



Writing a Fine Arts Paper

What is a Fine Arts Paper?

- A Fine Arts Paper is a well organized essay that is usually 3-6 pages long. It is written on a topic that is approved by one's professor.
- It should be written in standard 12 point font, double spaced, and with a one inch margin. It may also be written in first person.
- The paper is written about a painting, sculpture, building, photograph, play, opera, or a movie that the student has seen in person. The writer will be critically analyzing the work of art based on the form, content, and merits of the particular piece of art.

What is the Purpose of a Fine Arts Paper?

- The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze the work of art, while implementing the knowledge and skills gained in the class.

Things to Remember:

- In the paper, one must include terminology from the class.
- It is also helpful to take notes during the performance, or if the subject is a painting, sculpture, building, or photograph, it may be helpful to sketch the piece or note details for inclusion in the essay.
- The paper should be written after one has had some time to reflect over the performance or work of art but also while it is still fresh on the student's mind.
- This essay is generally not a research project; however, if one chooses to use research material, that material **must** be cited (MLA is the preferred format).

Basic Structure of a Fine Arts Paper:

- Introduction: The introduction should include where one decided to go, who or what was seen, and also why one chose to attend that particular performance or museum.
- Analyzing the work based on form: In this section, the writer should describe how the work was put together, the medium that was used, the subject matter, and also the historical context of the piece or performance.
- Analyzing the work based on content: This section should include what one feels the meaning of the performance or the work of art is, as well as what the artist was trying to convey through the art.
- Analyzing the work based on merit: When writing this section, one should describe the value of the work. The writer is entitled to have an opinion that differs from the mainstream but should give detailed reasons for personal opinion.
- Conclusion: In this final section, one should focus on the experience, what one gained from the art, and any strong personal feelings inspired from the art.