

Scholarship of Excellence in Teaching Fellowship, 2021-22

Problem-Based Learning in Art and Architectural History

Elizabeth Melanson, PhD
Professor, Art History
Art Department, Rockville

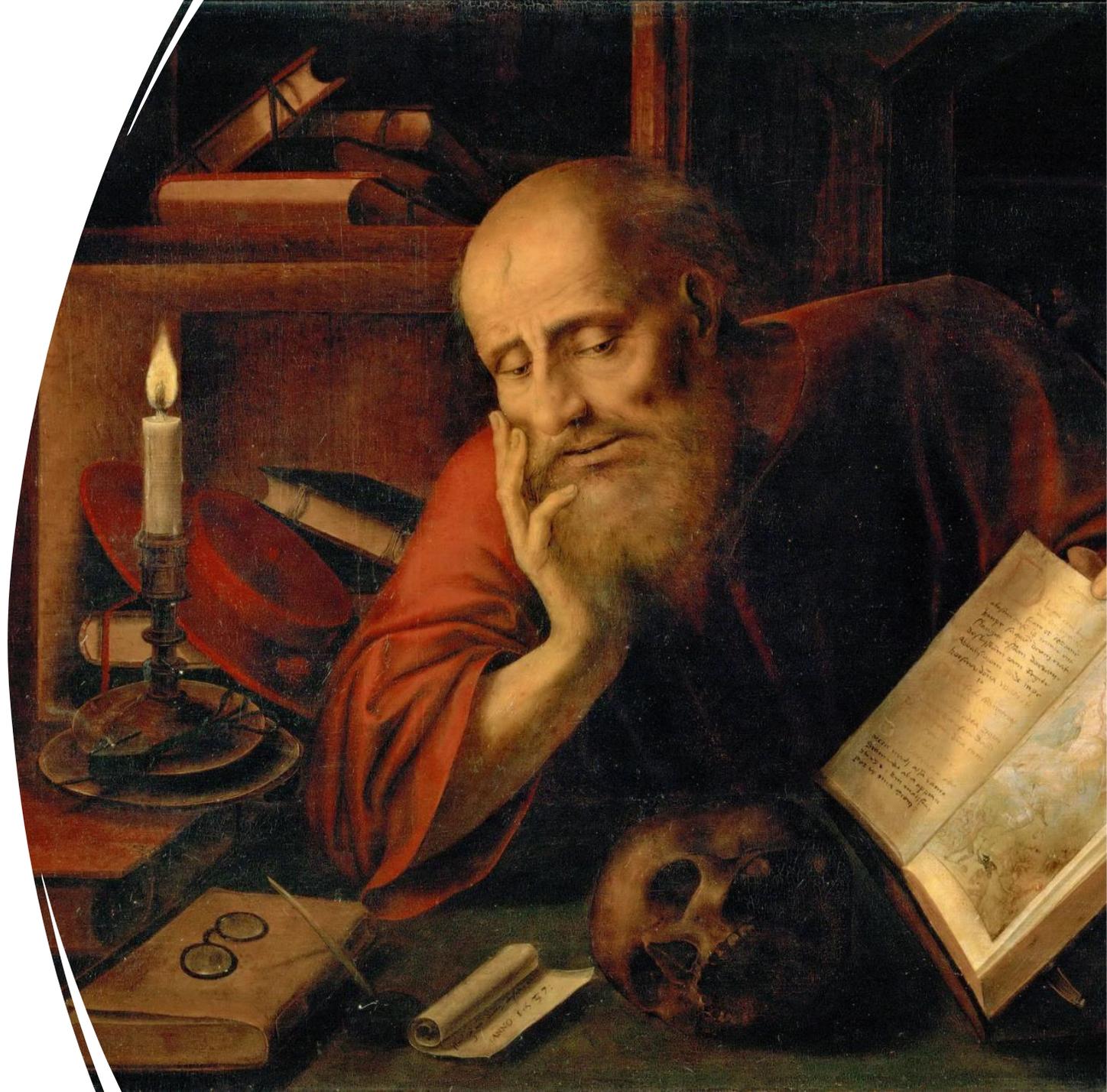
Problems and Goals:

Student Engagement and Higher Order Learning

Engagement

Art-in-the-Dark Model + Pandemic
Burnout =

Low energy and participation and
lack of community





Engagement Goals

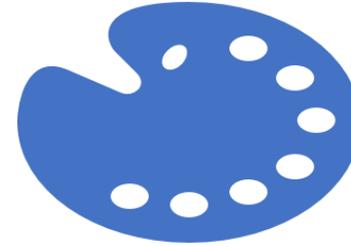
- **Encourage student agency**
- **Create an inclusive and active learning community**



“Agency helps (students) focus their attention, persist through struggles, understand themselves as competent, and build their confidence... Agency, moreover, extends beyond a student’s individual sense of accomplishment to his or her ability to work **collaboratively and productively with others**- an increasingly important skill for the workplace.”

