

Chapter 20: Exploring Aesthetics

- Plato’s aesthetic theory in *The Republic* recognized the dangers of art in corrupting citizens, and therefore included forms of censorship and propaganda. Parallels can be made to twentieth-century forms of *socialist realism*. (SE pp. 497-498)
- The four theories of art explored in Chapter 19 have deep histories, with different thinkers over time giving each a slightly different interpretation. There isn’t one form of any of these theories, but several. (SE pp. 496-502; see also *Enduring Understandings*, SE pp. 14-15)
- Philosophers have contributed different theories on the role of art in advancing civilization, and in confronting forces of nature and inner emotion. (SE pp. 509-514)

Background

Exploring aesthetic theories further in Chapter 20 brings students into the aesthetic ideas of canonical philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and Dewey, now familiar to students from previous units. Each of these thinkers offered a comprehensive philosophy, in the tradition of constructive system building (see Introduction, SE p. 9). Other thinkers, like Nietzsche, were more interested in “philosophizing with a hammer,” demolishing the structures others built. Post-structuralist philosophy, as with Lyotard (SE p. 512), follows more in the latter tradition (see Derrida, SE p. 106).

About Chapter 20

In this chapter, students go deeper into the history and philosophy behind various theories explored in the previous chapter, connecting thinkers and artistic movements to formalism, representationalism, expressionism, and institutionalism. They also explore perspectives on the role of art in the growth of civilizations. There are numerous occasions where connections are made between aesthetics and metaphysics, as in the visionary approaches of Morrisseau (theosophy and Catholicism) and Tolstoy. Tolstoy also appears in Unit 2: *Metaphysics* (SE p. 154), reminding us that his thinking involved theistic faith, and living communally (a form of utopian political philosophy) as part of the “art of life.”

Features

In this chapter, the following features are included to help students make personal connections and/or deepen their understanding of aesthetics. You may wish to use all or some of these features as explained in the table that follows.

Feature	Student Textbook Pages(s)	Opportunity for Assessment	Strategies for Classroom Use
World Views Across Time	504-505	Debate Tagore’s claim that music is more original than painting, not relying on external media but arising from within the artist.	How does the concept of negritude relate to identity politics (SE pp. 426-427 and 446-447); struggles for liberation (SE pp. 406-407); or Afrocentric knowledge (SE pp. 298-299)?
Philosophers on Philosophy	510	Consider having students write a journal entry on the cultivation of aesthetic enjoyment, using Kant and Schiller as their starting point (use BLM J).	Connect the discussion here to <i>Art and the Sublime</i> , SE pp. 511-512. Drawing on Lyotard, ask students what creates a sense of the sublime in their world. Video games? Movies like <i>Avatar</i> ?

Learning Goal

Students will connect philosophers to (and deepen their understanding of) the four theories of art introduced in Chapter 19: formalism, representationalism, expressionism, and institutionalism.

Teaching Plan 1 (SE pp. 494-508)

Activity Description

Building on the four-corners activity in Chapter 19 (see BLM 19.2), students will reconsider the applicability of the various theories of art, as well as their affinity for one or more of the four theories.

Assessment Opportunities for Chapter Questions

The table below summarizes assessment opportunities for selected questions in this section of the chapter.

Assessment Type	Assessment Tool	Feature Questions	Section Questions
Assessment as Learning	Small group inquiry		1-4, SE p. 508
Assessment as Learning	Self-reflection and extension	1 and 2, SE p. 505	

Resources Needed

Make copies of these Blackline Masters:

- BLM 20.1 Michel Foucault: Postmodern Response to Art
- BLM 19.2 Four-Corners Debate: Theories of Art
- BLM C Comparison Chart
- BLM J Journal Writing Guide

Timing

300 minutes
(four 75-minute classes)

Learning Skills Focus

- Independent work
- Organization
- Self-regulation
- Responsibility

Possible Assessment of Learning Task

See Teaching Strategy 8, on the creation of an experiment in aesthetic appreciation. This could be done for marks. Section question 4 on SE p. 508 could be made into a journal response, with further reading. Many of the topics in this teaching plan would be of potential interest to students as journal topics (see BLM J).

Assessment (For/As Learning)

As teachers move through each chapter, opportunities will be highlighted to provide assessment for/as learning in preparation for assessment of learning at the end of each chapter.

Task/Project	Achievement Chart Category	Type of Assessment	Assessment Tool	Peer/Self/Teacher Assessment	Learning Skill	Student Textbook Page(s)	Blackline Master
Four corners	Knowledge; Thinking; Application	For	Group appraisal of which theories of art best explain which works of art	Peer; self	Collaboration	499-502 and 507	BLM 19.2
Postmodern response to art	Thinking; Application; Communication	As	Further research	Self; teacher	Independent work	506	BLM 20.1
Animating philosophers: Tolstoy meets Langer	Knowledge; Communication	For	Acting in character	Teacher	Collaboration; responsibility	501	
Mural-drawing activity	Application; Communication	As	Chalkboard or paper mural, using prescribed symbols	Self; peer	Initiative; self-regulation	502	
Experiment in observing art out of context	Application	As	Psychological study of behaviour of passers-by	Peer	Collaboration; responsibility; self-regulation	507	
Norval Morrisseau interpretation or imitation	Knowledge; Application	As	Writing, speaking, or painting an interpretation	Self	Independent study; initiative	507-508	

Prior Learning Needed

Review the four theories covered in Chapter 19 (SE pp. 476-478). Twentieth-century history will also come into play as students encounter different art movements, such as Dadaism, which was a response to the horrors of World War I. German philosopher Jürgen Habermas has written on the advent of modernism and its significance.

