

# ART CRITICISM

A way to talk and write about art

# The main idea:

- Using visual clues to discover the purpose of an artwork
- Developing in-depth observational skills
- Making judgments that can be supported

# Four Major Components

- Describe
- Analyze
- Interpret
- Judge

# DESCRIBE

## Essential questions:

- What do you physically see/observe in the artwork?
- What is the art form?
  - (Painting, sculpture, printmaking, textiles, photography, ceramics, jewelry, painting, etc.)
- What is the subject matter?
  - (Still –life, portrait, landscape, non-representational, abstract, etc.)



# Describe the following images...

Get ready to write as many descriptive words as you can...

....Ready?





Rene Magritte  
"The Son of Man"  
1964

# Analyze

## Essential questions:

What is the **mood** of the artwork?

How does the artwork convey this mood?

## Now, Describe & Analyze...

- Describe what the image looks like.
- Then explain how the the artwork conveys the mood or feeling based on what you see.



Childe Hassam  
"The Avenue in the Rain"  
Oil on Canvas  
1917





Roy Lichtenstein  
"Sweet Dreams Baby"  
Screenprint  
1965

# Interpret

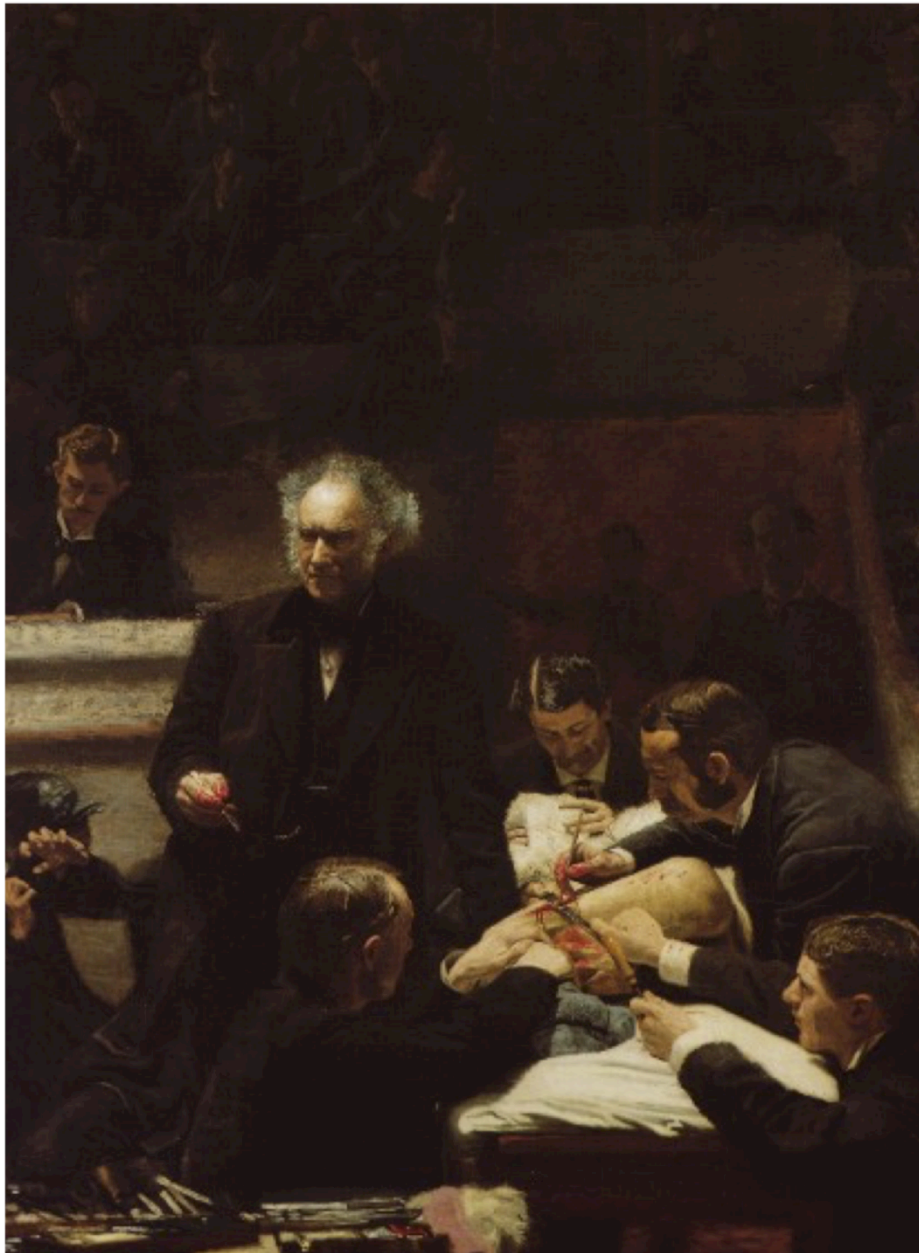
• INTERPRETATION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP.

- Use facts you have already gathered (description, analysis)
- In your opinion, what is this artwork about?
- Support your theory!
- Tell me a story!





Describe, Analyze & Interpret



Thomas Eakins  
“The Gross Clinic”  
Oil on Canvas  
1875



Edward Hopper  
"Night hawks"  
Oil on Canvas  
1942

# Judge

Do you like or dislike this artwork? Explain.

Do you value this artwork?

Does the artwork have value?



# Put it all together!

DESCRIBE

ANALYZE

INTERPRET

JUDGE



Claes Oldenburg  
"Soft Toilet"  
Wood, Vinyl, Plexiglass  
1966



Chuck Close  
"Self Portrait"  
Graphite on Paper  
1867-1968





Eric Fischl  
"The Funeral"  
Oil on Canvas  
1980





Richard Estes  
“Telephone Booths”  
Oil on Canvas  
1968

# Consider...

- What makes something a work of art?
- Who decides what a work of art means, the artist? The critic? The viewer?
- Does a work of art have to be beautiful? Who decides if it is?