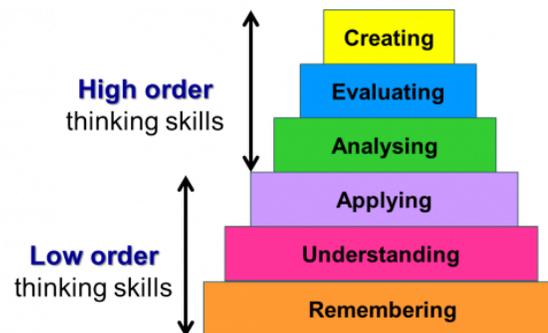
-(DiYanni and Borst, *The Craft of College Teaching*, 47)

Higher-Order Learning in Art History



"Coverage mentality" and too much emphasis on memorization leave little time for understanding, application, analysis, or evaluation of course material

Difficulty seeing the relevance of art or architectural history outside of the classroom





Higher Order Learning Goals

- Students consistently apply, analyze, and evaluate the concepts they are learning.

Skills:

- Cultural and historical literacy
- Critical thinking and perception
- Communication
- Problem solving
- Metacognition



Strategy: Problem-Based Learning

Problem-based learning (PBL):

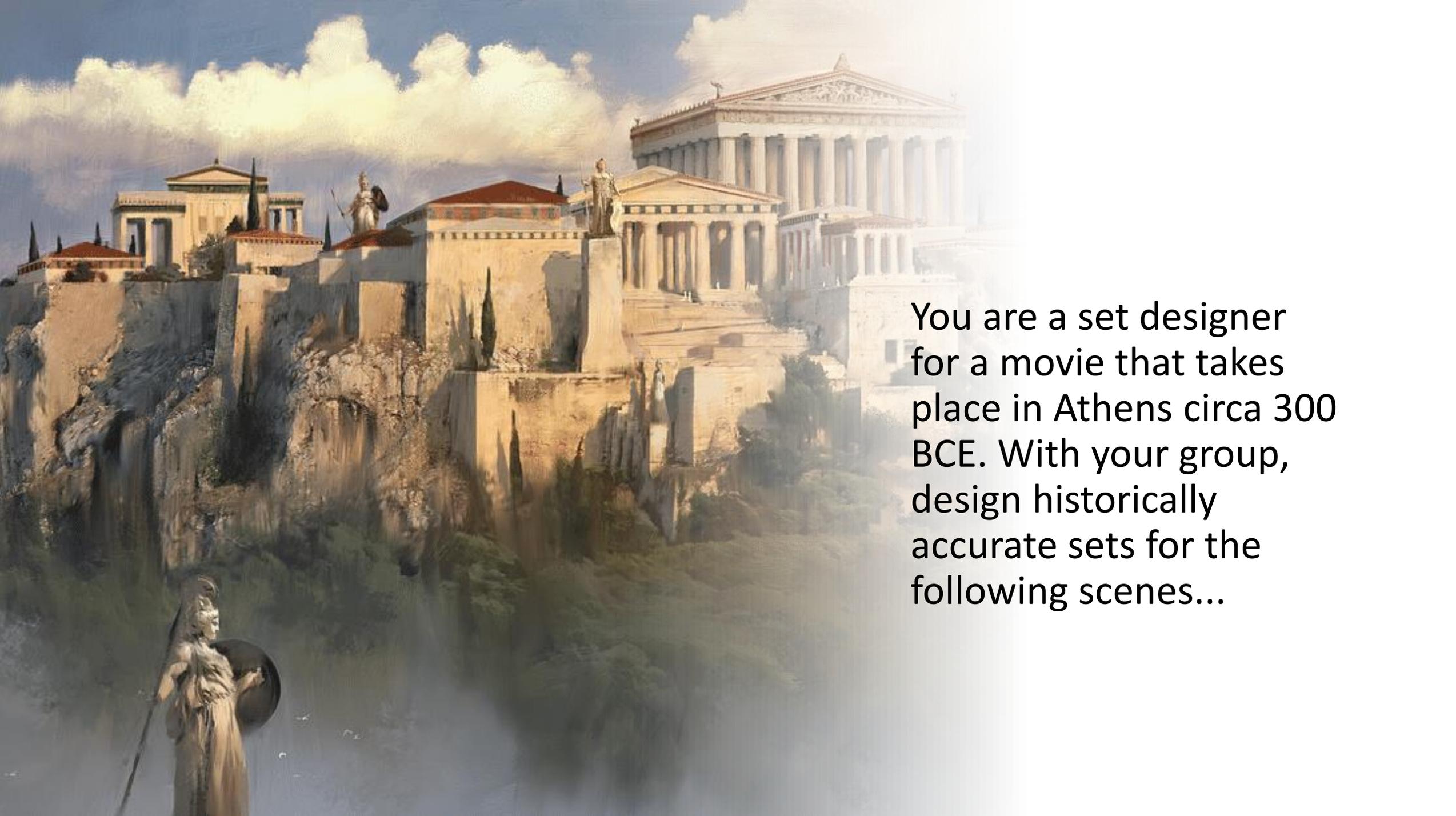
a student-centered approach in which students learn about a subject by working (often in groups) to solve an open-ended (authentic, discipline-specific) problem. This problem is what drives the motivation and the learning.