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. After reading more about the four theories of art, going deeper into the thinkers associated with each, ask students to revisit the question of which theory of art fits a given example (subject or artefact), again using template BLM 19.2. Suggested subjects to apply the theories to include the following: Angus' insect-infested art, depicted in Figure 20-1, SE p. 494; the 10 most valuable paintings (see Chapter 19 Teaching Plan 1); Perry's *Golden Ghost* in Figure 20-19 (SE p. 516; see Chapter Review question 5); an assortment of Group of Seven paintings for Canadian content (asking whether Harris, Varley, or Carr, for instance, break with representationalism and move into formalism or expressionism in their landscapes); whether institutionalism also plays into the heightened value of Thomson's work at auctions today; performance art (e.g., see the outrageous works of Chilean artist Marco Evaristti, such as cooking meatballs in his own liposuctioned fat, or putting goldfish in a blender for the audience to either watch or kill).
2. Aristotle's representationalism (mimesis) also brings up the therapeutic uses of art, helping artists and viewers to use representations, such as Greek or Shakespearian tragedies (*Oresteia Trilogy*, *Romeo and Juliet*), to bring out suppressed emotions. To generate discussion, see Chapter Review question 7, SE p. 517.

Acc Introducing the field of art therapy makes for a welcome break, and yet extension, from the theoretical consideration of representationalism. Koko the gorilla did art therapy after her tabby cat died, bringing up again the question of whether artistic impulses can originate in animals as well as humans.

3. In the section on expressionism (SE pp. 501-502), an opportunity for debate occurs in the dialogue between Tolstoy and Langer, on SE p. 501, over the need for art to emerge directly from the feeling in the artist.

DI Have two students develop a short puppet-show or skit to illustrate the opposition between Tolstoy and Langer. (See more on Langer, SE p. 490.)

4. The topic of abstract expressionism, illustrated by Pollock's work, can be opened for discussion by showing the clip on the artists talking about his work, or through scenes from the movie made about him. Look up the following titles on YouTube:

Jackson Pollock 51

Pollock painting (1950)

Activity: Try having students engage in this kind of abstract expressionism by doing murals on the board or paper, using multicoloured chalk, pencils, or markers. Give them five to seven different symbols to use, in varying sizes, solidity, and colours, and have them compose a work of abstract art. Use music to create flow and ecstatic escape from the surroundings: Radiohead or Philip Glass, Euro-trance, etc. More free-spirited students will begin to morph the symbols, or add in elements of their own creation, which is allowable if the spirit moves them to do so.

Sample symbols: $\sqrt{\circ}$ $\Delta \approx \cap$ $\square \diamond$ (all of which can be enlarged and morphed into more creative variations). Ask students: Is it the artist's expression that gives the work its power, or is it the formal elements of composition? Must it be an either/or, as in appraising Pollock's work or others?

DI Consider photographing the exhibits, and have some students make a digitally enhanced version or collage. Are students who are acting as the “second artist” still being original in their composition, and even equally original as the first artist, or is the work of the second artist derivative or parasitic? (See Chapter Review question 6. b), SE p. 517, for consideration of mixing elements and form.)

5. The “World Views Across Time” feature (SE 504-505) brings music and poetry into the discussion, and raises the questions: (a) is music more basic or primal than the other arts? and (b) can poetry be a vehicle not only for self-expression but for identity formation and possibly identity politics? For Tagore’s poetry (which Wittgenstein is said to have read out loud at meetings of the Vienna Circle, for the positivists who saw no literal meaning in poetic verse), see the following Web links:

<http://www.schoolofwisdom.com/history/teachers/rabindranath-tagore/gitanjali/>

<http://www.poemhunter.com/rabindranath-tagore/poems/>

http://www.poemhunter.com/i/ebooks/pdf/rabindranath_tagore_2004_9.pdf

(See Chapter 21 Teaching Plans for other video links to documentaries on music.)

A tribute to Aimé Césaire on the occasion of his death in 2008 highlights his political influence in Martinique and throughout the French-speaking world, and on thinkers like Frantz Fanon (SE p. 406). The claim is made that Césaire disproves the notion that poets make bad leaders, referring to his ability to combine art with politics. Look up the following video title on YouTube:

Aime Cesaire-poet, politician activist, 1913-2008

See question 2, SE p. 505, for a poetry-writing activity inspired by Césaire. Alternatively, rather than writing a poem, students can develop a journal entry based on question 2 on SE p. 505 (see BLM J).

6. The student textbook section on SE pp. 503-507 may be confusing for students and instructors alike, as we move from identifying thinkers associated with the four main theories of art (SE pp. 496-502) to introducing prevailing movements within art during the twentieth century: Modernism, Dadaism, and Postmodernism. One way to approach this is to consider how movements in art, such as Picasso’s modernist cubism, trouble or disturb the categories or theories we have previously explored. Here we encounter Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (note the typo in the spelling of Ortega’s name, and the unfamiliar reference to Gasset instead of Ortega in the SE). Ortega is famous for his lectures on metaphysics, in which he explains metaphysics as a way of discovering our fundamental disorientation in the world, being thrown into a body and its life trajectory. What we need to do is become aware of our freedom to create who we are becoming, and to do this we first need to realize our separation from our familiar surroundings or circumstances (a movement of thought also found in Husserl’s and Heidegger’s phenomenology). Art can serve in this process of making us aware of our ecstatic condition, waking us up from our daily narcosis or tranquilization (as Nietzsche and Heidegger put it) by distorting our surroundings. Consider, for instance, Gaudi’s architecture as an example from Spain. Then open the question of the merits behind Canadian architect Frank Gehry’s renovation of the Art Gallery of Ontario, or of his other buildings such as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, or the Walt Disney Concert Hall in L.A. Look up some images of Gehry’s work on the Internet—Google Images is a good place to start.

Also look up Frank Gehry asks “Then what?” (interview on his education, science, and architectural work) at this link:

http://www.ted.com/talks/frank_gehry_asks_then_what.html

7. The brief section on postmodernism (SE p. 506) can be expanded upon by using BLM 20.1 on Michel Foucault's reading of Magritte's painting, *The Two Mysteries*. Consider this a possible journal entry topic for students who are interested in contemporary, post-structuralist philosophy. Re: Modernism, Dadaism, and post-modernism, see also Chapter Review question 4 (SE p. 516).

8. Institutionalism (SE p. 507): Design an experiment such as the one described in Figure 20-14, where people are exposed to art that is seen out of context. Does going to a gallery or theatre create anticipatory excitement and appreciation, lending value (perhaps proportionate with the ticket price we pay) in accordance with the institutional theory? Introduce controls, such as planting classmates in the scene to either pay attention to the art (drawing conformity or inducing other gallery patrons also to look) or walk by it nonchalantly (possibly contributing to other gallery patrons also walking by, as in the bystander effect), in either case encouraging the same behaviour from passers-by. Ask students to record their observations of other people in the gallery in a methodical way and write up a brief report of their findings. In their analysis, ask students to apply psychological studies, such as the Asch and Milgram experiments, which demonstrate genuflection to authorities and others in the social group, creating a bystander effect.

Ask some students to film the experiment they carried out and present the documentary in class. Or, as in courtrooms, draw scenes that depict what happened.

Of course, teachers need to supervise these experiments to ensure students do not violate the subjects observed. (A study like the Stanford Prison Experiment would not likely pass ethical review today, as it caused serious trauma to some students.) After the experiment, look up the video titles (on YouTube) that follow and show them to your class (if not already taken up during Unit 3: Ethics). The video clips briefly illustrate how our behaviour (including our aesthetic reactions to art) is influenced by others. The Asch experiment in particular deals with perception of lines, showing how people will conform in their statements about how long a line appears. Would people also confer value on a painting or sculpture, play or song, through such social pressure? Does this indicate that the normalized subjects do not have a core self with which to make aesthetic appraisals, as Foucault might suggest?

The Asch Experiment

Milgram Experiment (Derren Brown)

Stanford Prison Experiment Part (1-2)

DI Ask some students to film the experiment they carried out and present the documentary in class. Or, as in courtrooms, draw scenes that depict what happened.

9. Norval Morrisseau discusses art, spiritualism, and culture in the first of these documentaries on his work (see below). After gaining some appreciation of Morrisseau's work and the mixture of spiritualism, theosophy, and Christianity that informs his paintings, you might have students attempt to interpret some of them (see Figure 20-15, SE p. 508).

DI Additionally, students could create Morrisseau-inspired paintings of their own, showing energies and other planes of reality. Look up the following video titles on YouTube:

Norval Morrisseau - Teachings of the Grand Shaman – 1981

Norval Morrisseau: Art as Wholistic Education

“Copper Thunderbird”: Norval Morrisseau

Norval Morrisseau Shaman Artist at the National Gallery in 2006

Text Answers

Page 505: World Views Across Time

- Tagore believes that music is the purest form of art because it arises from within, without the aid of any other media such as paint and brushes, chisels and marble or wood, etc.
 - Agreement with Tagore's statements may hinge on experience with different media, and first-hand knowledge of how musical composition, too, may be aided by instruments like the percussive piano—not unlike a drum, or paint brush. A horn, too, or flute is closely related to tools we hold in our hand. Is Tagore being a romantic? Would a computer be less direct than any other instrument for composing music or art?
 - Music can be an expression of oneself in terms of the moods conveyed, and whether the movements take the listener to optimistic heights or melancholic lows. Songs can become signature pieces for an artist, letting audiences know that this music is emblematic of a style.
- The activity here calls upon students to choose a piece of art that they feel is a reflection of their cultural pride, identifying the genre of art it falls under. They then write a poem in this genre (e.g., expressionism) that reflects their thoughts about the artwork and about cultural identity—whether as an abstract concept or about their own cultural identity. As many students have transnational allegiances to Canada and other countries of origin, the results may be diverse and multifaceted.

