

Appendix 1

SEMESTER-LONG PROJECT OPTION

This course will be your students' first in-depth introduction to Scripture during their high school years. The skills they learn for correctly interpreting the Bible will form a foundation they can build on in later courses and throughout their lives.

Through this semester-long project, the students will develop the ability to apply a formal process of exegesis to interpret several Scripture passages. They will also reflect on how this exegetical work has been intellectually challenging, emotionally engaging, and spiritually nourishing.

In order to complete this project successfully, the students must choose an exegetical paper for their final performance task for units 2–4 and create a final synthesis report. Thus, their completed portfolio will consist of the following:

- an exegetical paper for each of the three units
 - can be digital or print, as you direct
 - must include the grade and your comments
- a reflective synthesis (digital or print), as explained on the handout “Semester-Long Project Description” (TX005982), on pages 342–343.

If the completed portfolio is to be print, the students will assemble all required elements into a folder or binder, along with a table of contents.

If the completed portfolio is to be digital, you may simply direct the students to create a cloud-based folder (using Google Drive, for example) that contains all the required elements to which they grant you access. If you already use an online platform, such as bulb, for creating and curating digital portfolios, students may submit their work using the platform's established procedure.

Offering your students the digital portfolio option greatly expands the possible formats they can use for their reflective synthesis. Although it could simply be a digital copy of a written reflection, it could also be a PowerPoint presentation, podcast, video, or creative multimedia artifact. Emphasize that you will use the same rubric, “Semester-Long Project Rubric” (TX005983), on page 344, to assess the students' work, regardless of the format they select.

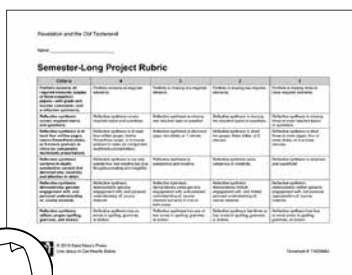
This portfolio may serve as the final culminating project of this course in place of a traditional final exam, or, if you prefer, it may constitute a portion of the student's final exam grade.

Semester-Long Project Learning Experience

If you choose to have the students engage in this semester-long project, consider adding this two-option learning experience near the end of unit 5 so that the students can benefit from peer feedback and reflection. When the students engage in meaningful, productive conversations about their



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work with their peers, they can experience affirmation, attain greater clarity about their ideas, and receive constructive criticism. Plan to conduct this learning experience on, or shortly following, the due date for the portfolios.

Option 1 *(best for a small class, a block schedule, or a two-day learning experience)*

Conduct a seminar-style class in which each student takes about 5 minutes to present a portion of their reflective synthesis to the class. Students who wrote a paper may summarize their writing, perhaps giving special emphasis to three or four key points. Students who prepared a podcast, video, or other electronic or multimedia piece may show or play a selection of their work. In either case, allow time for a question-and-answer session following each presentation.

To conclude this learning experience, pose the following questions as a means of inviting the students to offer a succinct summary of how this semester's learning may shape their future academic work, personal choices, and spiritual life.

- As a result of your learning in this course this semester . . .
 - What is one thing you would like to KEEP doing?
 - What is one thing you would like to STOP doing?
 - What is one thing you would like to START doing?

For example, students may express a desire to:

- KEEP
 - studying Scripture
 - honing their research and writing skills
- STOP
 - looking at only the literal meaning of Scripture
 - zoning out during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass
- START
 - praying regularly with Scripture
 - volunteering to teach Scripture to young children at a parish religious education program

Option 2

Arrange the students into small groups of four or five. Each group appoints a timekeeper. The timekeeper ensures that each member of the group takes about 8 minutes to do the following:

- share some portion of their reflective synthesis with the group
- respond to the KEEP-STOP-START questions (see above) as a means of reflecting on how this semester's learning may shape their future academic work, personal choices, or spiritual life

Time permitting, invite at least one volunteer from each group to share their KEEP-STOP-START responses and general reflections regarding the portfolios and their learning this semester.

Name _____

Semester-Long Project Description

To complete this project successfully, you must create a portfolio of exegetical papers. Your completed portfolio will consist of the following:

- **Three exegetical papers written as your final performance tasks for units 2–4.** The details for writing these papers are included on each unit's "Final Performance Task Options" handout. The copies in your portfolio will include your grade and your teacher's comments.
- **A reflective synthesis created as your final performance task for unit 5.** The details for creating this final synthesis are outlined on this handout.

Follow your teacher's directions regarding the creation of a print portfolio or a digital portfolio:

- For a print portfolio, assemble all required elements into a folder or binder, along with a table of contents.
- For a digital portfolio, follow your teacher's directions regarding uploading your materials to a cloud-based drive.

The Reflective Synthesis

The reflective synthesis invites you to consider all that you have learned throughout the semester, especially what you have learned from the process of writing your exegetical papers. Rather than simply summarizing your knowledge, a synthesis invites you to step back, consider the big picture, and notice associations, connections, relationships, and common themes in what you have been learning. As you create your synthesis, think about connections between elements of this project, the course content you have been studying all semester, and your personal experience.

