

Rococo

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Three French Rococo Artists

[Antoine Watteau](#); [François Boucher](#); [Jean-Honoré Fragonard](#)

This assignment is designed as part reading response and part argumentative essay although it can be modified to suit the needs of a particular class or instructor. It can also be modified to be an in-class discussion or debate instead of a written assignment. By using a well-researched and accepted source such as the Met's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, this assignment could also be used to explain the importance of a source's credibility.

Learning Goals

After completing this assignment, students will be able to:

- Understand the historical place of important French Rococo artists, and explain the Rococo as a movement and style through the works of key artists;
- Critically examine and argue for the role of a certain artist within the greater narrative of art history;
- Use visual evidence to present an argument, referencing key works from an artist's oeuvre or a movement or style;
- Critically evaluate their own position and how their convictions may have changed following the course of the assignment;
- Develop convincing and persuasive written arguments.

Assignment

- Each student chooses one of the above artists on whom to focus, using the provided Heilbrunn Timeline articles as a starting point.
- Using references to formal elements from the artist's oeuvre and historical understandings of the Rococo, the student then composes a short argumentative paper arguing that their chosen artist was the "foremost artist of the Rococo" (approximately 1 page).
- The assignments are then shared between the class and instructor via an online tool (BlackBoard, Dropbox, Google Drive, class blog etc.)
- Finally, having read their colleagues' arguments, each student then composes a short paper evaluating the shift in their thinking. (Approximately 1 page, submitted to the instructor). In

this assignment, the student identifies exactly what was persuasive, and if their colleague's contributions strengthened their original position, or opened them to other perspectives.

Alterations

- This assignment could also be altered to refer to specific works within the Metropolitan Museum's collection, mentioned in the original articles, instead of more general works from the artist's oeuvre. (Furthermore, it could be altered to take the form of short presentations, either in-class or at the museum).
- This assignment could also be altered to take the form of a take-home midterm assessment.