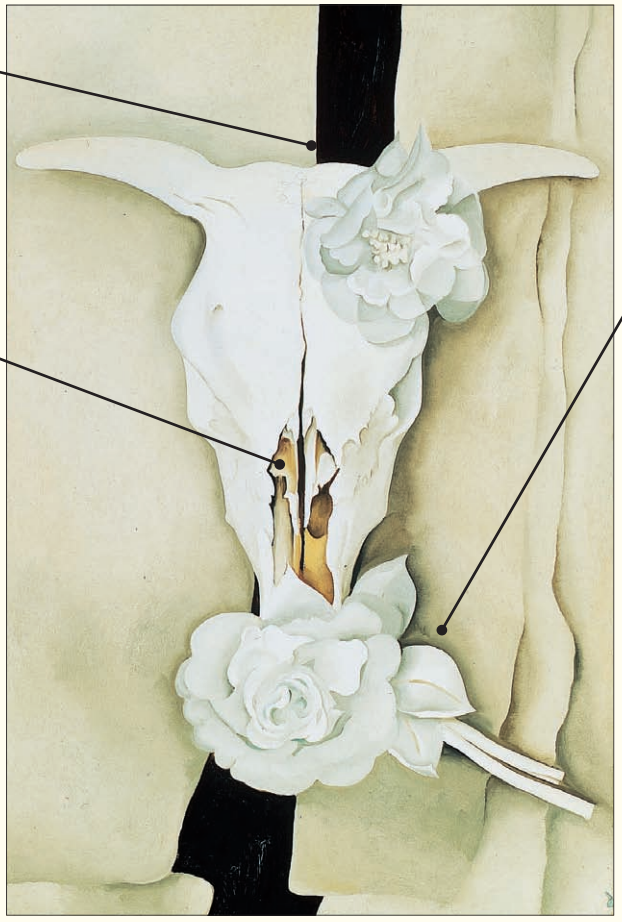
Interpreting Art

Form Verticality is the dominant form, as in the vertical line of the skull, the skull's vertical crack, and the band of black, running from top to bottom. The skull's horns form a horizontal line, thus adding a crosslike shape.

Color The colors are neutral-shades of black, gray, cream, and white. Inside the skull, darker hues-tan and ochre-cause it to stand out from the muted background.

Setting The cow's skull evokes the stark desert landscape of Taos, New Mexico, where the work was painted.

Religious Perspective Renaissance artists used human skulls to remind viewers of their mortality, and, here, the cow's skull suggests the unforgiving nature of the desert.



Psychological Perspective The overall feeling is one of contemplation: the pairing of incongruous objects-cow's skull and artificial flowers-reminds the viewer of the intimate relationships between life and death, beauty and ugliness, art and nature.

Depth Perception The work's surface is shallow and flat, a typical feature of modernist art. The skull appears to float in the foreground, and, at the same time, the black band seems to open into a mysterious space that recedes from the viewer.

Georgia O'Keeffe. *Cow's Skull with Calico Roses.* Oil on canvas, 36 × 24″. 1931. Georgia O'Keeffe's passion for nature was inspired by a childhood on a Wisconsin farm. Her mature artistic style blended realism and abstraction. Her artistic trademark, as shown here: the abstraction of an object from nature, which she then painted according to her inner vision.

- **Harmony** is the simultaneous combination of two or more tones, producing a chord. More generally, harmony refers to the choral characteristics of a work and the way in which chords interact with one another.

With these basic categories in mind, let's consider a well-known musical work, *Rhapsody in Blue,* by George Gershwin (1898–1937). Even if you don't know this piece by name, it's very likely that you have heard it. It has been used in ads and in the sound tracks of many movies, including *Fantasia 2000;* it is also a standard accompaniment to images of New York City.

Imagine that you're seated in a concert hall and hearing this piece performed by a symphony orchestra (probably a "pops" orchestra, one that performs more popular classical music). When listening to a new piece of music or one you are not familiar with, it's a good idea to try to get a sense of its general mood and character—again, focusing on the creator's intent. What emotions or ideas is the composer trying to convey? What musical elements does the composer use to execute that intent?

You will notice, first of all, that the work is written for a small orchestra and a solo piano, the same instrumental configuration you would expect for a classical piano concerto (a concerto is a work for one or a few instruments and an orchestra, with much of its interest coming from the contrasts between the solo voice and the ensemble voice). But the opening notes

of *Rhapsody in Blue* reveal something other than classical intentions: a solo clarinet begins low and sweeps up the scale in a seemingly endless "smear" of sound, finally reaching a high note, briefly holding it, and then plunging into the playful, zigzag melody that becomes one of the major themes of the work. Within moments, the orchestra enters and repeats the theme in the strings and brass, to be followed by the entry of the solo piano. Throughout the work, piano and orchestra alternate and combine to sing out beautiful melodies and create a varied and colorful texture. Variety also comes from different instrumentation of the themes and tunes, played first by a slinky muted trumpet, then by a sweet solo violin, later by a whole lush string section or a brash horn section.

You'll notice, too, the constant changes in tempo, now slower, now faster, almost as if the work is being improvised. Complex, syncopated, off-the-beat rhythms give the piece a jazzy feeling, and the combination of tones evokes the blues, a style of music in which certain notes are "bent," or lowered slightly in pitch, creating a particular sound and mood. The general feeling of the piece is upbeat, exciting, energetic, suggestive of a bustling city busy with people on the go. It may also make you think of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers movies you've seen on late-night TV—sophisticated, playful, casually elegant—and in fact, Gershwin wrote the music for some of their films.

What can we learn about this work from its title? Musical works often reveal their form in their titles (Fifth Symphony, Violin Concerto in D, and so on). A rhapsody is a composition of irregular form with an improvisatory character. Although you may have heard themes, repetitions, and echoes in *Rhapsody in Blue,* you probably were not able to discern a regular form such as might be apparent in a classical sonata or symphony. The word *rhapsody* also suggests rapture, elation, bliss, ecstasy—perhaps the feelings conveyed by that soaring first phrase on the clarinet. *Blue,* on the other hand, suggests the melancholy of the blues. The dissonance created by the combination of the two terms—like the combinations and contrasts in the music—creates an energetic tension that arouses our curiosity and heightens our interest.

In making these observations about *Rhapsody in Blue,* we've been noticing many of the formal elements of a musical work and answering questions that can be asked about any composition: What is the form of the work? What kind of instrumentation has the composer chosen? What is the primary melodic theme of the work? What tempos are used? How do the instruments or voices work together to create the texture? What is the overall mood of the piece—joyful, sad, calm, wild, a combination?

Now, at your imaginary concert, there may be notes in the program that will provide you with some context for the work. You will find that George Gershwin was a gifted and classically trained pianist who quit school at fifteen and went to work in Tin Pan Alley, a district in New York City where popular songs were written and published. His goal in writing *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924) was to blend classical and popular music, to put the energy and style of jazz into a symphonic format. Many listeners "see" and "hear" New York City in this piece. Gershwin created his own unique idiom, a fast-paced blend of rhythm, melody, and harmony that followed certain rules of composition but gave the impression of improvisation. He went on to write musicals, more serious compositions like the opera *Porgy and Bess,* and music for Hollywood films, all in his distinctive style. Information like this can help you begin to compare *Rhapsody in Blue* both with other works of the time and with other works by Gershwin. As in any analysis, integrating the formal and the contextual rounds out your interpretation and understanding of the work.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing materials should give you some ideas about how literature, art, and music can be approached in productive ways. By taking the time to look more closely, we gain access to the great works of our culture. This statement leads us to another issue: What makes a work "great"? Why do some works of art have relevance long beyond their time, while others are forgotten soon after their designated "fifteen minutes of fame"? These questions have been debated throughout history. One answer is that great art reflects some truth of human experience that speaks to us across the centuries. The voice of Shakespeare, the paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe, and the music of George Gershwin have a universal quality that doesn't depend on the styles of the time. Great art also enriches us and makes us feel that we share a little more of the human experience than we did before.

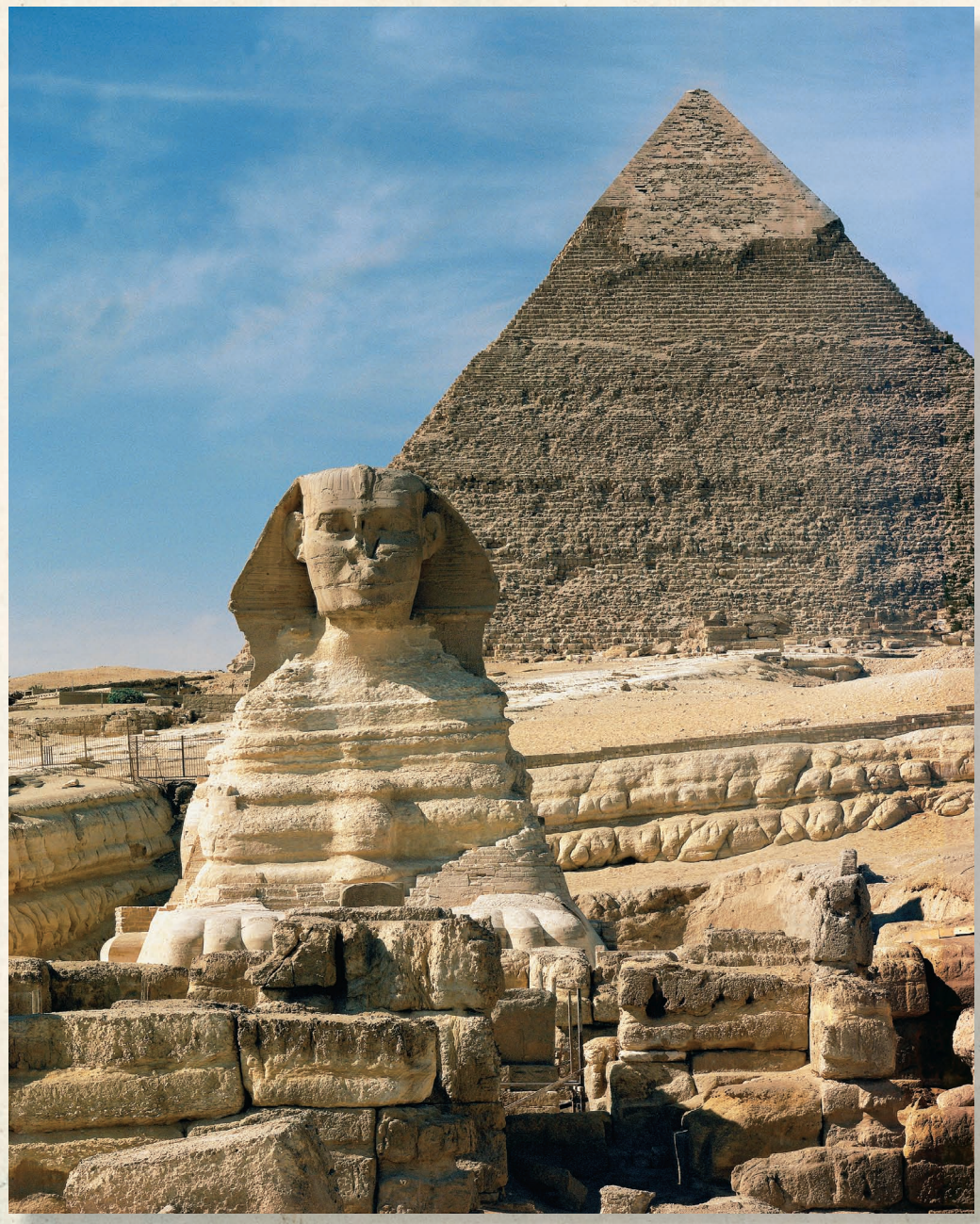
As both a student of the humanities and an audience member, you have the opportunity to appreciate and understand the arts. Despite the formal nature of academic inquiry, an aesthetic analysis is a personal endeavor. In looking closely at a creative work, seeking the creator's intent and evaluating its execution, you enrich your appreciation of the work with understanding; you bring the emotional reaction you first experienced to its intellectual completion. As twentieth-century composer Arnold Schoenberg once wrote, "You get from a work about as much as you are able to give to it yourself." This primer has been intended to help you learn how to bring more of yourself to works of art, to couple your subjective appreciation with intellectual understanding. With these tools in hand, you won't have to say you don't know much about art but you know what you like; you will be able to say you know *about* what you like.

To LeeAnn, Dixie, and Linda

There is nothing nobler or more admirable than when two people who see eye to eye keep house as man and wife, confounding their enemies and delighting their friends, as they themselves know better than anyone.

—Homer, *Odyssey*

Experience Humanities



The Great Sphinx. Ca. 2560 BCE. 65′ high × 240′ long. Giza, Egypt. Huge and majestic, the Great Sphinx, a lion with a man's face, stood silent sentinel before the Great Pyramid.

1

Prehistory and the Rise of Civilization in the Near East and Egypt

Preview Questions

1. *What* are the chief signs of the emergence of civilization in Mesopotamia and Egypt?
2. *How* did geography influence the development of government, society, and culture in Mesopotamia and Egypt?
3. *How* were the cultures of Mesopotamia and Egypt alike and different?

For some two hundred years, it has been customary to speak of "Western civilization" and, for a somewhat shorter time, to speak of the many cultures that have made up Western civilization. What do these terms mean? When people first spoke about "the West," they were referring to western Europe. But western Europe was the product of cultures and peoples who had lived around the Mediterranean Sea in antiquity, and eventually Europe exported its cultures to much of the rest of the globe. "West" is therefore as much an idea as a place. **Civilization** is in a way the largest unit within which any one person might feel comfortable. It is an organizing principle that implies common institutions, economic systems, social structures, and values that extend over space and time. **Culture** is a more restricted term. On one very general level, it means high culture: the fine arts and philosophy, for example. On another level, it means the totality of expressions and behaviors that characterize a readily identifiable group of people in a specific place and time. Every civilization enfolds many cultures, at any one time and across long periods of time. Mesopotamia and Egypt, like Greece and Rome, were cultures within ancient Western civilization, and they contributed powerfully to an enduring tradition.

