

Chapter 7
The Penitent Mary Magdalene
Domenikos Theotokopoulos
The Life of Mary Magdalene

In this assignment, students will analyze two additional paintings El Greco created of Mary Magdalene beyond the one provided in the text, which is the earliest of his iterations. El Greco's later paintings of Mary Magdalene depict her at different stages of her life. As they examine these additional paintings, students will make note of similarities and differences. They will also offer their own alternative title for each painting.

For reference, the new paintings to be discussed are The Penitent Magdalene (1580-1585) and Penitent Magdalene with the Cross (1585-1590). You may display these or have students look them up individually.

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El Greco painted several images of Mary Magdalene throughout his lifetime. Through these paintings, we see the progression of Mary Magdalene's spiritual life in stages. In your textbook we see her initial conversion from a life of prostitution to following Christ. You will view two of El Greco's works which depict later stages in her spiritual journey.

As you view these two paintings, titled *The Penitent Magdalene* (1580-1585) and *Penitent Magdalene with the Cross* (1585-1590), note similarities and differences between all three paintings and write them down in the spaces provided. Next, suggest an alternative title for each painting. You will then write a few sentences, describing this part of her life based on what you can see from the painting.

1. *The Penitent Mary Magdalene* (1576-1578)

Similarities and differences with the other two paintings:

Alternate title:

Description of this painting:

2. *The Penitent Magdalene* (1580-1585)

Similarities and differences with the other two paintings:

Alternate title:

Description of this painting:

3. *Penitent Magdalene with the Cross* (1585-1590)

Similarities and differences with the other two paintings:

Alternate title:

Description of this painting: