

# The Museum Assignment

Approx 2000 words. Due 21 Feb 2007 Worth 25% of your final mark.

## KEY DATES

Plan to visit the Museum between these dates:	17 Jan – 16 Feb
Lecture and tutorial are cancelled to allow you some time	6 and 7 Feb
Museum assignment is due in tutorial	21 Feb

For this assignment, you are required to visit the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto to view exhibits there, and to report on your findings.

There are no special travel arrangements: you must make your own way to the ROM. You are encouraged to go with a classmate if possible to share impressions (but try not to distract each other), though of course your assignment must be your own work. Do not choose all the same examples as a classmate!

- Location:** Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto  
The Museum is located at the "Museum" stop on the Yonge-University-Spadina subway line. It can also be reached by taking Avenue Bus #5 south from the Eglinton Subway Station.  
For parking info, [www.rom.on.ca/visit/index.php](http://www.rom.on.ca/visit/index.php)
- ROM Visitor Info:** [www.rom.on.ca/visit/index.php](http://www.rom.on.ca/visit/index.php)  
Recorded Telephone Info, 24 hours, and Visitor Services: 416.586.8000
- To take with you:** Your student card, this assignment sheet, lots of blank paper and pens, and pencil and eraser for sketching. Optional: A tape recorder or camera (don't use flash) could be useful for noting your impressions, but are certainly not essential. A small ruler may help you estimate artifact sizes and/or do your sketches.
- Accessibility:** If you are concerned about the physical accessibility of the museum or feel you may require assistance, please confer with Dr. Denning ASAP, and contact the ROM's Visitor Services at [accessibility@rom.on.ca](mailto:accessibility@rom.on.ca) or 416.586.5734, 9-5, Mon-Fri. Accessibility is an issue at present because of renovations.

## Museum Hours, Admission Costs, and Regulations

Please read this information carefully. ROM admission prices vary considerably according to when you go to the museum.

**Opening Hours:** The Museum is open every day of the week.

**Discounted admission:** Fridays 4:30-9:30, admission is \$5.00

**Free admission:** One hour before closing every day, and Fridays from 8:30 to 9:30.

### Student Admission

Day of the Week	Museum Opening Hours	Admission Time . . . . .	... and Regular Individual Student Admission Rate WITH STUDENT CARD
Sat - Thurs	10:00 - 6:00	10:00 - 5:00	\$12.00
Sat - Thurs		<b>5:00 - 6:00</b>	<b>FREE</b>
Friday	10:00 - 9:30	10:00 - 4:30	\$12.00
<b>Friday</b>		<b>4:30 - 9:30</b>	<b>\$5.00</b>
<b>Friday</b>		<b>8:30 - 9:30</b>	<b>FREE</b>

**Day of the Week, and Time of Day:** Different times of day have different advantages and disadvantages. Friday nights are less expensive, but can be busy. Daytimes are more expensive, and less busy overall, but you may find yourself surrounded by 8-year-olds on a school trip.

### ROM policies

“ The Museum requires visitors to check all backpacks, large bags, and packages. To avoid a lengthy wait in the coat check line, visitors should not bring such items. The coat check will not accept laptop computers or luggage of any size. All bags are subject to search and inspection.

Camera flashes, lighting attachments and tripods are prohibited. Cameras and video recorders may be used in the galleries for non-commercial photography except where indicated.

Visitors are welcome to sketch in the galleries using pen and pencils only.

Cellular telephone use is not permitted in the galleries.

Since even clean hands leave marks and cause wear and tear, please do not touch sculptures and other objects on display. Help preserve the collections for future generations to enjoy. “

### ESSENTIAL:

- \* Preview Chapter 10 from your textbook, to warm up in thinking about Civilizations of the Old World.
- \* Preview the galleries information here: [www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/wculture/index.php](http://www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/wculture/index.php)
- \* Consult the course website, at [www.yorku.ca/kdenning/2140museum](http://www.yorku.ca/kdenning/2140museum) for
  - a) tips on viewing the museum
  - b) Frequently Asked Questions (please check these before emailing us with questions)
  - c) useful links

## General Comments on the Museum Assignment Experience

**What the museum has to offer:** Bear in mind that the Museum is undergoing renovation. Not all galleries are open, and this assignment draws only from a few. Many others will be worth returning to see! It's not required, but you might want to take a general Museum Tour while there. (Ask at desk.) For your information: ROM Life has excellent short courses, and volunteer opportunities for students. Check their website: [www.rom.on.ca](http://www.rom.on.ca)

**Time:** If you're very focused, thoroughly prepared, decisive, take notes quickly, and aren't interrupted, you can probably do the 'fieldwork' portion of this assignment in as little as three hours. If you don't like to rush, aren't completely on top of the readings, bring a friend, like to look around at other galleries, or find yourself very distracted by other people in the galleries, then it will take you longer. Students working on museum assignments often find that they are frustrated by having to stay focused on the assignment when there is other good stuff to see. If you think this might be the case for you, then plan to go twice, or allow yourself extra time.