The two structures to the left, the Great Sphinx and one of the Great Pyramids, are probably familiar to readers of this book. Why should that be so? After all, they are five thousand years old. The reasons are many, but among the most prominent are history and tradition. These monuments have a history and they have entered the Western tradition. They have become a part of who we are. Standing as they do at the beginning of Western civilization, they invite us to reflect on the people who erected them. What kinds of political power, social structure, and wealth permitted such monuments? What do they tell us about those people's tastes and sensibilities? Why did they choose to represent themselves in this way?

PREHISTORY AND EARLY CULTURES

Human beings long preceded culture and civilization. The remote ancestors of modern human beings emerged in Africa at least four million years ago. That is merely a moment in comparison to the roughly six billion years that planet Earth can boast. To put those huge numbers into perspective, let us imagine a calendar: if Earth appeared on January 1, then human ancestors showed up around the end of August, but civilization, and history, commenced a few minutes before midnight on December 31.

Perhaps two million years ago, the species *Homo,* or the *hominids,* made its appearance whereas *Homo sapiens,* the immediate ancestor of modern humans, emerged around two hundred thousand years ago. For a very long time, therefore, the key story was the development of the human species itself. Unfortunately, knowledge about these hominids is limited and fragmentary. They were hunters and gatherers, lived in natural shelters such as caves, and did not possess complex social structures. Hominids invented crude stone tools, used fire, and probably developed speech—a major breakthrough that enabled them to communicate in ways denied to animals. Their first stone tools were simple choppers and, later, hand axes, pointed tools, and scrapers, all chiseled with care. Hominids and *Homo sapiens* span the **Paleolithic** period, the Old Stone Age, a time roughly coterminous with the geological Pleistocene, the Ice Age, about 2,000,000 BCE to about 10,000 BCE.

Paleolithic Period

The latter millennia of the Paleolithic period are somewhat better known than earlier ones owing to discoveries in widely dispersed places. *Homo sapiens* had migrated across the Eastern Hemisphere and even the Western Hemisphere, reaching the latter by means of a land bridge that connected Siberia and Alaska. People had begun to use more sophisticated tools, such as fishhooks, bows and arrows, and needles (Figure 1.1). Most impressively, however, late Paleolithic peoples began to express themselves in art. Ice Age cave paintings of reindeer, bison, rhinoceroses, lions, and horses in Altamira, Spain, and in Lascaux and the Ardèche region of France date from the Upper Paleolithic (40,000–10,000 BCE) and are the earliest examples of human art (Figure 1.2). The purposes of the paintings in the Chauvet caves in the Ardèche region remain a mystery, but those at Altamira and Lascaux were probably elements in hunting rituals. By painting numerous wild animals pierced with arrows, the artists were attempting to ensure a successful hunt.

Another type of Upper Paleolithic art is seen in the carved female figurine found at Willendorf, Austria (Figure 1.3). Made of limestone, the statue is faceless and rotund. The distended stomach and full breasts suggest that the figure may have been a mother goddess used as a fertility symbol to represent the creative power of nature. As a mythological figure, the mother goddess appeared in many ancient cultures, beginning in Paleolithic times; approximately thirty thousand miniature sculptures in clay, marble, bone, copper, and gold have been uncovered at about three thousand sites in southeastern Europe alone. The supremacy of the mother goddess was expressed in the earliest myths of creation, which told of the life-giving and nurturing powers of the female. The Willendorf figurine, with its emphasized breasts, navel, and vulva, symbolic of creativity, may have been used in religious ceremonies to ensure the propagation of the tribe or to guarantee a bountiful food supply. The statue also reveals the aesthetic interests of the sculptor, who took care to depict the goddess's hands resting on her breasts and her hair in tightly knit rows.

Figure 1.1 The Ice Man. South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology. In 1991 hikers in the Alps discovered the body of a man in melting ice. He turned out to be over five thousand years old. He died in a bloody fight after having eaten a last meal of bread and goat meat. He possessed a bow and arrows, a copper hatchet, and several pouches and containers. The Ice Man was about 5 feet 2 inches tall and had lived a very hard life.

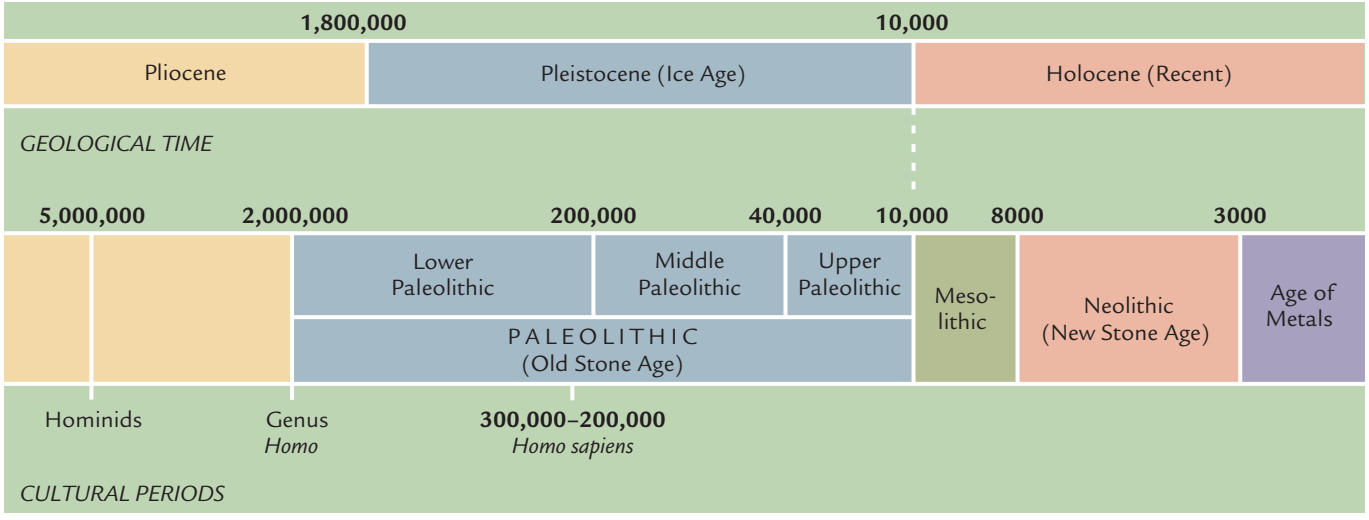
Figure 1.2 Herd of Rhinoceroses. Ca. 32,000–30,000 BCE. Chauvet Cave, Ardèche region, France. This naturalistic detail of a panel painting includes lions, bison, and a young mammoth (not visible here) moving across a vast expanse of the cave wall. The repeated black lines of the rhinoceroses' horns and backs create a sense of depth and give energy to the work.

The Neolithic Revolution

As the last glaciers retreated from Europe, during the Holocene (Recent) epoch of geological time, humans had to adapt to new living conditions. The brief Mesolithic period (Middle Stone Age) proved to be a decisive turning point. In the most important development in human history, hunters and gatherers became farmers and herders. Thus began, some ten thousand years ago, the **Neolithic** period, or New Stone Age. As *Homo sapiens* became farmers and herders, they gained knowledge about agriculture and developed wooden tools and other technologies for farming and herding. Their stone tools became more advanced than those in the Mesolithic period and included knives and hammers. Along with the domestication of animals, the animal-drawn plow was introduced to Mesopotamia, thus

Figure 1.3 Figurine from Willendorf. Ca. 25,000 BCE. Ht. $4\frac{3}{8}$″. Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna. Discovered in about 1908 CE, this female statuette measures just under 5 inches high. Carved from limestone, it still shows evidence of having been painted red. Many other statues like it have been discovered, but this one remains the most famous because of the unusual balance it strikes between symbolism and realism.

Timeline 1.1 GEOLOGICAL TIME AND PREHISTORIC CULTURAL PERIODS **All dates approximate and BCE**



increasing the yield of crops. After 3500 BCE, the rise of the new technologies accelerated, making this one of the most fruitful eras for change that the world has ever known. In transportation the changes included two innovations: the boat (with and without sails) and the wheel—each with enormous potential for commerce, travel, and warfare. In construction and building, the discovery and use of kiln-fired bricks made houses, temples, and palaces possible. Five new technologies changed the domestic scene: weaving, dyeing (using animal and vegetable dyes), tanning, pottery making (both plain and kiln-fired), and lighting with oil lamps. Large-scale irrigation in dry lands expanded crop yields and brought new plants under cultivation, such as wheat, flax, millet, barley, and spices.

In Southeast Asia, Central America, parts of South America, and the Near East, humans ceased their nomadic existence and learned to domesticate wild animals. They learned to plow the earth and sow seeds, providing themselves with a more reliable, predictable food supply than in earlier times, which in turn permitted increased population, permanent settlements, and eventually urban centers. This agrarian pattern of life dominated the West until about 150 years ago.