Page 508: Section questions

- Jennifer Angus' use of insects to create patterns definitely fits the formalist definition of art, and may also serve to represent something (e.g., birds, houses, etc.) or express emotion and ideas (e.g., our kinship with all forms of life, and the geometric patterns on our social and spatial organization). Seeing only a portion of the work, like a section from a quilt, does not allow for informed interpretation. Visit her Web site to see more of her work, and project it on a screen for students to make better judgments. Expert judgment was a topic from Chapter 12 (SE pp. 300-303) that students may also wish to bring into aesthetic judgment.
 - Although Angus has exhibited her work in many art galleries, her 2011 exhibit was at the Craft and Folk Art Museum (Los Angeles, California, United States); does that name lend cultural capital, or reduce her work to quotidian, folk status? Is there a legitimate hierarchy, or is that, too, socially constructed? Visit Jennifer Angus' Web site:
<http://www.jenniferangus.com/home.htm>
- George Dickie's institutional theory of art does help explain Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, a urinal in a gallery passing as art (see Figure 20-13, SE p. 507). Would it still be art if it was in the gallery washroom, unsigned, or if it were a functional urinal? Here, students must contest or agree with Dickie, using terminology related to aesthetics. Minimalism offers rich examples to feed their inquiry. Look up these YouTube video titles, which combine minimalist music and art:
Minimalist music, abstract art.
Minimalist Music – Humanity
Philip Glass - Two Pages (for Steve Reich), 1968
GCSE Music - Minimalist Composition

3. Students can also watch the experiment with virtuoso violinist Joshua Bell playing in a subway and people going by with disinterest (as described in Figure 20-14, SE p. 507). Look up the following video title on YouTube:

Joshua Bell “Stop and Hear the Music” by the Washington Post

To see what Bell’s subway-station performance indicates about the theory of institutionalism, contrast it with him playing in a concert hall, wearing formal attire and gaining the respect of the conductor. See if this contrast changes your mind about this theory. Look up these video titles on YouTube:

Joshua Bell Plays Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons”

Joshua Bell - Bruch violin concerto (movt 1)

4. Tolstoy’s and Langer’s views about art are only similar to the extent that both recognize the expression of emotion as central, but for Langer this is different from raw or gut emotion: it takes symbolic form, and is closer to a mathematical notion than a primal scream. She objects to the idea that dance, for instance, is considered on a lower level than music (which has notation), seeking to show that it, too, has formal elements that elevate its importance. Agreement or disagreement with either view will be difficult for students without further reading. Suggest that students look up one or more of these books and consider making this into a journal reflection for marks:

Leo Tolstoy’s *What Is Art?* This book is no longer protected under copyright, and can be downloaded for free from this link:

<http://www.archive.org/details/whatisart00tolsuoft>

Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art, by Susanne Langer; look up this text on Google Books.

Susanne Langer in Focus: The Symbolic Mind, by Robert E. Innis; also look up this text on Google Books.

Learning Goal

Students will explore the role of art in the advancement of civilizations, considering whether art serves a social and even moral purpose or is conducted for its own sake, as a form of play.

Teaching Plan 2 (SE pp. 509-517)

Activity Description

Drawing on the survey of aesthetic thinkers in Chapter 19, students probe more deeply the European and North American traditions, covering the purpose of art in eighteenth-through twentieth-century philosophies.

Assessment Opportunities for Chapter Questions

The table below summarizes assessment opportunities for selected chapter questions, including questions in the Chapter Review, which are relevant to this teaching plan.

Assessment Type	Assessment Tool	Feature Questions	Section Questions	Chapter Review Questions
Assessment as Learning	Small group inquiry		1-4, SE p. 515	
Assessment for/as Learning	Self-directed inquiry	1 and 2, SE p. 510		
Assessment for Learning	Organizer, note taking and creative writing			1-3, SE p. 516
Assessment as/of Learning	Small group inquiry and applications			4-7, SE pp. 516-517

Resources Needed

Make copies of these Blackline Masters:

- BLM 20.2 Performance Task: Researching and Writing in the Library
- BLM C Comparison Chart
- BLM D Argument Builder
- BLM E Learning Skills Tracking Sheet

Possible Assessment of Learning Task

Consider assigning Chapter Review question 3 (SE p. 516) on Jackson Pollock as seen through the four theories of art as a project that is marked. The same could be done with Chapter Review questions 4-7.