**Company:** If you need a meeting place, the easiest may be the Druxy's, on the basement level. (It is just inside the entrance.) Students who go with a classmate, friend, or family member often find that it's helpful to have someone else with whom to share impressions and information; however, some find it distracting enough that they have to come back alone a second time to finish their work. If you are planning to go with someone, it may be wise to arrange to split up for a while at the museum, to enable you to focus. N.b. Students who have taken their children with them for a museum assignment generally find that it's impossible to watch the kids and do their work at the same time.

**Your comfort:** The first rule of archaeological fieldwork is to dress comfortably! You'll be standing around for hours and taking notes, or perhaps sitting on the floor at times... comfortable shoes are advisable, as are layered clothes (it can be chilly). You're not allowed to bring in a big backpack, so consider leaving nonessentials at home, or check your bag at the coat check. You can borrow a small folding stool from the Educational entrance on the basement level.

**Patience:** Archaeological fieldwork of every kind requires patience, and so will this assignment. You'll need to think about which objects to use, record a lot of information, take time making sketches, and work around other people who are also viewing the displays.

**IMPORTANT: Take Good Notes:** Make sure your notes are detailed enough and clear enough for you to use when you write your assignment, after you leave the museum.

## Requirements

**Grading criteria:** In this assignment, you are being asked to think about objects from cultures that you have not studied in this course — *i.e.* Asian cultures. We do not expect you to demonstrate expertise in this area. We DO expect you to try to “think archaeologically” about artifacts and their meanings, and how we can study them.

Your assignment will be marked according to the thoughtfulness, clarity, accuracy, and detail of your answers. You are not required to do extra research (though you are welcome to), but you should refer to the course readings and lecture notes. Your ‘artistic ability’ is not important for the sketches; what is important is a reasonable attempt to draw the object clearly so that the main features are visible and identifiable (*i.e.*, so we can recognize it). Please note: marks are given for **content** rather than for attractiveness; thus, it is not worth your time to create a lovely portfolio of sketches or digital photos. You must provide sketches where these are asked for; you may not substitute a photo.

**Late Penalties:** Assignments will be penalized 5% per day or part thereof late.

**Special Note:** Identical or excessively similar assignments will be noted and penalties will be applied. Avoid using all the same examples as your classmates.

**Format:** Follow the formatting instructions in the handout called “Standard Guidelines for All Your Written Work in Anthropology 2140”, which you received as part of your Writing Assignment #1 package. [www.yorku.ca/kdenning/2140.htm](http://www.yorku.ca/kdenning/2140.htm), see General Guidelines.

**Correct Citation and A Bibliography Must Be Included:** As always, be careful to attribute words correctly to their source. Use quotation marks when using someone else’s words, and note the source. But note! Simply repeating what the display says is not a good answer. You should write down exact quotes while taking your notes, but when you write your assignment, we’re expecting you to summarize and paraphrase, quoting only where really necessary, and always citing your source. If you use outside sources — **to cite a book or article**, use the anthropology referencing format you have learned in this course. **To cite a website**, include the website name, the author where known, the full page URL, and the date that you accessed it.

**For each artifact:** Clearly indicate where it is, by including as much information as possible. E.g. you might say “Egypt Gallery, Predynastic Period, Case with vases, third vase in the top row”. When you include a sketch, label it with as much information about the artifact and its location as you can.

**To cite a ROM display,** choose an abbreviated name OR a number for a display case. Use that short form for your in-text citations, and then include the full details in your bibliography. In the bibliography, include as much information as you can provide: caption, display case, exhibit, gallery, floor. If there isn’t a clear label for an exhibit, then invent a short description. So: describe the display’s location, what’s in it, and what specifically you are citing.

So, for example:

**Your sentence:** According to the Tomb of Kitines display, “The actual tomb is located at Ezbet Bashendi in the Dakhla Oasis” (1).

**Your bibliography:** (1) Egypt Gallery, Tomb of Kitines reproduction display, Information panel titled “The Tomb of Kitines (Full Scale Replica in Cast Cement.)”