Your reflective synthesis may be a four-page paper or a digital option that your teacher offers, such as a twelve-slide (minimum) PowerPoint presentation, a 5-minute (minimum) podcast or video, or a creative multimedia presentation. Whatever format you select, be sure to respond to the following questions in some way. (You don't have to include the numbered the questions and your responses in a list, and it isn't necessary to respond in this exact order. Simply ensure that you cover each of these topics thoughtfully and thoroughly.)

- Examine your three papers carefully, noting the order in which you wrote them. How did your skills in biblical research and writing grow over the course of the semester? For example, what is some aspect of biblical exegesis that you understood much more clearly by the time you wrote the third paper?
- Which of the seven steps of exegesis did you find to be the most interesting or intriguing? Why?
- Which of the seven steps of exegesis did you find to be most difficult or challenging? Why?
- How might you use these exegetical skills in other courses, in other reading, or in other aspects of your life?
- How has your understanding of Sacred Scripture grown, changed, or deepened through the process of writing these papers?



Semester-Long Project Description

- How has your study of Sacred Scripture this semester—and especially your careful exegesis of Scripture passages—helped you to grow in faith? For example, what have you learned about the essential role that Sacred Scripture must play in the life of a disciple? What new insight have you gained into how God reveals himself to us through Scripture?
- How do the Scripture passages on which you wrote your papers call you to action? For example, does one or more of the passages invite you to make some concrete change in your life? Does one or more of the passages motivate you to take action to make our world more just? If so, in what way?
- Listed below are the focus questions for each unit of this course. Choose any one of these questions and explain how one or more of the Scripture passages you wrote about in your papers provides particular insight regarding this question.
 - Unit 1: How does the Bible help me know God?
 - Unit 2: How do I keep my focus on God?
 - Unit 3: Why do the kings and prophets matter?
 - Unit 4: How do challenging times deepen our faith?
 - Unit 5: How is Jesus' mission kept alive?
- What further questions do you have about Scripture? What have your studies this semester made you curious about? How will you satisfy that curiosity?



Revelation and the Old Testament

Name _____

Semester-Long Project Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Portfolio contains all required elements (copies of three exegetical papers—with grade and teacher comments—and a reflective synthesis).	Portfolio contains all required elements.	Portfolio is missing one required element.	Portfolio is missing two required elements.	Portfolio is missing three or more required elements.
Reflective synthesis covers required topics and questions.	Reflective synthesis covers required topics and questions.	Reflective synthesis is missing one required topic or question.	Reflective synthesis is missing two required topics or questions.	Reflective synthesis is missing three or more required topics or questions.
Reflective synthesis is at least four written pages, twelve PowerPoint presentation slides, or 5-minute podcast or video (or comparable multimedia presentation).	Reflective synthesis is at least four written pages, twelve PowerPoint presentation slides, or 5-minute podcast or video (or comparable multimedia presentation).	Reflective synthesis is short one page, two slides, or 1 minute.	Reflective synthesis is short two pages, three slides, or 2 minutes.	Reflective synthesis is short three or more pages, four or more slides, or 3 or more minutes.
Reflective synthesis contains in-depth, substantive content that demonstrates creativity and attention to detail.	Reflective synthesis is not only substantive and creative but also thought-provoking and insightful.	Reflective synthesis is substantive and creative.	Reflective synthesis lacks substance or creativity.	Reflective synthesis is simplistic and superficial.
Reflective synthesis demonstrates genuine engagement with, and personal understanding of, course material.	Reflective synthesis demonstrates genuine engagement with, and personal understanding of, course material.	Reflective synthesis demonstrates some genuine engagement with, and personal understanding of, course material but lacks in one or both areas.	Reflective synthesis demonstrates limited engagement with, and limited personal understanding of, course material.	Reflective synthesis demonstrates neither genuine engagement with, nor personal appropriation of, course material.
Reflective synthesis utilizes proper spelling, grammar, and diction.	Reflective synthesis has no errors in spelling, grammar, or diction.	Reflective synthesis has one or two errors in spelling, grammar, or diction.	Reflective synthesis has three or four errors in spelling, grammar, or diction.	Reflective synthesis has five or more errors in spelling, grammar, or diction.



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Appendix 2

LEADING ART STUDIES

Many of the chapters in the student book end with a full-page image of a work of religious art. These images are to be used as learning opportunities to engage the students in reflecting on the chapter, leading to deeper understanding of the content. But knowing how to “read” a work of art requires skill and practice! Here are two methods that will help your students engage with religious art.

Preparation for Both Methods

To begin, identify a piece of art connected to your religious topic or theme. In many chapters, we have already identified one art piece. The chapters in the student ebook contain an extra visual feature, some of which could be used for additional art studies. You might also search the internet for a painting that your students are most likely familiar with, preferably one that depicts a biblical scene that has already been studied in class (e.g., *The Creation of Adam*, by Michelangelo [Genesis 2:4–7]).