Acc Students who may have missed handing in an assignment earlier in the course, and who may have a zero recorded as the mark, could benefit from a second chance by doing one of the Chapter Review questions suggested above as a make-up assignment. This work would be in line with authentic assessment as the activities are rich applications of philosophy to art. Gauge the work expected from students and weight the evaluation categories (K,T,C,A) to be the same as the missed assessment. *Rationale:* Giving this kind of chance for students to redeem themselves can make the difference in terms of graduating or making it into the post-secondary program to which they apply. At the risk of introducing a Cartesian mind-body dualism, where we separate the learning potential of the soul from the faults of the student body, it also mitigates the blurring of boundaries between achievement and behaviour, in line with Ministry and many District initiatives such as “Assess for Success” and restorative practices of discipline.

Assessment (For/As Learning)

As teachers move through each chapter, opportunities will be highlighted to provide assessment for/as learning in preparation for assessment of learning at the end of each chapter.

Task/Project	Achievement Chart Category	Type of Assessment	Assessment Tool	Peer/Self/Teacher Assessment	Learning Skill	Student Textbook Page(s)	Blackline Master
Discussion of the role of art	Knowledge; Thinking; Communication	For	Group discussion	Teacher	Collaboration	509-510	
Defining the sublime; reading further into Kant's philosophy of aesthetics	Thinking; Communication	As	Self or group inquiry	Self; peer	Independent work; collaboration	511-512	
Unification through art, and unifying the thesis statement of the essay	Knowledge; Application; Communication	For	Research toward essay; argument building	Self; teacher	Independent work; responsibility	513-514	BLMs C and D
Progress check on culminating activity	Knowledge; Communication	As	Research skills: topic clarification, research notes, annotated bibliography	Self; teacher	Independent work; responsibility; self-regulation	544-553, Appendices 1 and 2	BLM E

Timing

150 minutes
(two 75-minute classes)

Learning Skills Focus

- Collaboration
- Independent work
- Organization
- Initiative

Prior Learning Needed

See discussions of Kant, Langer, Tolstoy, and Dewey in Chapter 19.

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. The Role of Art (SE p. 509) introduces the notion that art was once thought to save us from the negative influence of rustic environments, bringing art into the domain of moral improvement or character-building. See the discussion of virtue ethics in Unit 3: Ethics (SE pp. 193-195), and possibly draw links between who we are becoming and where we reside. As Heidegger once noted, the Greek *ethos*, root word of *ethics*, means both *character* and *abode* or *home range*, similar to German/Old English *habit* and *habitat*. Dwelling amongst beautiful works was thought from ancient times to have an “up-building” effect on character. Is this a form of arrogance? Some thinkers, like Rousseau, romanticize the noble savage and proximity to nature, a line of thought found in Emerson and Thoreau, but also in Buddhism and Taoism as well as Aboriginal cultures. The discussion around the influence of art can also bring up the concepts of determinism and free will, again linking ethics and metaphysics to aesthetics.
2. The principle of art for art’s sake (SE p. 509) starts with the recognition that art may have a positive or negative effect on the people, and hence should be controlled by legislators. But here, it is the channelling of leisure time that is of concern. Ask students if they can see links here to the earlier discussion of the Greek education system (Chapter 12, SE pp. 294-296), such as the liberal arts in general (suited to free men) and the Greek word *skolē* meaning *disinterested study* (i.e., without direct or practical application to the world of work or commerce). Is this value scheme part of the inherited *bedrock* or *world picture* of our culture today, in the sense we used that term in Chapter 11 (SE pp. 280-283)?
3. “Philosophers on Philosophy” feature (SE p. 510): We can see the influence of the classical worldview in Kant’s and Schiller’s discussions of art as free play of the imagination. And question 1 (SE p. 510) asks students to find the connection of this idea to Aristotle, which they should readily see. Question 2 (SE p. 510) may require more reading. Ask students to probe Schiller’s letters on aesthetics in his book *Aesthetical and Philosophical Essays*, available at this link:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/6798/6798-h/6798-h.htm>

Students may benefit from reading sections of Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, which is available at this link:

<http://philosophy.eserver.org/kant/critique-of-judgment.txt>

If students look up the above link, ask them to look at the following specific sections of Kant’s work:

FIRST PART CRITIQUE OF AESTHETIC JUDGMENT

SECTION I. ANALYTIC OF AESTHETIC JUDGMENT.

BOOK I. Analytic of the Beautiful.

FIRST MOMENT. Of the Judgment of Taste*:

Moment of Quality.

SS 17. Ideal of beauty.

FIRST PART CRITIQUE OF AESTHETIC JUDGMENT

SECTION I. ANALYTIC OF AESTHETIC JUDGMENT.

BOOK II. Analytic of the Sublime.

SS 23. Transition from the faculty of estimating the beautiful to that of estimating the sublime.

Students can use this research on Kant toward their culminating activity essay.

4. Ideas about art and pleasure and art and the sublime are likely to create some confusion among students (and perhaps teachers), as the terms and concepts are unfamiliar and abstract. The following discussion of Kant's theory of beauty and the sublime, as well as Schiller's view of the sublime, may help to clarify some of these ideas.

