

Essays

For this course, you'll write a researched position paper (due at the end of the semester) and an essay on images of the ancient world. In addition, you'll also turn in the write-up of your two in-class presentations and a proposal for your position paper.

Before uploading, make sure your essays meet the [Requirements for All Papers](#). All written assignments must be submitted via [BlackBoard](#).

Open the individual pages linked below for the details, requirements, and guidance.

Upload by	
1. Images Essay	Nov 5
2a. Position Paper Proposal	Oct. 15
2b. Position Paper	Dec. 10
3. Presentation	night before class meeting

1. Essay on Representations and Images

The assignment: Write a 3- to 4-page essay using depictions of the ancient world to **take a position** on the representations of ancient cultural ideas and beliefs regarding gender, following **one** of the following two options.

OPTION 1

Two pieces in a museum

How a culture sees abstract ideas (masculinity, virtue, old age, divinity, and so on) is often reflected in its artwork. What can two different works of art depicting the same idea, but from different times or places, tell us about how the cultures that produced them?

For this option, you need to choose two works of art relating to gender from the ancient world that (a) represent the same idea or concept but (b) come either from different periods or from different places in the ancient world.

In your essay, compare three things that these works have in common, using those comparisons to make an argument about what these two artists believed in and the insights this gives us into the cultures they came from.

Choosing your subjects

- Your two works of art must represent the same idea or concept. For example, you can choose two little girls, two warriors, two fertility goddesses, etc. The idea is to look for how similarities and differences in representations of the *same idea* tell us about the cultural beliefs and expectations that shaped the artists and their own culturally-conditioned visions of that idea.
- Your works of art must be from two different places or two different periods in the ancient world (before 500 CE). This allows you to talk about two separate societies and how they represent the same concepts differently. The two pieces can be in any visual medium: sculpture, painting, relief, etc. They do not have to be in the same medium as long as they are depictions of the same idea or concept.
- Ideally, you should experience the artwork face-to-face by attending a museum in person. Possible venues include: Metropolitan Museum's Egypt Collection; Metropolitan Museum's Greek and Roman Art Collection; Brooklyn Museum of Art's Ancient Egyptian Art Collection; and Fordham Museum of Greek, Etruscan and Roman Art. You are, of course, not limited to these venues, and you are not limited to New York. If you are not able to attend a museum in person because of ongoing restrictions, you may find imagery of artworks that meet the requirements on museum websites instead.

Writing your paper

- Choose three aspects of the works relating to gender you can discuss for both pieces that seem to reflect how the artist felt about the subject and what the subject stood for.
 - Some possibilities include facial expression, dress, use of technique or medium, stiffness/fluidity, apparent strength/weakness, idealism/realism, or any other elements offering some kind of insight into what the artist was trying to convey. Describe and discuss your subjective impressions of these three aspects in the two works.
 - For each aspect, compare how it manifests in the first piece; then talk about how the second piece is similar or different and in what way; and finally talk about what these similarities or

differences tell us about what each artist believed about their subject and what that might tell us about the cultural beliefs they came from in relation to the subject being depicted.

- For example: say the works you've chosen are two sculptures depicting a goddess of love from different cultures, and one has a crafty expression while the other has an innocent expression. The different facial expressions can be used to talk about how each artist, and the cultures they came from, might have thought about things like the gods' attitudes toward their roles in creating relationships between mortals; the nature of love; the motivations of the gods, etc.
- Make an argument about how consistently the same core idea was seen in the two times or places that produced these two works. If art is an expression of cultural values, what do the differences between these works tell you about the respective cultures they come from? What do their similarities tell you about what these ancient cultures have in common?
- You do not need to preface your essay with background about the periods, the media used, etc. This essay is about your subjective reactions to these two specific works and what you believe they are telling you about the beliefs and social expectations of the cultures they came from relating to gender.
- On a separate "Works Discussed" page after your essay:
 - List the title of each work, the artist, the approximate date it was created, the city or region it came from originally, and the name of the museum gallery where the work can be found.
 - Paste in photographs of the items. If it's permitted at the museum, take a picture of the items while you're there. If it's not, find pictures of those specific items on the museum's web site.