**Partial  
Map of  
Ground  
Floor  
- Asian  
Galleries**

<http://www.rom.on.ca/visit/floorplan.php>

## **The Questions**

This assignment is based on the galleries on the main floor of the ROM — specifically, the Asian galleries, which are all connected together: The Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Gallery of China, the Matthews Family Court of Chinese Sculpture, the Bishop White Gallery of Chinese Temple Art, the ROM Gallery of Chinese Architecture, the Prince Takamodo Gallery of Japan, Gallery of Korea, Herman Herzog Levy Gallery. Do not use the other galleries for this assignment.

It would be wise to walk through these galleries first, to acquaint yourself with their contents, before you start answering the questions.

These questions are meant to encourage you to think about cultural change over time, and archaeological ways of understanding past peoples and the things they made.

This assignment has three parts. Do any two of the following three parts. Do not do all three!

Each question is worth half of the assignment. The assignment will be marked out of 50, but is worth 25% of your final grade.

**Part A: Everyday Things of the Past: Food**

**Part B: Representing Humans and Gods**

**Part C: Remembering the Dead: Funerary Archaeology**

## Part A: Everyday Things of the Past: Food

1000 words, 25 marks

**Your task:** Analyze four different objects relating to food.

**Where:** You may use objects from any of the Asian galleries.

**Which:** You may use any artifacts of your choice, with these restrictions:

- do not use the same objects that you use to answer other questions
- use any four objects that are related to food storage, processing, or consumption. The objects should be from different time periods (at least 500 years apart).

1) Sketch the objects and provide a brief description of them for us (make sure to cite their location.) Approx 200 words, 5 marks

2) Briefly describe each object's purpose. Is this something that we also use today? (If not, why not?) If you had simply encountered this object in the field as an archaeologist, i.e. without a helpful museum display describing it — would its purpose immediately be obvious to you? (Why or why not?) Approx 200 words, 5 marks

3) As an archaeologist, how might you study these objects? What methods of analysis could we use to learn as much as possible about how and when they were made, and what they were used for? Overall, what can we know, and what can't we know, about the objects' uses? Approx 200 words, 5 marks.

4) Consider the objects carefully; what do they tell you about past practices concerning food? What do they say about their owners? How are they like, and unlike, each other? What can you infer about the societies they come from? approx 400 words, 10 marks.

## Part B: Representing Humans and Gods

1000 words, 25 marks

In this exercise, you will be starting to explore the world of artifacts and what they mean. Objects are sometimes simply practical. However, an object may have a symbolic meaning to the person that used it. And an artifact might give the archaeologist a hint about the social behaviour of its owner. There is much to learn from objects!

**Your task:** Analyze three different artifacts which represent a human or a god.

**Where:** You may use objects from any of the Asian galleries.

**Which:** You may use any artifacts of your choice, with these restrictions:

- do not use the same objects that you use to answer other questions
- The objects should be different from each other in some way

1) Provide a sketch of each object, describe it carefully, and note the key details (date, location). (200 words, 5 marks)

2) Examine the objects carefully. For each, consider these questions: What is it representing? Is the depiction realistic or does it represent something other than ordinary reality? Is it practical or decorative? Why is the representation of the human or god there? What do you think it means? (Is it just decoration or does it have other significance?) What do the style and material tell us about the makers? If you were an archaeologist studying this object without the descriptions from the museum display, and weren't sure what it meant, how would you try to find out? How do the objects compare to one another? (What do they have in common? How are they different?) (800 words, 20 marks)

## Part C: Remembering the Dead: Funerary Archaeology

1000 words, 25 marks

In this exercise, you will explore the world of burial archaeology.

**Your task:** Analyze three different Asian funerary monuments.

**Where:** Asian galleries, main floor of ROM

**How to choose:** You can choose large sculptures, copies of burial structures, or collections of objects from tombs. Do not use the same objects you chose for other questions.

**First:** Familiarize yourself thoroughly with the displays you choose.

Then:

- 1) Provide a sketch of each monument (or the part displayed), and note the key details (date, location). (200 words, 5 marks)
- 2) Discuss these monuments by exploring some or all of the following questions: What does each reflect about the people's belief systems concerning death? Can you see any interesting patterns about the relationships between people, or between people and gods, or between people and animals? How are these monuments political statements as well as religious statements? What do they say about the individual people they memorialize? What do their form and construction tell us about these societies and their changes over time? (800 words, 20 marks)