



## *A Piece of the Past* Museum Essay Contest Essay Requirements for 2023-2024

### **Entry Deadline**

Submissions will be accepted until 5 p.m. April 1, 2024.

### **Submission Link**

Please submit your essay on the "A Piece of the Past" Museum Essay Contest Blackboard page:

<https://forms.office.com/r/TUMqYxzcg1>

### **Format**

All papers should have a cover sheet, and there should be no identifying information for the student or the faculty member anywhere in the essay itself.

#### **Cover Sheet**

The cover sheet should include the following information:

- Full Name
- H#
- HCU Email address
- Faculty Mentor's Full Name
- Museum Category for your artifact (one per artifact, and up to 3 submissions allowed). Here are the categories:

**The Museum of Southern History**  
**Museums of American Architecture and Decorative Arts**  
**The Dunham Bible Museum**  
**The Museum of Fine Arts and Contemporary Arts**  
**First Year and Academy Students**

- Classification (First Year and Academy Students may enter in that that category OR a specific museum category) "First Year" designates 32 hours or less, or enrolled in a 1000 level writing course
- Name of Artifact or Artwork
- Word Count (excluding the cover sheet, title, and citations in determining word count of 1,000 to 1,250 words)
- Title of Your Essay (centered on page and MUST match the title on the essay exactly)



## Format (Cont.)

### First Page of the Essay

The first page of the essay should repeat the essay title but should not include any other identifying information. The text of the essay should begin 2" down the page. Do not include your name on the first page or any subsequent page of the essay.

### Electronic Submission

To submit your essay, you must be enrolled in a special "A Piece of the Past' Museum Essay Contest" course page on Blackboard. The one step link to enroll is here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/TUMqYxzcg1>

### References/Citation Styles

You may use MLA or APA citations styles. Whichever you choose, be sure to use it consistently throughout the essay.

The essay should include a Works Cited page or a References page, as required by the chosen style. Such a page alone, however, does not count as sufficient citation. **Each piece of information in your essay must be responsibly sourced, either in a footnote, endnote, or parentheses following the use in the body of your essay. MLA parenthetical citation is preferred. Even if you are not using a direct quotation, paraphrased and summarized ideas must be sourced in the text and listed on the Works Cited or References page.** Please see the contest page for additional resources for documentation.

**NOTE: The use of AI is prohibited. These are original essays using your own knowledge and critical thinking, research, writing skills.**

You will submit your essay on the Blackboard course page to the appropriate category for your artifact. **Note that First Year and Academy Students have their own category for their submissions.** Those students are encouraged to enter in that category, and if they do more than one submission, choose the specific category for that artifact.



## Essay Considerations

*You may choose any artifact or work of art in any of the five museums.*

### **The Museum of Southern History, The Museum of American Architecture and Decorative Arts, and The Dunham Bible Museum**

For these museums, your essay should combine knowledge of the artifact itself with an understanding of its broader historical context and significance. Your aim should be to ***enhance the viewer's knowledge and appreciation of the artifact.***

In preparing your essay, you may wish to consider the following:

1. The artifact as a physical object: What is your artifact made of? What is its size and shape? When was it made? For whom was it made? For what purpose was it made? Is this a unique piece or one of many? Who owned it?
2. The artifact in historical context: What broader historical trend does your artifact illustrate? What historical event has it played a role in? What prevailing cultural value does it express?
3. The artifact as a museum piece: What impression does the artifact make upon you as a museum piece? How might that impression differ had you encountered it in its original historical setting?

*\*Please be sure to correctly identify which museum holds your artifact. If you are uncertain, ask the museum directors or staff members for clarification. \**

### **The Fine Arts Museum and Contemporary Art Gallery**

For the art category, write on one of the works in the Fine Arts Museum or the Contemporary Art Gallery. It may be helpful to consider the following:

- The period in which the work was created, the style, and the historical context.
- The artist and the intent of the work, and the audience for the work
- In what ways does this work demonstrate the properties of Beauty that come to us from Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas: proportion, symmetry, integrity of design, clarity, and unity?
- In what way does this work demonstrate Truth, Goodness, and Beauty?
- What does this artifact contribute to our understanding of the world, and how can we best appreciate it?



### **Judging Criteria**

The judges will take into consideration the following:

1. Adherence to the Submission Guidelines
2. Quality and Use of Research
3. Organization and Clarity
4. Creativity and Writing Style, including Argumentation, Evidence, and Documentation
5. Mechanical Excellence, including Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation and Usage

***The judges reserve the right to disqualify essays that do not meet the basic requirements for the contest.***

Best wishes for a rewarding experience in better understanding these fascinating artifacts!

Questions may be directed to Dr. Doni M. Wilson at [dmwilson@hc.edu](mailto:dmwilson@hc.edu).