The ancient world on film

Every depiction of an historical event, whether in prose, poetry, painting, theater, or film, involves an artist using history to convey his or her own beliefs. What do the creators of the film and the authors of the source material it was based on want you to believe?

For this option, you need to choose a film that is set in the ancient world and that is based on an ancient primary source. In your essay, compare the agenda of the filmmakers with the agenda of the authors of the primary source. Describe and discuss the similarities and differences in how these creators reshaped this event for their own purposes. Use these similarities and differences to make an argument about the ways in which this particular event is leveraged to impose ideas on audiences and about what this event means to the people who create art about it.

Choosing your subjects

- First, choose and watch any feature-length film set in the ancient world (3500 BCE to 500 CE) in which gender expectations or identities play an important role. You can also choose two episodes of a television series set in the ancient world.
- Then find the ancient primary source material it was based on and read it. For example, if you chose the movie *300*, which is about Spartans fighting Persian invaders at the Battle of Thermopylae, the primary source you'd need would be the main ancient account of that battle, which is in Book 7 of *The Histories* by the famous historian Herodotos.
- Some suggestions for possible films or series and their corresponding sources are below. The list is not exhaustive, and you are not limited to this list as long as the film you choose is set in the ancient world and is based on ancient primary sources.

Writing your paper

- Choose three moments or depictions from the film and find the corresponding events or depictions in the primary source.
 - For each moment or depiction, describe and discuss how it appears in the film and how it is presented similarly or differently in the primary source material.
 - For example:
 - In the movie *300*, Xerxes and the Persians are depicted in a very distinctive and heavy-handed manner. If this is one of your three topics, could describe and discuss what tropes and visual and dialog cues the filmmakers were using to suggest how we should think of the Persians in the film, and why the filmmakers might have chosen to represent the Persians this way as part of their overall point about these events.
 - Meanwhile, Herodotos's presentation of the Persians is very different, which you can use to discuss what *Herodotos* wanted us to think about the Persians and the role he saw them as playing in this war.
 - After that, you could discuss how and why the two depictions are different and what this means for their two different perspectives on differences between Greeks and Persians.
- Use these similarities or differences to make an argument about (a) the agenda of the primary source author and how it compares to the agenda of the filmmakers, and (b) the ways this historical event is used by others to present their own ideas, and what this tells us about the shape and meaning of this event's impact and legacy on history.

- **Please take note:** This essay is about the agenda of the primary source author as much as the filmmakers. Do not use the source to “fact check” the film and list what it got “wrong”. You must consider the primary source to be at least as skewed, manipulative, and agenda-driven as the film.
- On a separate “Works Discussed” page after your essay, list the title of film, year, director, stars and studio. Then list the book or books you drew your written evidence from, using standard citation style. The references to the primary source must also be properly cited in the text as usual.

Below is a list of films that relate to the ancient world, but that may or may not be ideal in terms of discussing gender identity; you are encouraged to do a bit of further research about films you're not familiar with. This list is also not exhaustive, so if you have other ideas, run them past me.

Links to most of these primary sources can be found on the [ancient texts page](#) on my website.