According to Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, there are three modes of aesthetic experience when we encounter things, which he discusses as experience of: things that are agreeable or disagreeable—a person's taste; things that are universally appealing, or beautiful; and the rarer, initially overwhelming but awe-inspiring experience of the sublime. Let's focus initially on the more common experience, drawing distinctions between taste and beauty as different kinds of aesthetic experience that occur through four moments in our aesthetic judgment (as described on SE p. 510) of almost anything.

When confronted with something—a flower or weed, plate of food, or new clothes—we immediately judge whether it is agreeable or disagreeable to us, employing our subjective perceptions of *taste*. What is agreeable to one person may be disagreeable to another, as displayed in the wide range of preferences—even in the selection of those who look good to us, with whom we may be infatuated. These perceptions of what appeals to us are *interested*, in the philosophical sense, in that we have clear purposes for their use or enjoyment. In judging a beautiful piece of art, however, Kant argued that, beyond our sensory response to the object, we reason that it *is* objectively beautiful and not just a matter of personal taste. In the case of beautiful as opposed to agreeable objects, we view them with detachment or *disinterest*, meaning that we judge them without being overly influenced by our feelings or past experiences, and without ascribing personal meaning to the work because we like or prefer *this or that* artist or musician. In other words, we judge the piece for what it *is*, objectively or universally, not on the purely emotional (empirical) response it may evoke.

When we ascribe *beauty* to a thing, we say it as though everyone would agree, even though we cannot provide a deductive argument that proves this *necessary* conclusion. Kant extends his idea of objective appreciation of the arts to the *universal* and *necessary*, meaning that the judgment of beauty *should* be accepted by everyone—like acceptance of rational moral maxims (duties) or laws of nature—whether or not people actually agree. It is possible that people fail to give due, rational regard for beautiful things, perhaps as a result of their impoverished education or their own moral failings (inner 'ugliness' or imperfection of character). Many people are unable to detach themselves from interest or preoccupation with utility ("What's it worth to me?") in order to achieve aesthetic, *disinterested* judgement—a precondition for appreciating the universal agreement of beauty. As Kant writes in *Critique of Judgment*:

"This definition of the beautiful is deductible from the foregoing definition of it as an object of delight apart from any interest. For where anyone is conscious that his delight in an object is with him independent of interest, it is inevitable that he should look on the object as one containing a ground of delight for all men. For, since the delight is not based on any inclination of the subject (or on any other deliberate interest), but the subject feels himself completely free in respect of the liking which he accords to the object, he can find as reason for his delight no personal conditions to which his own subjective self might alone be party ... Accordingly he will speak of the beautiful as if beauty were a quality of the object and the judgement logical ... But this univer-

sality cannot spring from concepts ...The result is that the judgement of taste, with its attendant consciousness of detachment from all interest, must involve a claim to validity for all men, and must do so apart from universality attached to objects ...”

The idea of the sublime as startling encounters with lofty poetry and overpowering images of nature goes back to Longinus (first century C.E.). Burke, working within the empiricist and *emotivist* tradition in British philosophy, played up the terrifying aspects of the sublime. Kant, the great synthesizer of empiricism and rationalism, saw how the human mind can overcome these initial sensations to contemplate the sublime as another movement of rational thought. His category of the sublime is something we encounter either in: (a) mathematics, with the concept of infinity; or, (b) powerful vistas in nature. Kant has less to say about this category of aesthetic experience, but he was very influential on later thinking—especially on Schiller (SE p. 510), and later Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Lyotard (SE pp. 486, 489, and 512 respectively). For an example of what Lyotard means by the Dadaists creating the sublime in their provocative, post-World War I art, students can explore these two Web sites:

<http://www.huntfor.com/arthistory/C20th/dadaism.htm>

<http://www.theartstory.org/movement-dada.htm>

In “On the Sublime,” German poet and philosopher Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) conveys, in clearer and more romantic terms, Kant’s distinction between the beautiful and the sublime. For Schiller, as for Kant, art serves in the “aesthetic education of man” toward “free play”—that ability to detach ourselves from interested or purposive engagement to exercise our imagination. Like Kant, he also sees us as employing moral judgement in our interpretation of the sublime, and the sublime as serving a moral purpose in our development or cultivation.

Ask students to visit this Web site to read excerpts from Schiller’s book:

http://www.schillerinstitute.org/transl/trans_on_sublime.html

In particular, at the above Web site ask students to examine the short passage that begins with the words “We delight in the sensuous-infinite...” and ends with “... is elevated infinitely precisely through that which presses the other to the ground.”

Postmodern sublime: For more recent postmodernist experiences of the sublime, ask students to examine the photographic works of JR and Chris Jordan in the TED Talks series (2011 and 2008), referenced in Chapter 21, Teaching Plan 2, Teaching Strategy 2 (political- or social-change art). JR brings the overwhelming presence of shanty towns and global disparity into perspective, and Jordan illustrates vast statistics with objects like plastic cups and Barbie® dolls.