-Cornell Center for Teaching Innovation

“You’re a curator at a museum that has just received a mysterious object from an anonymous donor. Consider other artworks that we've studied this semester to identify the object by style and possibly artist.

To celebrate the acquisition, you have been asked to plan an exhibition around this object. What other works would you include in this exhibition and why?”





You are a set designer for a movie that takes place in Athens circa 300 BCE. With your group, design historically accurate sets for the following scenes...

Reacting to the Past: Problem-Based Role-Playing Games

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

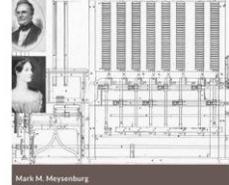


ACID RAIN IN EUROPE, 1972-1987, AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN COPENHAGEN, 2009

DAVID E. HENDERSON AND SUSAN K. HENDERSON

REACTING GAME UNDER REVIEW LEVEL 3

Charles Babbage
Ada Lovelace, and the Dawn of Computing



Mark M. Meyersonburg

REACTING GAME UNDER REVIEW LEVEL 3

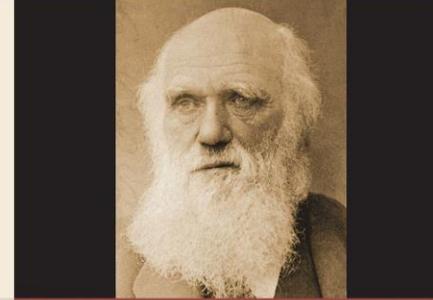
FOOD OR FAMINE 2002
The Debate over Genetically Modified Crops in Southern Africa



David E. Henderson

REACTING GAME UNDER REVIEW LEVEL 3

CHARLES DARWIN,
THE COPLEY MEDAL, AND THE
RISE OF NATURALISM, 1862-1864



MARSHA DRISCOLL, ELIZABETH E. DUNN,
DANN SIEMS, AND B. KAMRAN SWANSON

THE COLLAPSE OF APARTHEID
AND THE DAWN OF DEMOCRACY
IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1993



JOHN C. EBY AND FRED MORTON

REACTING GAME UNDER REVIEW LEVEL 3

THE TRIAL OF GALILEO



ARISTOTELIANISM, THE "NEW COSMOLOGY,"
AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1616-1633

MICHAEL S. PETERSEN, FREDERICK PURNELL JR.,
AND MARK C. CARNES

FIRESTONE IN LIBERIA
US Investment in Liberia, 1926-1932:
"Mr. Firestone, What Are You Up To?"



Suzanne R. McCoskey and Andrew A. Beachy

REACTING GAME UNDER REVIEW LEVEL 3

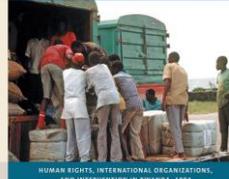
AFTER A LONG BATTLE
CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSE TO THE AIDS
EPIDEMIC, 1982-1985



Bella Poni

REACTING GAME UNDER REVIEW LEVEL 3

THE NEEDS OF OTHERS
HUMAN RIGHTS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
AND INTERVENTION IN RWANDA, 1994



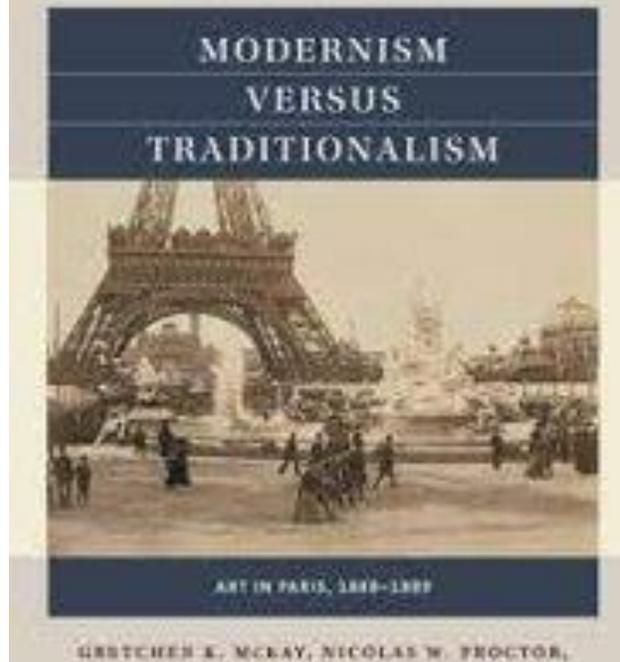
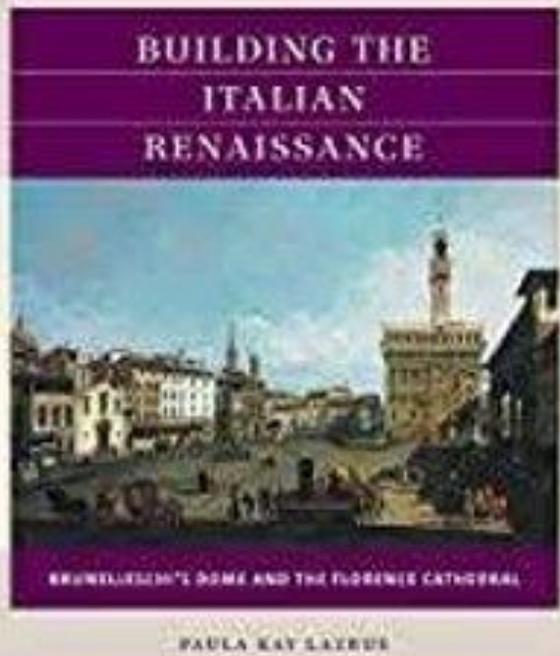
KELLY MCFALL

