

Writing Assessment and Evaluation Rubrics

Name Class Date

Above-average Writing Model

Writing Process in Action: The Writing Process (Unit 2, pages 98–101)

Assignment: For an art review magazine, write a one-page essay to define artistic greatness, using a particular artist's life and work as an extended example.

Frida Kahlo's Personal Vision

What makes a truly great artist? It's not how popular the artist is or how much the person's work brings at an auction or gallery after he or she is dead. To me, a great artist is defined by an undeterred dedication to his or her unique personal vision, no matter how difficult or unpopular that vision may be.

The Mexican painter Frida Kahlo is an example of this kind of artistic individualism. She and her husband, the celebrated muralist Diego Rivera, were both socialists, and their work reflected their political beliefs. But while Rivera's work was often overtly political in its subject matter, Kahlo's paintings didn't preach. Instead, she used her work to explore her Mexican identity.

Kahlo's work went unappreciated in the 1930s—her career was dwarfed by Rivera's much greater reputation. Because she was a woman painting portraits, rather than a man tackling politics, her work was considered insignificant. Still, Kahlo was determined to pursue her art. She started painting after a horrible bus accident in 1925, in which a metal railing pierced her pelvis. The accident left her in chronic pain for the rest of her life, but while she was recuperating she taught herself to paint.

Her vision was highly idiosyncratic. She's best known for her colorful, fantastic self-portraits. Because her accident left her unable to have children, she often surrounded herself with pets; in one of her most well-known paintings, *Self-portrait with Monkeys*, she shows herself surrounded by monkeys, which clamber over her like babies. In another painting, *The Broken Column*, her body is in a metal brace and split open to show her spine. Her art was often primitive and literal. For example, to show sadness she painted tears running down her face. Some critics think her style is simplistic, but I think her work is powerful and direct.

Her emphasis on self-portraiture, her commitment to Mexican culture, and her willingness to reveal her painful life in her paintings all contributed to the dismissal of her talent when she was alive. Now, forty-five years after her death, Frida Kahlo's art finally has been "discovered." Her paintings have sold for as much as \$3.2 million, and celebrities such as Madonna collect Kahlo's work. However, it's not the sudden interest in her work or its monetary value that confirms her greatness. Frida Kahlo long ago proved her incredible talent by purposefully fulfilling her own artistic vision despite all the obstacles life threw in her path.

Summary: *This essay successfully fulfills both parts of the assignment.*

This piece might receive a 4 if evaluated by the holistic scoring method. It might receive a 100 if evaluated by the analytic scoring method—35 points for Focus/Organization, 35 points for Elaboration/Support/Style, and 30 points for Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics.

Opening presents thesis and uses questions and examples to engage reader's interest in subject.

Introduces a specific artist as an extended example

Uses a precise, sophisticated vocabulary to maintain a knowledgeable tone

Relevant details and facts support the writer's opinions and add interest to the writing.

Conclusion summarizes ideas and restates the thesis.