The Age of Metals

The Neolithic Revolution expanded across the Near East and probably into Europe and Africa. Between 6000 and 3000 BCE, human beings also learned to mine and use copper, signifying the end of the Neolithic period and ushering in the Age of Metals. In about 3000 BCE, artisans combined copper and tin to produce bronze, a strong alloy, which they used in their tools, weapons, and jewelry.

The Bronze Age extended from about 3000 to about 1200 BCE. A herald of the Age of Metals was the mastery of gold and silver metalworking. Gold and silver were first reduced from their ores after 3500 BCE, but their scarcity made them too precious for general use. The shift from stone tools to bronze tools occurred at first in only a few areas in the Near East, China, and Southeast Asia. Elsewhere, especially in Europe, Mesoamerica, and the Andes of South America, stone continued as the dominant material for tools.

From Mesopotamia, where the earliest successful bronze was produced by anonymous artisans, this metalworking tradition was transmitted to Egypt, Greece, and elsewhere. It produced a host of new technologies. Writing is the hallmark of this period, with Egyptians putting words on papyrus, a flat writing surface made from pressed reeds, and Mesopotamians incising words on clay tablets. With the invention of writing, the silence of the prehistoric period gave way to the voice of the historic period.

Other technologies improved the lives of people during the Bronze Age. Construction methods moved along two different paths: in Egypt, stone building techniques arose, and in Mesopotamia, stepped temples, made of dried bricks, became the chief building style. Advances in transport were made, with sailboats plying their wares on Egypt's Nile and wooden ships maneuvering in the Mediterranean. Copper and tin were in short supply in Egypt and Mesopotamia. To ensure a continuous supply of these metals, complex trading ties and mining operations had to be established. Copper was found in neighboring Anatolia (modern Turkey), but tin was scarce, as it was mined in only a few places, in modern Serbia and Bulgaria at first, and in Cornwall, in modern England, after 2500 BCE. Domestic life made extraordinary advances in Mesopotamia, with many changes that are still part of life today, including baking bread in ovens, brewing beer, and distilling perfumes. In Egypt and

Learning Through Maps

MAP 1.1 ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA AND EGYPT

This map shows the two earliest civilizations of the Near East: Mesopotamia and Egypt. *1.* ***Notice*** *that much of Mesopotamia is contained within the area known as the Fertile Crescent and that Egypt is settled mainly along the Nile River. 2.* ***Locate*** *the cities in Mesopotamia and Egypt. 3.* ***Compare and contrast*** *the role and importance of rivers in these civilizations. 4.* ***Why*** *was Egypt less exposed to external influences than was Mesopotamia?*

Mesopotamia, making glass and wine became common, and, in Egypt, the invention of hand mirrors and the sundial lent new perspectives for people to experience. Urban culture also led to the widespread use of calendars, in both Egypt and Mesopotamia.

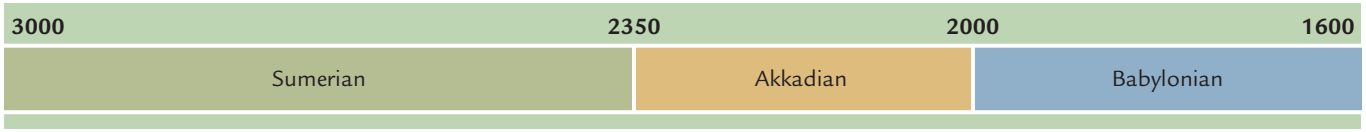
The Iron Age began in about 1200 BCE, but the making of iron has been dated to about 2000 BCE. Iron technology soon led to new devices, fashioned from either iron or steel, such as iron-tipped plows, weaponry, buckets, and locks and keys. Warriors quickly realized that sturdy iron defeats brittle bronze every time. Indeed, the outcome of some wars between 1200 and 1000 BCE was determined by which side wielded iron weapons.

THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION: MESOPOTAMIA

Civilization is based on a Latin word meaning "city" and "citizen." It was the Neolithic Revolution that made cities possible. That revolution depended on agriculture and the domestication of animals. Those processes brought the division of labor, government, religion, priestly classes, arts and crafts, and sciences. Taken together, along with writing, these elements add up to civilization. Western civilization arose in Mesopotamia and Egypt (about 3500–3000 BCE). Both regions were ruled by kings who were supported by educated priestly classes and shared power with an economic and military elite. Their economies were slave based; their societies were hierarchical and stratified. Both had elaborate palaces and temples for governmental and ceremonial purposes.