DIET AND KILLER DISEASES
THE MCGOVERN COMMITTEE
HEARINGS, 1977



David E. Henderson and Susan K. Henderson

REACTING GAME UNDER REVIEW LEVEL 3



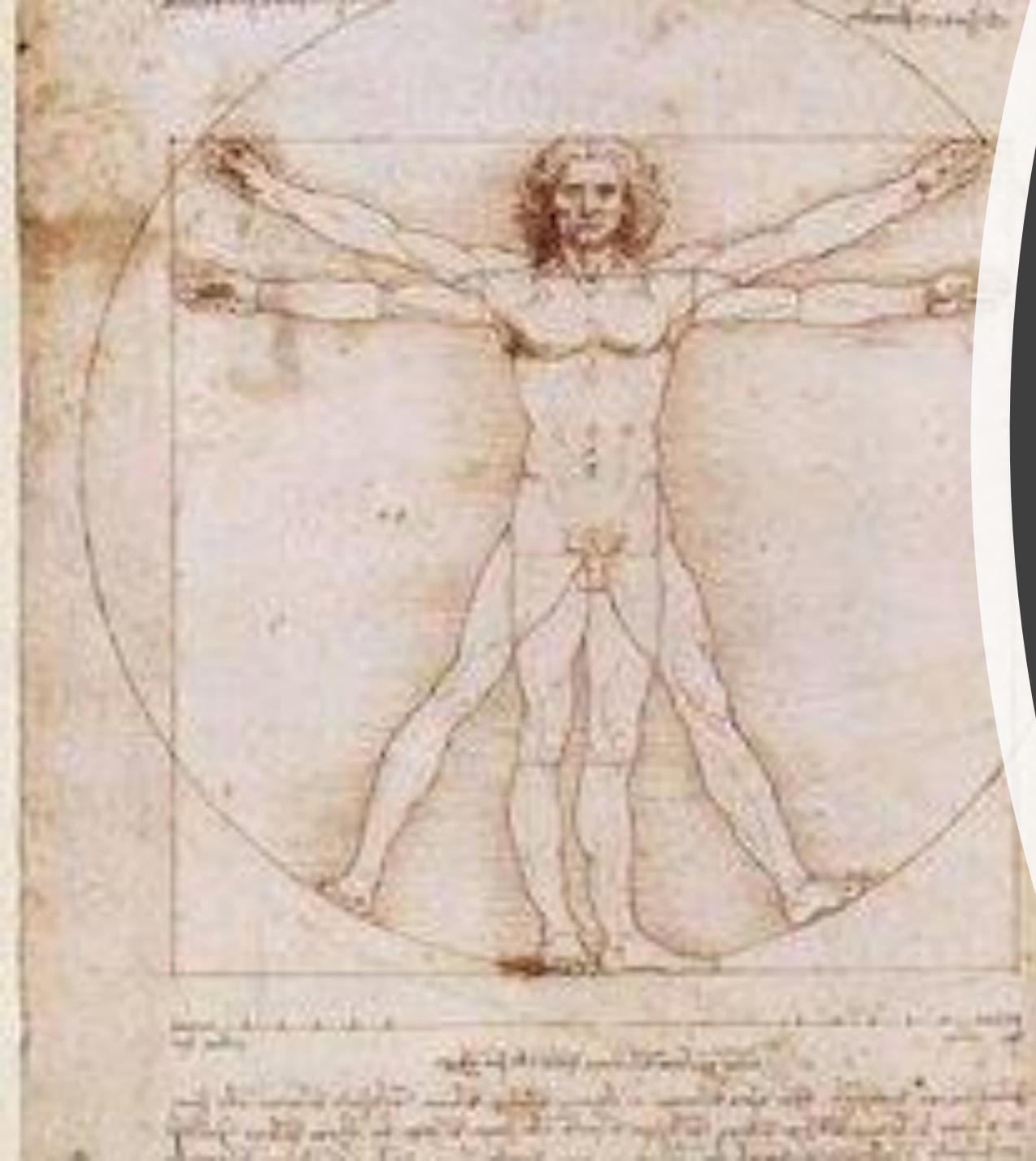
- ARTT 266: Architectural History, 1400-Present: *Building the Italian Renaissance, Brunelleschi's Dome and the Florentine Cathedral*