Greece and Greek Mythology

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
300 (2007) or <i>The 300 Spartans</i> (1962)	Battle of Thermopylae Herodotus, <i>The Histories</i> book 7
<i>300: Rise of an Empire</i> (2014)	Battle of Salamis Herodotus, <i>The Histories</i> book 8
<i>Agora</i> (2009)	Hypatia Socrates Scholasticus, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> , 7.15; John of Nikiû, <i>Chronicle</i> 84.87-103; The Suda, <i>Life of Hypatia</i>
<i>Alexander the Great</i> (1956) or <i>Alexander</i> (2004)	Alexander Plutarch, <i>Alexander</i> ; or Arrian, <i>Anabasis</i>
<i>Atlantis</i> (2011)	Atlantis myth Plato, <i>Timaeus</i> and <i>Critias</i>
<i>Barefoot in Athens</i> (1966)	Socrates Plato, <i>Phaedo</i> , <i>Apology</i>
<i>Clash of the Titans</i> (1981, 2010)	Theseus Plutarch, <i>Theseus</i> ; Ps.-Apollodorus, <i>Bibliotheca</i> ; Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i>
<i>Damon and Pythias</i> (1962)	Damon and Pythias, Syracuse Cicero, <i>On Duties</i> 3.45; Diodorus Siculus 10.4
<i>Electra</i> (1963)	Elektra Euripides, <i>Elektra</i> ; Sophocles, <i>Elektra</i>
<i>The Fury of Achilles</i> (1962)	Achilles, Trojan War Homer, <i>Iliad</i> Books 1, 9, 16-19
<i>Helen of Troy</i> (1956)	Helen, Trojan War Homer, <i>Iliad</i> 3, <i>Odyssey</i> 4, 23; Euripides, <i>Helen</i> ; Ovid, <i>Heroides</i> 16; Isocrates, <i>Helen</i>
<i>Hercules</i> (1997), <i>Hercules</i> (2014), or <i>The Legend of Hercules</i> (2014)	Hercules Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> 9, 12; Apollodorus, <i>The Library</i> ; Euripides, <i>Herakles</i> ; Apollonios Rhodios, <i>Argonautika</i> 1.1175–1280
<i>Iphigenia</i> (1977)	Iphigenia Euripides, <i>Iphigenia at Aulis</i>
<i>The Odyssey</i> (1997) or <i>Ulysses</i> (1955)	Odysseus Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> [focus on key events of the film]
<i>The Trojan Horse</i> (1961)	Trojan War, Aeneas Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> Book 2
<i>The Trojan Women</i> (1971)	Greek subjugation of Troy Euripides, <i>The Trojan Women</i>

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>Troy</i> (2004)	Achilles, Trojan War Homer, <i>Iliad</i> [focus on key events of the film]

Rome and the Roman Empire

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>Agora</i> (2009)	Hypatia Socrates Scholasticus, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> , 7.15; John of Nikiû, <i>Chronicle</i> 84.87-103; The Suda, <i>Life of Hypatia</i>
<i>Attila</i> (2001)	Attila Jordanes, <i>Origin and Deeds of the Goths</i> 36-53; Procopius, <i>History of the Wars</i> 3.4
<i>Boudica</i> (2003)	Boudica Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 14.29–39, <i>Agricola</i> ; Cassius Dio, <i>Roman History</i> 62
<i>Caligula</i> (1980) [warning: explicit sex]	Caligula Suetonius, <i>Caligula</i> ; Cassius Dio, <i>Roman History</i> 59
<i>The Centurion</i> (1961)	Battle of Corinth Polybius, <i>The Histories</i> book 38
<i>Centurion</i> (2010)	Roman Britain Tacitus, <i>Agricola</i>
<i>Cleopatra</i> (1963, 1999)	Cleopatra, Caesar, Antony Plutarch, <i>Caesar</i> and <i>Antony</i>
<i>Coriolanus</i> (1963)	Coriolanus Plutarch, <i>Coriolanus</i> ; Livy 2.33–2.40
<i>Decline of an Empire</i> (2014)	St. Katherine of Alexandria Saints lives of Saint Katharine of Alexandria
<i>Druids</i> (2001)	Vercingetorix, Julius Caesar Julius Caesar, <i>Gallie Wars</i> book 7; Cassius Dio 40:33–41, 43:19; Plutarch, <i>Caesar</i> 25–27
<i>Duel of Champions</i> (1961)	Horatius Livy 1.24-26
<i>The Eagle</i> (2011)	Roman Britain Tacitus, <i>Agricola</i>
<i>Empire</i> (2005 Mini-Series)	Augustus Suetonius, <i>Augustus</i> ; Nicolas of Damascus, <i>Life of Augustus</i> ; Cassius Dio, 45–56
<i>The Fall of the Roman Empire</i> (1964)	Rome under Commodus Cassius Dio 73; Herodian 1.15; Historia Augusta, “Commodus”
<i>The First King: Birth of an Empire</i> (2019)	Romulus and Remus Livy 1.4-6; Dionysius 1.71-87; Plutarch, <i>Romulus</i> ; Ovid, <i>Fasti</i> ; Appian, <i>Roman History</i> book 1
<i>Gladiator</i> (2000)	Rome under M. Aurelius, Commodus Cassius Dio 73; Herodian 1.15; Historia Augusta, “Commodus”
<i>Hannibal</i> (1959) or <i>Hannibal</i> (2006)	Hannibal Barca, 2d Punic War Cornelius Nepos, <i>Hannibal</i> ; Livy 21-30; Plutarch, <i>Fabius</i>

