What can art tell us about the time and place of its creation, and how does that context help us understand an artwork? Provide examples.
“How does art reflect, as well as shape the world?”
Keith Haring

American Street Artist, 1980s, New York City
The 1980s

- Rise of MTV & Rock Music
- Beginning of the AIDS pandemic
- National Safety Campaigns & Anti-Smoking Movements
- “Political Correctness” became the social norm in order to oppose prejudice against minority groups.
  - Role of women in the workplace increased greatly.
  - Gay Rights became more widely accepted
MTV & Pop Music

“Cable was born and MTV had an enormous impact on music and young people. The digital compact disc (cd) revolutionized the music industry. Dances learned on MTV included slam dancing, lambada, and break dancing.” - kclibrary.lonestar.edu

“Haring was an avid video maker. “He recorded his own very performative creations of these abstract patterns sometimes on the floor of his studio or the wall of the studio,” said Ms. Platow. “He considered the video the work of art, not the drawing itself.” - galleristny.com
The Aids Epidemic

“The history of HIV and AIDS in the USA began in 1981, when the United States of America became the first country to officially recognize a strange new illness among a small number of gay men.” -http://www.avert.org/

“(Keith Haring) tried to create social awareness for AIDS at a time when information about the disease was profiled in an extremely negative way.”
The United States crack epidemic refers to the surge of crack cocaine use in major cities in the United States between 1984 and 1993. According to New York Senator Charles Schumer in a statement made in August 2004, "Twenty years ago, crack was headed east across the United States like a Mack truck out of control, and it slammed New York hard because we just didn't see the warning signs.” -Wikipedia
Conclusions...

• The aesthetic of Keith Haring’s artwork reflects the music, pop culture, fashion, and dance of the 1980s.
• The subject matter of his work reflects the social and health issues of the 1980’s, such as the Aids epidemic, and the Crack epidemic.
• His art work reinforced our cultures values to care about each other’s health and wellbeing.
Your Assignment…

Overview | What can art tell us about the time and place of its creation, and how can that context help us understand an artwork?

In this project, you will research historically and culturally significant events as a potential means to understand artists and their works.

You will create and present a slideshow or prezi that incorporates images of artwork with commentary that places the art pieces in their historical and cultural context.
Your Assignment…

Your Presentation must include…

1. **Overview of the artist** and his style.

2. **Overview of significant historical/cultural events** from that artist’s context.

3. **2-3 detail slides** that show the connection between specific artworks and specific aspects of the artist’s historical/cultural context.

4. One slide that presents your **conclusions** about the connection between the artworks and it’s historical context. Your conclusions should include an analysis of what **cultural values** are *represented and/or reinforced* by this artist’s work.
Possible Artists…

Dorthea Lange
Walter Womacka
Jacob Lawrence
Roy Lichtenstein

Diego Rivera
Salvador Dali
Robert Smithson