- ARTT 201: Art History, 1400-Present: *Modernism vs Traditionalism: Art in Paris, 1888-89*

Primary Sources

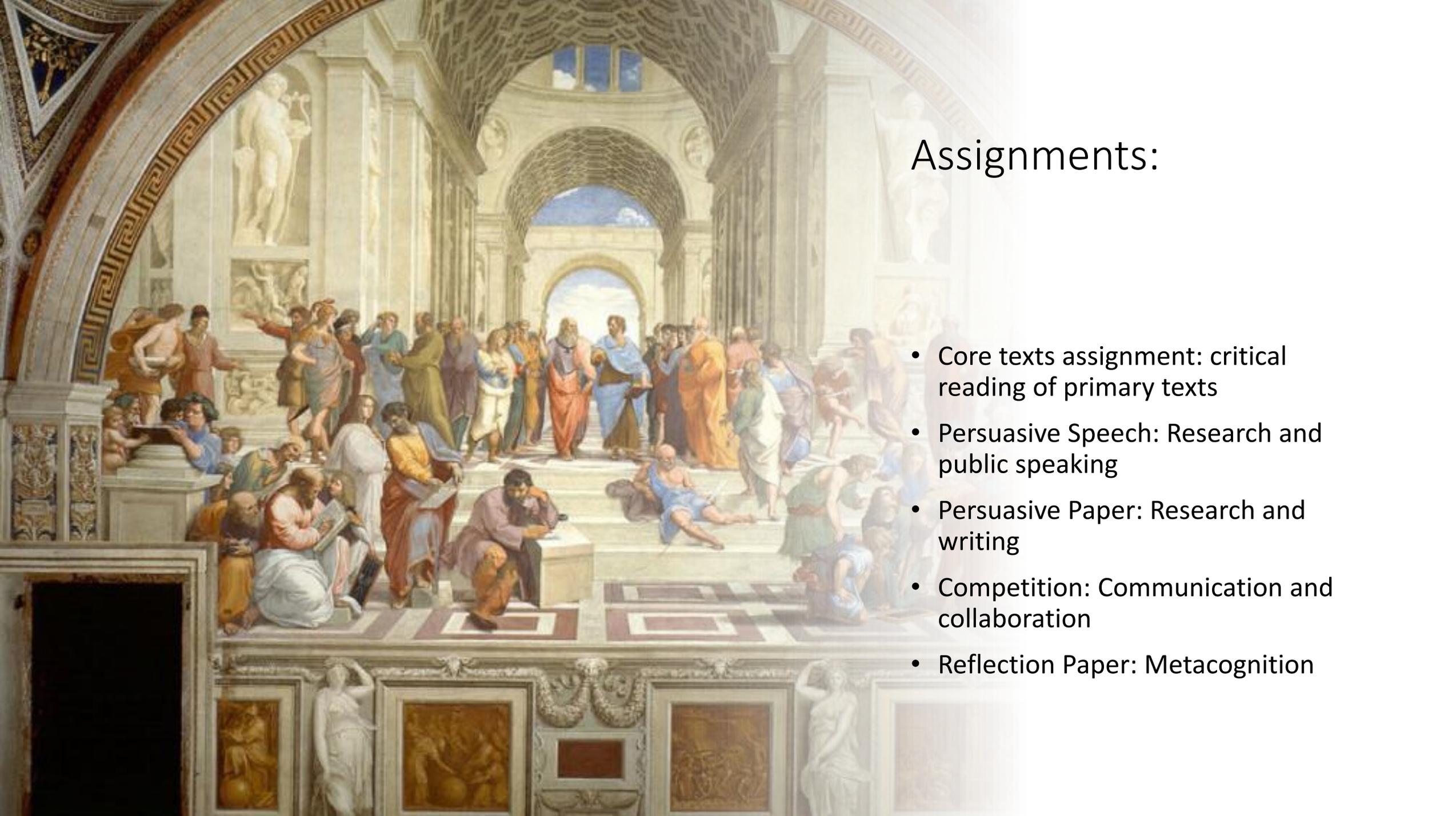
- Joris-Karl Huysmans, “The Exposition of Indépendants in 1880,” “On Degas,” “The Exposition of Indépendants in 1881,” “On Dilettantism,” and “Gustave Moreau”
- G-Albert Aurier, “The Salon of 1888”
- Josephin Péladan, “The Aesthetics at the Salon of 1883”
- André Michel, “The Salon of 1884,” and “Puvis de Chavannes Exhibition”
- G-Albert Aurier, “Essay on a New Method of Criticism,” and “Symbolism in Painting: Paul Gauguin”
- Joséphin Péladan, “Materialism in Art,” and “In Search of the Holy Grail”
- Félix Fénéon, “On the Third Exhibition of the Société des Artistes Indépendants”
- Petrus Paulus Vergerius, *On Noble Manners and Liberal Studies* (1404)
- Leonardo Bruni, *Panegyric of Florence* (1404)
- Goro Dati, “The Structure of the Florentine Government,” (1409)
- Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture* (63 BCE-14 CE)