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>Hero of Rome</i> (1964)	Scaevola, Lars Porsena, formation of Roman Republic Livy 2.1-21
<i>I, Claudius</i> (1976) [1-2 episodes]	Claudius Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 11–12; Suetonius, <i>Claudius</i>
<i>Julius Caesar</i> (1953, 1970, 2002)	Julius Caesar Plutarch, <i>Caesar</i> ; Suetonius, <i>Divine Julius</i>
<i>Messalina</i> (1960)	Messalina. Claudius Suetonius, <i>Claudius</i> 26-29, 37; Tacitus <i>Annals</i> 11-12; Cassius Dio 60-61
<i>Pompeii: The Last Day</i> (2003) or <i>Pompeii</i> (2014)	Eruption of Vesuvius, Roman Italy Pliny the Younger's letters to Tacitus, #65 and #66
<i>Quo Vadis?</i> (1951, 2001)	Persecution of Christians under Nero Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 13–16; Suetonius, <i>Nero</i> ; Cassius Dio 61–63
<i>Rome</i> (2005–2007) [use 1-2 episodes]	Collapse of the Roman Republic Various (see me)
<i>Fellini Satyricon</i> (1969)	Imperial Rome, homosexuality Petronius, <i>Satyricon</i>
<i>Scipio Africanus: The Defeat of Hannibal</i> (1937)	Scipio Africanus, 2d Punic War Polybius 10; Cornelius Nepos, <i>Hannibal</i> ; Livy 26-29; Valerius Maximus 3.7; Plutarch, <i>Marcellus</i> and <i>Fabius</i>
<i>Siege of Syracuse</i> (1960)	Archimedes, Siege of Syracuse Plutarch, <i>Marcellus</i> ; Livy 21-23
<i>The Sign of the Cross</i> (1932)	Persecution of Christians under Nero Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 13–16; Suetonius, <i>Nero</i> ; Cassius Dio 61–63
<i>Spartacus</i> (1960) or <i>Spartacus: Blood and Sand</i> (2010)	Spartacus, Roman gladiators/slavery Appian, <i>Roman History</i> 116–120; Plutarch, <i>Crassus</i> 8–11

Egypt

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>Cleopatra</i> (1963, 1999)	Cleopatra, Caesar, Antony Plutarch, <i>Caesar</i> and <i>Antony</i>
<i>Exodus: Gods and Kings</i> (2014)	Moses, Hebrew exodus Old Testament, <i>Exodus</i>
<i>The Prince of Egypt</i> (1998)	Moses Old Testament, <i>Exodus</i>
<i>A Queen for Caesar</i> (1962)	Cleopatra Plutarch, <i>Caesar</i> and <i>Antony</i>
<i>The Ten Commandments</i> (1956)	Moses, Hebrew exodus Old Testament, <i>Exodus</i>

Israel, Canaan, Biblical Stories

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>Abraham</i> (1993 miniseries, 1994 film)	Abraham Old Testament, <i>Genesis</i> books 11–25