Mesopotamia is a Greek word meaning "between the rivers." The valleys of the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates formed part of what is known as the Fertile Crescent, which starts at the Persian Gulf, runs slightly northwestward through the region between the rivers (roughly modern Iraq), and then turns westerly to the Mediterranean Sea and curves south along the shoreline toward Egypt (Map 1.1). This arc of land contained most of the fertile soil in the Near East, many heavily traveled trade routes, and early centers of civilization. The hill country and Zagros Mountains rise

Timeline 1.2 MESOPOTAMIAN CIVILIZATIONS **All dates approximate and BCE**



to the east of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, and the vast Arabian Desert stretches to the west. The rivers flow down to the Persian Gulf, draining an area approximately 600 miles long and 250 miles wide. Near the mouth of the gulf, in the river delta, human wanderers settled in about 6000 BCE.

The Sumerian, Akkadian, and Babylonian Kingdoms

Three successive cultures—Sumerian, Akkadian, and Babylonian—flourished in Mesopotamia for nearly fifteen hundred years (Timeline 1.2). As historian Samuel Kramer asserts, "History begins at Sumer."

The rulers of Sumer sought a just and stable society and fostered a rich cultural life. Sumer's most inspirational king, Gilgamesh [GILL-guh-mesh], ruled about 2700 BCE at Ur, one of the thirty or so cities of Sumer. His heroic adventures and exploits were later immortalized in the poem *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. A later ruler, Urukagina [Ur-oo-KA-gee-na], is known for reforming law codes and revitalizing the economy near the end of the Sumerian period (2350 BCE). But Urukagina's successors were unable to maintain Sumer's power, and the cities became easy prey for the Akkadians of northern Mesopotamia.

Akkadian rulers between about 2350 and 2000 BCE incorporated Sumerian culture into their own society and carried this hybrid culture far beyond the Tigris-Euphrates valley. According to legends—which are similar to the later story of the Hebrew leader Moses—Sargon (r. about 2334–2279 BCE), the first and greatest Akkadian ruler, was born of lowly origins and abandoned at birth in the reed marshes; yet Sargon survived and rose to prominence at the Sumerian court. Excavated inscriptions reveal that Sargon conquered the Sumerians and founded a far-flung empire to the east and northeast. At its height, Sargon's power was felt from Egypt to India, but his successors, lacking his leadership and skill, could not maintain the Akkadian Empire.

Babylonia was the third culture in Mesopotamia. From northern Mesopotamia, their power base, the Babylonians governed the entire valley from about 2000 to 1600 BCE. Under their most successful military leader and renowned lawgiver, Hammurabi [ham-uh-RAHB-e] (r. 1792–1750 BCE), the Babylonians reached their political and cultural ascendancy.

Agriculture dominated the economy of Mesopotamia. Harsh living conditions and unpredictable floods forced the inhabitants to learn to control the rivers through irrigation systems and cooperative tilling of the soil. Farmers eventually dug a complex canal system to irrigate cultivated plots at increasing distances from the river. As production increased, prosperity allowed larger populations to thrive. Villages soon grew into small cities—with populations ranging from ten thousand to fifty thousand—surrounded by hamlets and tilled fields. Trade developed with nearby areas, and wheeled vehicles—perfected by the Sumerians—and sailboats carried goods up and down the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and eventually throughout the Fertile Crescent.

By the beginning of the Bronze Age, the family had replaced the tribe or clan as the basic unit in society. Families now owned their lands outright, and, under the general direction of the religious and secular authorities, they worked their fields and maintained irrigation ditches. Marriages were arranged by parents, with economics an essential consideration. According to the law codes, women possessed some rights, such as holding property; however, a wife was clearly under her husband's power. Divorce was easier for men than for women, and women were punished more severely than men for breaking moral and marital laws. As peoples fought and conquered each other, government became increasingly military in outlook and function and the roles and status of women declined. In sum, Mesopotamian women were originally able to participate actively in economic, religious, and political life as long as their dependence on and obligation to male kin and husbands was observed, but they progressively lost their relative independence because rulers extended the concept of patriarchy (rule by the fathers) from family practice into public law.

The political structure reflected the order and functions of the social system. At the top stood the ruler, who was supported by an army, a bureaucracy, a judicial system, and a priesthood. The ruler usually obtained advice from prominent leaders, meeting in council, who constituted the next layer of the social order: rich landowners, wealthy merchants, priests, and military chiefs. The next group consisted of artisans, craftspeople, and low-level businesspeople and traders. Below them were small landowners and

tenant farmers. At the bottom of the social scale were slaves, who either had been captured in war or had fallen into debt.