Acc Ask students to write down Kant’s three modes of aesthetic experience and examples of each:

Kant’s three modes of aesthetic experience or judgment	Type of reasoning	Example
Taste	subjective, rooted in desire or need	clothing, food, partners
Beauty	objective, rooted in universal reason	acclaimed works of art that everyone (with reason) recognizes as great (Mozart, Rodin, van Gogh, etc.)
Sublime	sublime experiences are possibly overwhelming, but brought under control by reason	outer space, mountains, oceans, infinity in math

5. Art as a Unifier (SE p. 513): Use this section as an opportunity for students to build toward the culminating activity essay, taking research notes, using BLM C Comparison Chart or BLM D Argument Builder.

Acc Have students pair up to help each other, forming a research partnership but keeping their essays separate to avoid plagiarism. Review the policies on plagiarism to help students avoid this problem ahead of time.

Additional notes follow about the thinkers who are explored in this textbook section:

Tolstoy: He presents a response to Kant and Schiller, and the idea that art serves the purpose of pleasure instead of the moral improvement of character. One should be careful, however, not to overlook the role of ethics in the thinking of Kant and Schiller, and their Enlightenment project of up-building human civilization (the German tradition of *bildung*).

Dewey: Encourage students to look up online versions of *Art as Experience* and encourage them to read this primary document, in English. Also suggest that students use Dewey in their essays for the culminating activity (see BLM 19.1).

Croce: See the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (online) to get a better sense of his views, though they changed over his career. See the following link:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/croce-aesthetics/>

At the previous Web link, students can read the following quote from Croce's work, *The Essence of Aesthetic*, translated by Douglas Ainslie, which is available online at this link:

<http://www.archive.org/details/essenceofaesthet00crocuoft>

“...what gives coherence and unity to the intuition is feeling: the intuition is really such because it represents a feeling, and can only appear from and upon that. Not the idea, but the feeling, is what confers upon art the airy lightness of a symbol: an aspiration enclosed in the circle of a representation—that is art; and in it the aspiration alone stands for the representation, and the representation alone for the aspiration.”

The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* explains more about Croce's ideas. If you visit this online encyclopedia, look up “Croce's Aesthetics.” Then scroll down to “Later Developments.” In that section, begin reading from “Croce still holds that art is intuitive...”

Acc Take up section questions 1-4, SE p. 515, as review to help students check their understanding of this more theoretical material. A word wall for this chapter in the classroom might help some students, perhaps in an acrostic poem, word art poster, or crossword puzzle. Refer students to the Chapter 20 key terms on SE p. 494.

DI Have students develop a scrapbook or portfolio that includes portraits of the main thinkers, both in terms of drawings, theories, and biographies. Consider a collage for the classroom wall.

6. Conduct a progress check on the student essays (culminating activity), using BLM 19.1 and possibly BLM E Learning Skills Tracking Sheet.

Acc Suggest that students use the Argument Builder (BLM D) to construct their case for their essay and refine their thesis statement. Discuss due dates and go through the rubric on BLM 19.1 (the evaluation criteria) to ensure a completed project for final submission.

Text Answers

Page 510: Philosophers on Philosophy

1. Aristotle's notion that art is disinterested, as the work of free men not bound by affairs of commerce, had an impact on Kant's and Schiller's ideas that art is a form of free play, or higher imagination that we aspire to as rational beings.
2. Schiller's idea that play is the basis of art and humanity can be approached through both positive and negative definitions of art and humanity: What elements make them what they are? What elements distinguish them from other things? Agreement may be in part instead of in whole; play may apply to some forms of art and not others. Here we are avoiding composition errors (see SE p. 58), where the whole is attributed to the parts or the parts to the whole.

Page 515: Section questions

1.

Thinker	School of thought	Associated theory of art	Profession
Kant and Schiller	rationalist	formalist	philosophers
Tolstoy	spiritualist/communalist	expressionist	novelist
Dewey	pragmatist	contextualist	philosopher
Croce	idealist, liberal anti-fascist	intuitionist expressionist (He wrote, "To intuit is to express."*)	historian, philosopher, politician

*Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic* (translated by Douglas Ainslie).

2. Ask students to consider using BLM D Argument Builder to construct a definition of the role of art. Philosophical reasoning skills and terminology used to defend students' views might include the following: catharsis, therapy, sublime, representation, expression, communication/community building, persuasion/propaganda, devotion or worship, personal fulfillment, play, intellectual/emotional/spiritual stimulation, etc.
3. Burke's theory on the sublime causing pain stems from his commitment to British empiricism. It is not very convincing to suggest that we are overwhelmed by impressions or thrown into despair by the pathos of a scene, when this is seldom our experience. Detachment in viewing art safeguards most people from such visceral reaction. Kant's movement from reaction based on taste to rational appreciation of beauty is leveraged on such detachment, where a person can stand aside from their revulsion or infatuation and consider things from a more universal perspective.
4. Examples of the sublime (which admittedly reflect more the taste of the author) might include the following.

Literature: William Wordsworth's poetry, such as the *Excursion* collection (including "The Wanderer"), or in the twentieth century being tossed in the quagmire of bureaucracy or the maelstrom of political upheaval, as in Franz Kafka's surrealist nightmare *The Trial*, Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, Milan Kundera's *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, and Margaret Atwood's trilogy of dystopian novels, *Oryx and Crake*, *The Year of the Flood*, etc.