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>David and Goliath</i> (1960), <i>David and Bathsheba</i> (1951)	David, kingdom of Israel Old Testament, <i>1 Samuel</i> , <i>2 Samuel</i>
<i>Esther and the King</i> (1960)	Esther Old Testament, <i>Esther</i>
<i>Exodus: Gods and Kings</i> (2014)	Moses, Hebrew exodus from Egypt Old Testament, <i>Exodus</i>
<i>Jacob</i> (1994)	Jacob and Esau Old Testament, <i>Genesis</i> 25–50
<i>Jason and the Argonauts</i> (1963)	Jason Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> ; Apollonius Rhodius, <i>Argonautica</i>
<i>Jesus of Nazareth</i> (1977)	Jesus New Testament: <i>Matthew</i> , <i>Mark</i> , <i>Luke</i> , <i>John</i>
<i>Joseph</i> (1995) or <i>Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat</i> (1999)	Joseph Old Testament, <i>Genesis</i> 37–50
<i>King David</i> (1985)	David, kingdom of Israel Old Testament, <i>1 Samuel</i> , <i>2 Samuel</i>
<i>Last Days of Sodom and Gomorrah</i> (1962)	Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham, Lot Old Testament, <i>Genesis</i> 14–19
<i>The Last Temptation of Christ</i> (1988)	Jesus New Testament: <i>Matthew</i> , <i>Mark</i> , <i>Luke</i> , <i>John</i>
<i>Masada</i> (1981 Mini-Series)	Siege of Masada Josephus, <i>The Jewish War</i> book 1
<i>The Nativity Story</i> (2006)	Birth of Jesus New Testament: <i>Matthew</i> , <i>Mark</i> , <i>Luke</i> , <i>John</i>
<i>Noah</i> (2014)	Noah, Great Flood Old Testament, <i>Genesis</i> 6–9
<i>One Night with the King</i> (2006)	Esther Old Testament, <i>Esther</i>
<i>The Passion of the Christ</i> (2004)	Jesus, the Crucifixion New Testament: <i>Matthew</i> , <i>Mark</i> , <i>Luke</i> , <i>John</i>
<i>The Prince of Egypt</i> (1998)	Moses Old Testament, <i>Exodus</i>
<i>The Red Tent</i> (2014 miniseries)	Dinah (daught. of Jacob) Old Testament, <i>Genesis</i> 30, 34
<i>Risen</i> (2016)	Aftermath of the Crucifixion, Roman Judea New Testament, <i>Acts of the Apostles</i>
<i>Samson and Delilah</i> (1949)	Samson and Delilah Old Testament, <i>Judges</i> 13–16
<i>Sins of Jezebel</i> (1951)	Israel under Ahab Old Testament, <i>1 Kings</i> 16–22
<i>Slave of Dreams</i> (1995)	Joseph Old Testament, <i>Genesis</i> 37–50

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>Solomon and Sheba</i> (1959)	Solomon and Sheba Old Testament, <i>Kings</i> or <i>Chronicles</i> ; Josephus, <i>Antiquities</i> book 8
<i>A Story of David</i> (1960)	David, kingdom of Israel Old Testament, <i>1 Samuel</i> , <i>2 Samuel</i>
<i>The Ten Commandments</i> (1956)	Moses, Hebrew exodus from Egypt Old Testament, <i>Exodus</i>

Mesopotamia, Persia, Asia

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
<i>Esther and the King</i> (1960)	Esther Old Testament, <i>Esther</i>
<i>Gautama Buddha</i> (2007)	Siddhārtha Gautama The <i>Buddhacarita</i> , <i>Lalitavistara Sūtra</i> , and other Buddhist biographies
<i>Intolerance</i> (1916) [Part 1 only]	Iron Age Babylon Herodotus 1.70–144; Josephus, <i>Antiquities</i> 10–11
<i>One Night with the King</i> (2006)	Esther Old Testament, <i>Esther</i>
<i>Queen of Babylon</i> (1954)	Semiramis, Babylon Diodorus Siculus, 2.4–20

2a. Position Paper Proposal

For the position paper, you will be writing a 6- to 8-page **position paper** in which you express an opinion about a topic related to gender in ancient history, and use evidence to back up that opinion. In this paper, you're taking a side on some question or controversy, and you're using reasoning and research to support your side of the argument.

We'll work through it in stages over the course of the semester. The first stages involve choosing a topic and writing a proposal.

A. Choose a Topic

First, choose one of the 13 meeting topics for the course and decide on a controversy or debate pertaining to that topic.

- You can choose a question or problem that the people at the time might have debated—e.g., "How are the expectations for goddesses different from those of mortal women?"; or a question that might arise among modern historians—e.g., "Is Athens really more repressive of women than Sparta?" In each case you need to outline both sides of the question in your paper and then provide evidence why you think one side was right.
- Choose a topic you're interested in and have fun with it. Make it wacky, make it provocative—anything is fine as long as you make an argument regarding your chosen topic and support it with facts.

B. Write a Proposal

The assignment: The proposal is just a brief one-page preview of your position paper. It should include:

- The topic you think you'll want to write about and the problem you're interested in addressing. You should be able to delineate the problem by describing the opposing views people might take. To make sure you have two clear opposing opinions, you might want to express them in the form "Some say... . Others say..."
- Your preliminary thesis statement—in other words, what you think you might be arguing in your paper.
 - Your thesis statement, both here and in the final paper, should be a statement of opinion that someone could disagree with. It can take the form of following up the description of the opposing opinions with your own: "I believe...."
 - Remember that your thesis is provisional. You can change anything about your approach and interpretation after the proposal; in fact, uncovering information as you do your research makes refining or changing your initial assessments very likely.