Benefits

- Student-centered
- Highly structured and scaffolded
- Immersive and competitive
- Explicit connections to "real-world"
- Multiple opportunities to provide/react to feedback
- Opportunities for reflection

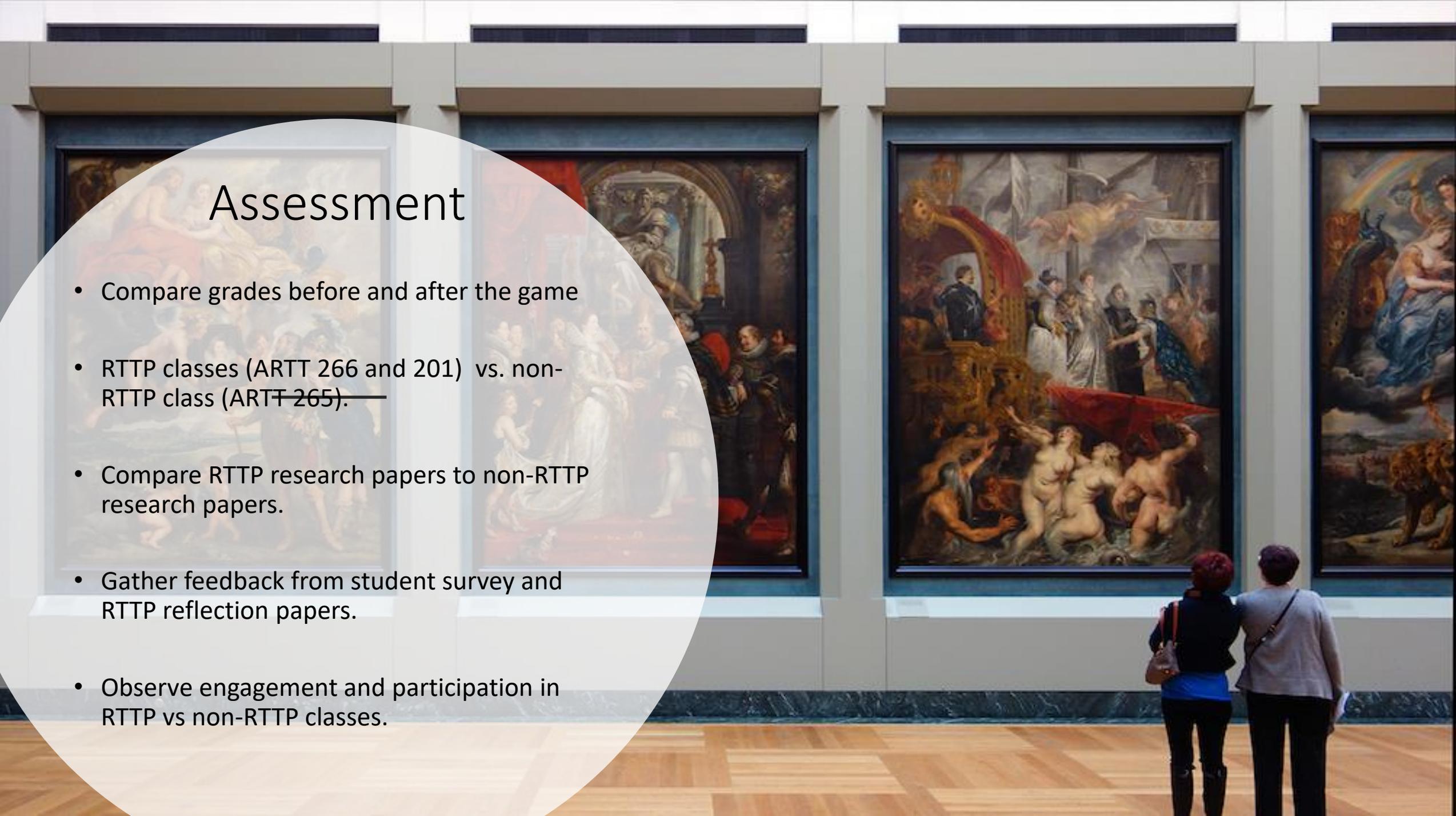


Assignments:

- Core texts assignment: critical reading of primary texts
- Persuasive Speech: Research and public speaking
- Persuasive Paper: Research and writing
- Competition: Communication and collaboration
- Reflection Paper: Metacognition

Assessment

- Compare grades before and after the game
- RTTP classes (ARTT 266 and 201) vs. non-RTTP class (ARTT 265).
- Compare RTTP research papers to non-RTTP research papers.
- Gather feedback from student survey and RTTP reflection papers.
- Observe engagement and participation in RTTP vs non-RTTP classes.