Painting: *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, Caspar David Friedrich (1818) and *The Shipwreck* (1805) by J.M.W. Turner.

Film: Charles Chaplin, *Modern Times*, on the machine age; Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*, based on the novel by Arthur C. Clarke. The following link takes you to a video of the trailer of Kubrick’s film, with Richard Strauss’ *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as background music:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vahx4rAd0N0&feature=related>

Dance: Robert Desrosiers’ *Blue Snake*, originally performed by The National Ballet of Canada, available at the following links:

<http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/eng/collection/film/?id=16399>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-z3snd_GzKU

James Kudelka’s *In Paradisum*, performed by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal, and David Earle’s *Sacra Conversazione*, choreographed to Mozart’s *Requiem* and performed by Toronto Dance Theatre (both available as part of *The Dancemakers*, a series for Bravo! channel, through Dance Collection Danse).

Music: Many examples, but try looking up these classical pieces. The specific titles that follow are available on YouTube:

Gabriel Fauré - Requiem : ‘In Paradisum’

Mozart - Requiem – Lacrimosa

Pages 516-517: Chapter Review

1. The organizer summarizing and evaluating the theories of the key philosophers would look something like this. Students will suggest strengths and weaknesses.

Name	Summary	Strengths	Weaknesses
Plato	formalist		
Aristotle	representationalist		
Kant	rationalist		
Schiller	rationalist		
Tolstoy	expressionist		
Dewey	pragmatist		
Croce	intuitionist expressionist		

2. Bell’s significant forms could be shown through the work of artists like Paul Klee, who use formal and yet simple elements. Marc Chagall would also make an interesting candidate for this, as his paintings work on the symbolic rather than literal level.
3. Admittedly, it may be hard for students to enter into the role of introducing Jackson Pollock at an exhibit, using one of the philosophers discussed in this chapter. Try turning off the volume on the YouTube clip (see Teaching Plan 1, Teaching Strategy 4) that shows Pollock painting, and then animate the clip with explanation of what he is doing. His works fall under the category of abstract expressionism because he is channelling energy to become a quasi-force of nature as he splatters and drips paint. Then try to add in the analytic lens of a philosopher such as Tolstoy, Dewey, or Croce.

4. The table that follows describes key pieces of art that represent each of the styles:

Style	Sample exhibit	Justification
representationalism	Edouard Manet, <i>A Bar at the Folies-Bergère</i> (1881-1882)	The painting vividly depicts a woman serving a party.
modernism	Joseph Van Sickle, <i>Cubist Hoe Down</i> (1954)	Cubism was a modernist movement in the twentieth century.
Dadaism	Max Ernst, <i>L'oeil du silence</i> (1943-1944)	As a Dadaist, the work shows both the destruction of the Great War, leaving Europe in ruins, and the psyche grappling with a haunting sense of the loss of meaning.

5. To judge Perry's artwork *Golden Ghost* as beautiful (see Figure 20-19, SE p. 516), we first have to redefine *beauty*, considering such elements as social truth, the power of revelation, or expression of collective remorse and grief, as elements of beauty. Whether we can ever fully remove personal biases from influencing our judgment is a big question. Phenomenologists would suggest that we always project in the act of seeing or interpreting, or as Gadamer would say (*Philosophical Hermeneutics*), we inescapably *fore-structure* the things seen or read with the *pre-judicial* horizon of our own worldview and its values.
6. To address this question you could show the class the examples given in the student textbook question or generate local cases with which they may be more familiar. For Vancouver's Moving Dragon Dance Company, see the Web site:
<http://www.dancepassport.ca/?q=node/1078>
 Read about Toronto's hip-hop B-boy dance troupe Floor Assassins Militia or Future Art Movement (F.A.M.) at this link:
http://culturemagazine.ca/hip_hop_360_3rd_edition.html
 ...or watch them at this link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXsm32hdU_4
- a) Students might try to answer the question directly, differentiating between choreographies where dancers interact with artefacts in a museum to tell a story. Some of R. Murray Schafer's musicals offer a good example of that genre.
 Alternatively, students could challenge whether every painting and sculpture tells a story. Contesting the question might lead into a more philosophical inquiry.
- b) When an art form crosses artistic disciplines, it certainly could diminish the purity of the elements, and also the quality of the technique. There are few polymaths who can successfully cross disciplines, but then there are those amazing people like Leonardo da Vinci who can. Combinations can enhance the elements of form, as in musical and cinematic theatre, which is both song and spectacle.
7. Students are directed to write a personal response explaining whether they agree with censoring films that feature horror or homicide, subsequently defending their point of view in a class debate. They are asked to use philosophical reasoning skills, which might include logical fallacies such as slippery slope (SE p. 55) or straw man arguments (SE pp. 46, 50) if they think the "demons" are fictitious constructs. Appeal to authority is the fallacy featured at the end of Chapter 21 (SE p. 541).