Your proposal is structured like the introduction (see below), and may serve as the basis for it.

The proposal is not graded, but whether you submitted a proposal on time will be factored into the final grade for the position paper. I will give you feedback on things like the feasibility of researching your topic, whether the scope is too big or too narrow for a paper like this, and some possible sources you might want to look at.

Sample Introduction

PROBLEM >

Hannibal Barca, the great Carthaginian general, brought 37 war elephants with him over the Alps into Italy, and at the climactic Battle of Zama they had a front line that included 80 elephants. Did Hannibal's elephants really make a difference? *Some say*

OPPOSING >
SIDES >

that Hannibal's elephants were crucial in establishing the morale of his troops against the legendary Roman legions and in intimidating other armies along the way into alliances; but others say that Hannibal's elephants did the Carthaginian side more harm than good in their fight with Rome. I believe that Hannibal's use of elephants was a mistake, not because war elephants were a dumb idea in general, but because Roman adaptability meant that the Romans would inevitably find a way

THESIS >

around them.

C. Find your Evidence

D. Make your Argument

For the final stages, see the video and details on [the Position Paper page](#).

C. Find your Evidence

Research your topic and find at least three sources that will provide you with evidence for your argument; these need to be **primary and secondary sources** only. I'll point you toward some possibilities in my feedback on your proposal.

- Ideally you should have a mix of primary and secondary sources, but it will depend on the topic.
- **Tertiary sources are not allowed.** These include textbooks, encyclopedias, and most websites.
- For guidance on finding full-text online primary and secondary sources in the Covid-19 era, read the **Research Options** handout.

D. Make your Argument

- In your introduction, briefly describe the problem and state the position you will argue as a thesis statement. Your introduction should follow the format of the proposal (see **the proposal page**).
- In the body of your paper, make three assertions as to why your thesis statement is valid. For each assertion, describe and discuss the evidence from the primary and secondary sources.
 - For example, if you were writing the Hannibal/elephants paper above, you could start one section with an assertion that elephants were not a bad idea inherently, then discuss evidence showing the effective use of elephants in war.
 - Then begin the next section with an assertion that Romans were adaptable in war, and discuss evidence showing how Romans changed their military tactics and strategies to meet new kinds of war and new enemies.
 - Your third section could begin with an assertion that it was Roman adaptability that trumped the effectiveness of Hannibal's evidence, and discuss the evidence that showed how the Romans overcame the use of elephants in the fight with Hannibal.
 - Each section starts with an assertion followed by evidence, and each section builds on the previous sections to make an overall argument.
- End with a conclusion that shows how your three assertions came together to support your thesis.

Optional Draft. You may submit an optional draft two weeks before the final due date. It should include most of your paper (at least two thirds of the final content, with sections to be written described in square brackets). I'll give feedback, but not a grade, to help you refine your final paper. To make sure I see it soonest, please email me your optional draft rather than uploading it to BlackBoard.

3. Presentation on a Primary Source

You'll make presentations to the class on two of the scholarly articles assigned as class readings, one in the first half of the course and one in the second half. You'll then turn in 2–3 page essay write-up that:

- Briefly summarizes what the document says and, more importantly, analyzes what the author is trying to say about the subject at hand. In other words, you need to identify and discuss what you believe is the author's interpretation, bias, and point of view and how it affected the author's treatment of the topic. Give examples from the document that illustrate your assessment of the author's spin.
- Provides perspective by relating the material in the document, and the author's bias on it, to the bigger picture—the material being discussed in class.

The main point of the presentation and the write-up is NOT to summarize the reading. Summary should be less than 25% of your presentation and your write-up. The main point is to analyze the reading and talk about what it means and what it tells us about that place and time in ancient history.

Your write-up needs to be posted on the weekly discussion page the night before the class meeting for which we are reading that selection, so your fellow students can react to it during our discussions. At the same time, also upload your essay to BlackBoard for grading.