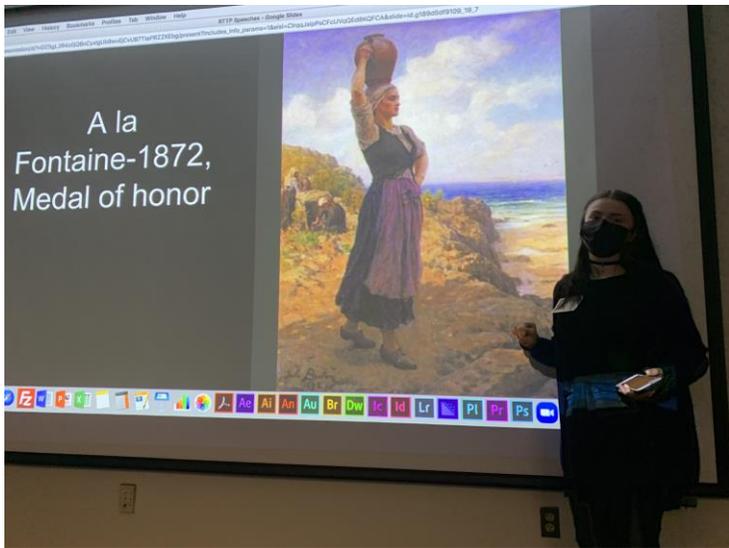
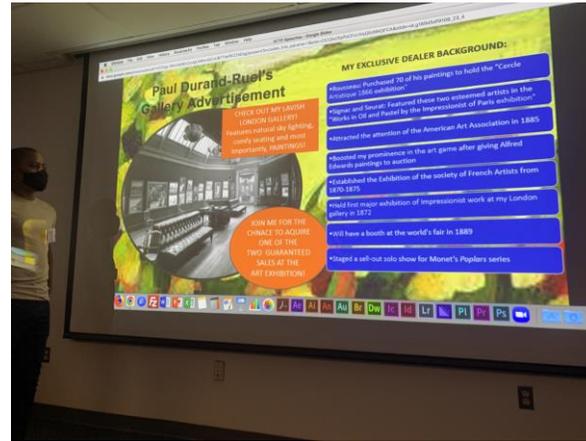
Grades

- ARTT 201, 265, and 266 midterm and final grades, very similar
- Students taking 265 and 266 earned the same grade in both classes
- 201 grades improved significantly after the game

ARTT 201	Midterm (before game)	Final (after game)
A	5	10
B	2	6
C	5	2
D	2	0
F	9	5



Engagement



Engagement

Reflections

- Reflection/metacognition: "Reacting to the past was a fun and informative way to learn. Even though I did not meet my goals due to external and internal factors, I did assist another person in meeting his... I believe that doing some research on the history of Florence as well as research on how notaries present their writings would have been more beneficial to me."
- Community: "I admit, I was so stressed in the beginning because I was trying to adjust to the college life... I made great friends within my teammates, and I appreciate this experience tremendously."
- Connection to course content: "I think one of the best, and one of my favorite ways to learn about architecture is through more detailed case studies. Like people, buildings can be very rich in history and character. As such they often deserve more time than they are given. The Florence Cathedral is quite amazing, so I am glad I got to spend more time with it."





Will we play
again?



Global Art History and Problem-Based Learning

creating wicked students

DESIGNING COURSES
FOR A COMPLEX WORLD

paul hanstedt

POWERFUL TEACHING



UNLEASH
THE SCIENCE OF
LEARNING

POOJA K. AGARWAL, Ph.D. *** PATRICE M. BAIN, Ed.S.