Next, identify some basic facts about the work of art to share with the students. Or, you could have the students research this information. Often background on the art can be found on the website where you found the image or through an internet search. If it is a modern piece of art, you can sometimes contact the artist directly—they are often very happy to tell you about their art piece.

Some basic facts to begin with could include:

- the title of the piece
- where the piece is located (for example, a museum or church)
- who the artist is
- when (approximately) it was created
- what medium was used to create the piece (i.e., oil, pen and ink, fresco, marble)

Method 1: Basic Art Study

If you are going to use an art study for only a part of a class, you might follow this process.

1. **Ask** the students to examine the art for a few minutes in silence to make initial observations.
2. **Draw** their attention to the specific details of the artwork using questions such as these:
 - Compare the biblical story to the art. Is it accurate? What is missing? What has been added?
 - What are the facial expressions, and what do they reveal about the emotions of the people in the art piece?

- Notice postures, gestures, and stances reflected in body positioning. What do they tell us about the attitudes of the people depicted?
 - How would you describe the mood of the image? Notice color, shapes, forms, textures, and lines.
 - How does the image use light and shadow? In other words, what dramatic emphasis is created by the artist's use of light and shadow?
 - How does the image depict the passage of time? For example, is it like a snapshot of a single moment, or is it like a storyboard, depicting many moments at once?
 - Notice the objects depicted in the painting, both the ones that seem central and the ones that seem peripheral or hidden.
 - What do you think the artist wants us to focus on?
3. **Discuss** the symbolism in the art using one of the following means:
- Share with the students a list of symbols and their meanings that you have compiled in advance.
 - Ask the students to research the symbolic meanings of people, objects, colors, and gestures that have significance in the Christian context. You may need to guide the students through their research by offering examples of Christian symbols commonly found in art. For example, a palm branch of victory carried in someone's hand or arm often indicates that the person is a martyr.

Method 2: Advanced Art Study

If you really want to go deep in engaging the students in an art study, you might take most of a class period and possibly make it a written assignment using any combination of steps from this process:

1. **Ask** the students to examine the art for a few minutes in silence to make initial observations.
2. **Draw** their attention to the specific details of the artwork using these questions:
 - Who is represented? Who is left out?
 - What topic did the artist consider important enough to make a painting of it?
 - When was the artwork made?
 - Does it represent the artist's era or another time? Or is it a combination of the two?
 - Does it depict real time or sacred time (the time of eternity or Heaven or prayer)? Or is it a combination of the two?
 - Where is the action taking place? Is it inside or outside? Is it in some faraway place or where the painting was made?
 - Why was it painted? Why did the artist choose this topic?

3. **Share** the following remarks to help guide the students in uncovering the culture and the religious beliefs and practices of the people at the time the art was created:
 - The community in which an artist lives and worships influences that artist. The artist is also affected by family, upbringing, and social, political, and economic factors.
 - If an artist created a painting at the request of a patron, that piece of art will likely reflect something about the patron.
 - When an artist makes a painting, they include some details intentionally just because they are the way things are done at that time in that place.
4. **Continue** by asking the students to research pertinent questions on the religious, political, economic, and social beliefs and practices that might have influenced the artist.
 - Religious Questions
 - What was this community's understanding of God?
 - What was this community afraid of?
 - Did this community experience a lot of suffering? How did they understand suffering?
 - Did this community experience a lot of evil? How did they understand evil?
 - What gave this community joy?
 - How did this community express love?
 - How did this community understand salvation?
 - What was the relationship between this community and creation?
 - Political Questions
 - Who was in power at the time, and who was not?
 - How was political power exercised (money and influence, arms and fighting, and so on)?
 - How did the people without power feel about those who had it?
 - How did the people with power feel about those without? (Did they even think about them?)
 - How much freedom to speak their minds did average people have?
 - Who had basic political rights, and who did not?
 - Did the Church have political power? If so, in whose favor did it exercise that power?

- Economic Questions
 - How were artists paid? Who paid them?
 - Who had money, and who did not?
 - What economic opportunities were available to which people?
 - What was the economic and political agenda of the person or institution that paid the artist?
 - What economic structure does the painting try to communicate?
 - Did the Church have economic power? If so, in whose favor did it exercise that power?
- Social Questions
 - How were ethnic minorities viewed and treated?
 - How were people of other religions viewed and treated?
 - How were children viewed and treated?
 - How were women viewed and treated?
 - How much did the Church influence social relationships within the family, village, city, and so on?
 - Were people formal and polite or casual and coarse?
 - Did groups exhibit different social norms? How was the society split?

TEACHER NOTE

You may want to go through the steps of each method yourself, to familiarize yourself with the two processes before choosing one and leading it with your students.

Resources

- Christian symbols and their meanings:
www.fisheaters.com/symbols.html
- Finding Christian art: *www.smp.org/resourcecenter/resource/2866/*
- *Beyond the Written Word: Exploring Faith through Christian Art*, by Eileen M. Daily, (Saint Mary's Press, 2005)