The Cradle of Civilization

The three Mesopotamian cultures responded to the same geography, climate, and natural resources. The Sumerians were the most influential: from Sumer came writing, the lunar calendar, a mathematical computation system, medical and scientific discoveries, and architectural and technological innovations.

Writing Thousands of clay tablets inscribed with the wedge-shaped symbols of Sumerian script have been uncovered in Mesopotamia, indicating that the Sumerians had developed a form of writing by 3000 BCE. With the invention of writing, people no longer had to rely on memory, speech, and person-to-person interactions to communicate and transmit information. Instead, they could accumulate a permanent body of knowledge and pass it on from one generation to the next.

At first, the Sumerians needed a simple way to record agricultural and business information and the deeds and sayings of their rulers. Their earliest symbols were **pictograms,** or pictures, carefully drawn to represent particular objects. To these they added **ideograms,** pictures drawn to represent ideas or concepts. A simple drawing of a bowl, for example, could be used to mean "food." As these pictures became stylized, meaning began to be transferred from the represented object to the sign itself; that is, the sign began to stand for a word rather than an object.

Later, Sumerian scribes and writers identified the syllabic sounds of spoken words and created **phonograms,** symbols for separate speech sounds, borrowing from and building on the earlier pictograms and ideograms. These simplified and standardized symbols eventually resulted in a phonetic writing system of syllable-based sounds that, when combined, produced words (Figure 1.4).

The Sumerian writing system is called **cuneiform** ("wedge shaped"), from the Latin word *cuneus* ("wedge"). Using wedge-shaped reeds or styluses, scribes pressed the symbols into wet clay tablets, and artists and craftspeople, wielding metal tools, incised the script into stone monuments or cylindrical pillars. Scholars have painstakingly deciphered thousands of clay tablets thus revealing the society and thought of the Sumerians and of their Akkadian and Babylonian successors.

Around 1050 BCE, the Phoenicians (fuh-NEE-shuns) improved on the syllabic writing they had inherited from their neighbors. They created the first alphabet, a system of writing in which one sign (we call them "letters") is assigned to each sound. Afterward, writing became more economical because it was not necessary to have a single symbol for every possible syllabic configuration (ba, ca, da, etc.). The original Phoenician alphabet had twenty-two letters, all consonants (Figure 1.5). The Phoenicians were great travelers and merchants, and from their homeland, in what is now Lebanon, they influenced the writing of many other peoples including, prominently, the Hebrews and the Greeks. The Greeks turned some Phoenician letters into vowels and created additional vowels too.

Religion Sumerian, Akkadian, and Babylonian religions shared many basic attitudes and concepts that became the foundation for other Near Eastern belief systems. Fundamentally, Mesopotamian religion held that the gods had created human beings to serve them, that the gods were in complete control, and that powerless mortals had no choice but to obey and worship these deities. The hostile climate and unpredictable rivers (flooding that ranged from a torrent to a trickle) made life precarious, and the gods appeared

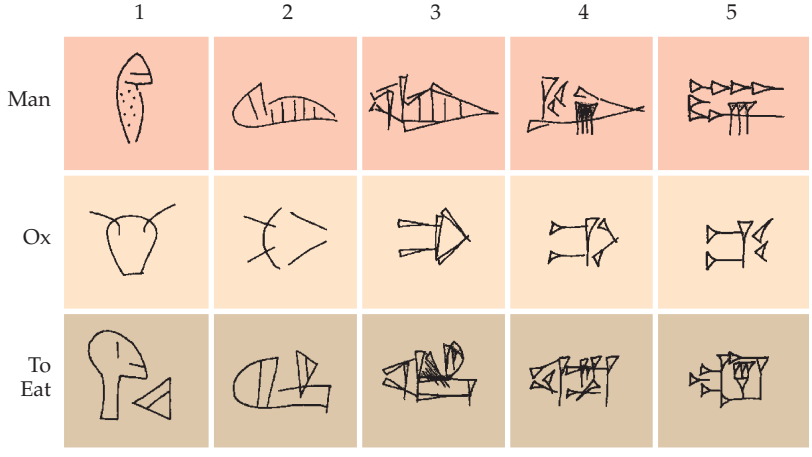


Figure 1.4 Sumerian Cuneiform Writing. Ca. 3000–1000 BCE. The columns illustrate the evolution of Sumerian writing from pictograms to script. Column 1 shows the pictogram: a man, an ox, and the verb "to eat" (represented by the mouth and a bowl). In column 2, the pictographic symbols have been turned 90 degrees, as the Sumerians did in their first writing. Columns 3 and 4 show how the script changed between 2500 and 1800 BCE. Column 5 is an Assyrian adaptation of the Sumerian cuneiform script.