JOSSEY-BASS
A Wiley Brand

RICHARD PAUL AND LINDA ELDER



EIGHTH
EDITION

THE MINIATURE GUIDE TO
CRITICAL
THINKING

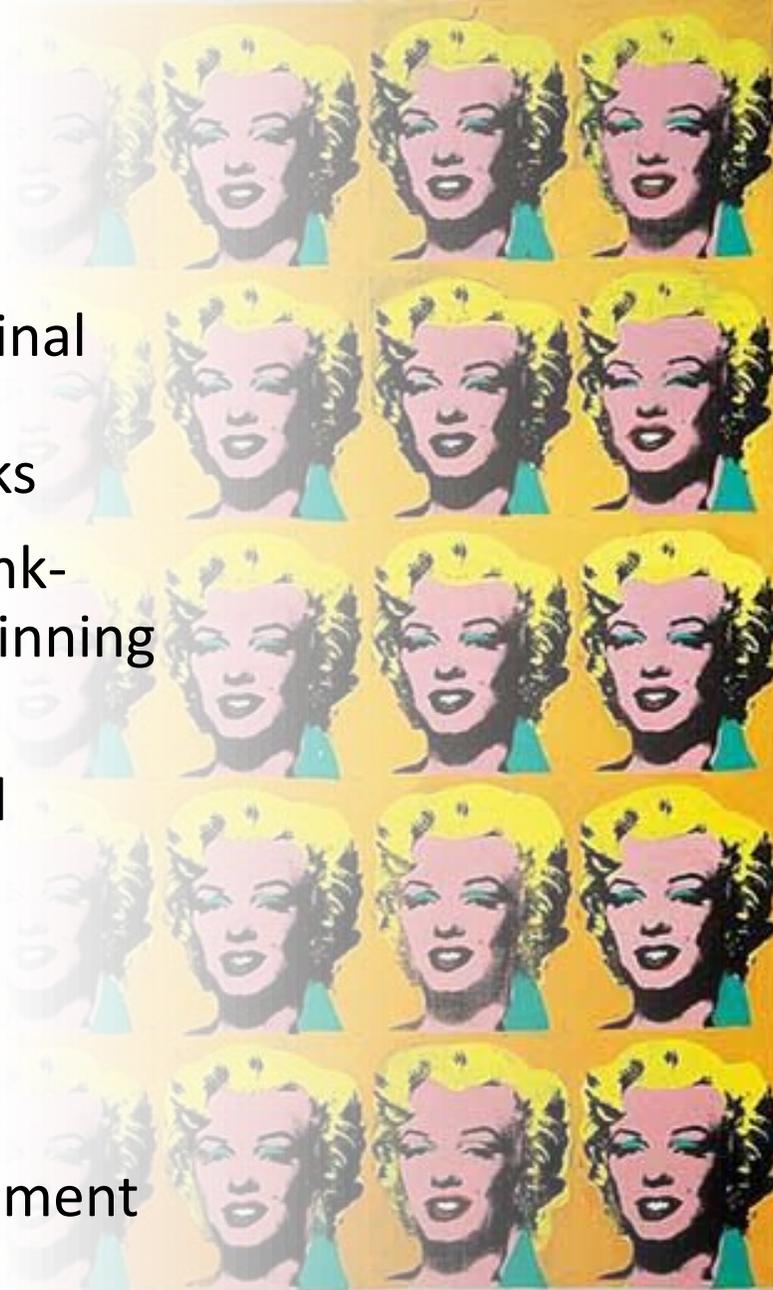
Concepts and Tools



THINKER'S GUIDE LIBRARY

In addition

- Replace midterm and final exams with low-stakes quizzes every few weeks
- "note checks" and "think-pair-shares" at the beginning or end of class
- Smaller problem-based assignments
- Regularly use of critical reading questions
- End courses with a reflection assignment



Reflection and Critical Reading Assignments

- Design a thematic exhibition using work from at least three different periods/places.
- What can we learn about history by looking at art? Cite three examples.
- Tell me what you learned in this class that matters. What does it mean to matter? Does it matter for your major or career goals? Did you learn anything that could be relevant or even useful in your life outside the classroom?

Template for Analyzing the Logic of an Article

Take an article that you have been assigned to read for class, completing the "logic" of it using the template below. This template can be modified for analyzing the logic of a chapter in a textbook.

The Logic of "(name of the article)"

- 1) The main purpose of this article is _____
(State as accurately as possible the author's purpose for writing the article.)
- 2) The key question that the author is addressing is _____
(Figure out the key question in the mind of the author when s/he wrote the article.)
- 3) The most important information in this article is _____
(Figure out the facts, experiences, data the author is using to support her/his conclusions.)
- 4) The main inferences/conclusions in this article are _____
(Identify the key conclusions the author comes to and presents in the article.)
- 5) The key concept(s) we need to understand in this article is (are) _____
By these concepts the author means _____
(Figure out the most important ideas you would have to understand in order to understand the author's line of reasoning.)
- 6) The main assumption(s) underlying the author's thinking is (are) _____
(Figure out what the author is taking for granted [that might be questioned].)
- 7a) If we take this line of reasoning seriously, the implications are _____
(What consequences are likely to follow if people take the author's line of reasoning seriously?)
- 7b) If we fail to take this line of reasoning seriously, the implications are _____
(What consequences are likely to follow if people ignore the author's reasoning?)
- 8) The main point(s) of view presented in this article is (are) _____
(What is the author looking at, and how is s/he seeing it?)



Final Thoughts