

# GCSE LITERACY GUIDANCE

## ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN

Throughout the GCSE course it is important that you discuss artwork properly using subject specific vocabulary, good spelling and grammar. You will need to write about your own artwork and work created by other artists. You will annotate, analyse and evaluate.

It is important that you can do this well because your written work plays a major part in your overall GCSE grade and runs alongside your practical work.





**A01** Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources

**DEVELOP**

**INVESTIGATE**

**EXPLAIN  
IDEAS**

**ARTISTS  
ANNOTATE**

**contextual research**

**EXPLORE**

**A02** Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes

**REFINE**

**EXPERIMENT**

**EXPLORE  
TECHNIQUES  
AND SKILLS**

**SELECT  
EXPLAIN**

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**IDEAS**

**A03** Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses

**RECORD**

**INTENTIONS**

**LINK  
IDEAS**

**OBSERVATION  
PLANNING**

**PRIMARY RESEARCH**

**RELEVANT**

**A04** Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language

**RESPONSE**

**MEANINGFUL**

**VISUAL  
LANGUAGE**

**DEMONSTRATE  
UNDERSTANDING**

**MAKE CONNECTIONS**

**CONCLUSION**

# FORMAL ELEMENTS

When looking at artwork there are lots of different elements that you can discuss. These are called the Formal Elements. We describe artwork using the formal elements: colour, tone, line, pattern/texture mood and composition.

## COLOUR

Clean  
Subtle  
Vibrant  
Rich  
Vivid  
Delicate  
Diluted  
Muted

## LINE

Organic  
Flowing  
Bold  
Vertical  
Horizontal  
Scratchy  
Uneven  
Aggressive

## PATTERN

Delicate  
Balanced  
Repeat  
Ordered  
Random  
Uniform  
Irregular  
Geometric

## TONE

Deep  
Graduated  
Dramatic  
Faded  
Sombre  
Crisp  
Contrasting  
Heavy

## MOOD

Intense  
Mysterious  
Sinister  
Peaceful  
Uplifting  
Disturbing  
Soothing  
Positive

## SHAPE

Freeform  
Circular  
Square  
Rectangular  
Angular  
Organic  
Defined

## TEXTURE

Rough  
Smooth  
Abrasive  
Matt  
Glossy  
Sharp  
Delicate

## COMPOSITION

Vacant  
Symmetrical  
Asymmetrical  
Structured  
Cluttered  
Juxtaposed  
Minimal

When talking about an artwork use the formal elements in your sentences. For example " The artist has used a dramatic line to convey aggression in their work."



# WHAT TO INCLUDE ON AN ARTIST RESEARCH PAGE

RESEARCH MUST ALWAYS BE RELEVANT AND INFORM PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

## Introduce the artist

Artists Name:

Who are they?

What inspires and motivates them?

What media do they work in?

### Why?

Why are you studying this artist? How does their work relate to your project?

## Discuss other artists

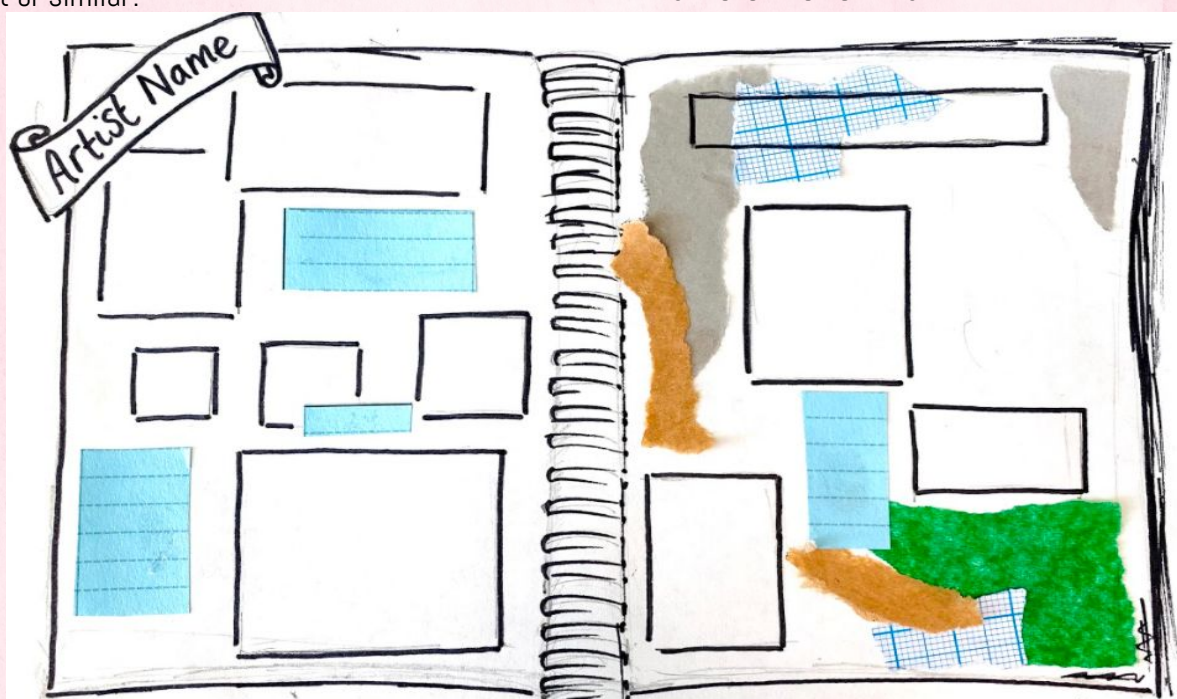
Make links to other artists. Is their work different or similar?

## Deconstruct their work

Talk about the artists work in depth. Talk about the formal elements Line, tone, colour, texture and composition. Explain how these elements create different moods and atmospheres. Explain your thoughts on their work.

## Discuss other artists

Make links to other artists. Is their work different or similar?



Presentation of your artists page should relate to the artist you are researching

### Artist images

Stick in images of the artists work. Explain how they relate to the project.

### Create

Create studies and experiment using different media.

Learn new skills and techniques inspired by the artist.

### Personal opinion.

Talk about the work. Do you like it? If so why?

### Moving forward

How has this research developed your project?

What will you take forward in your project?

### The content

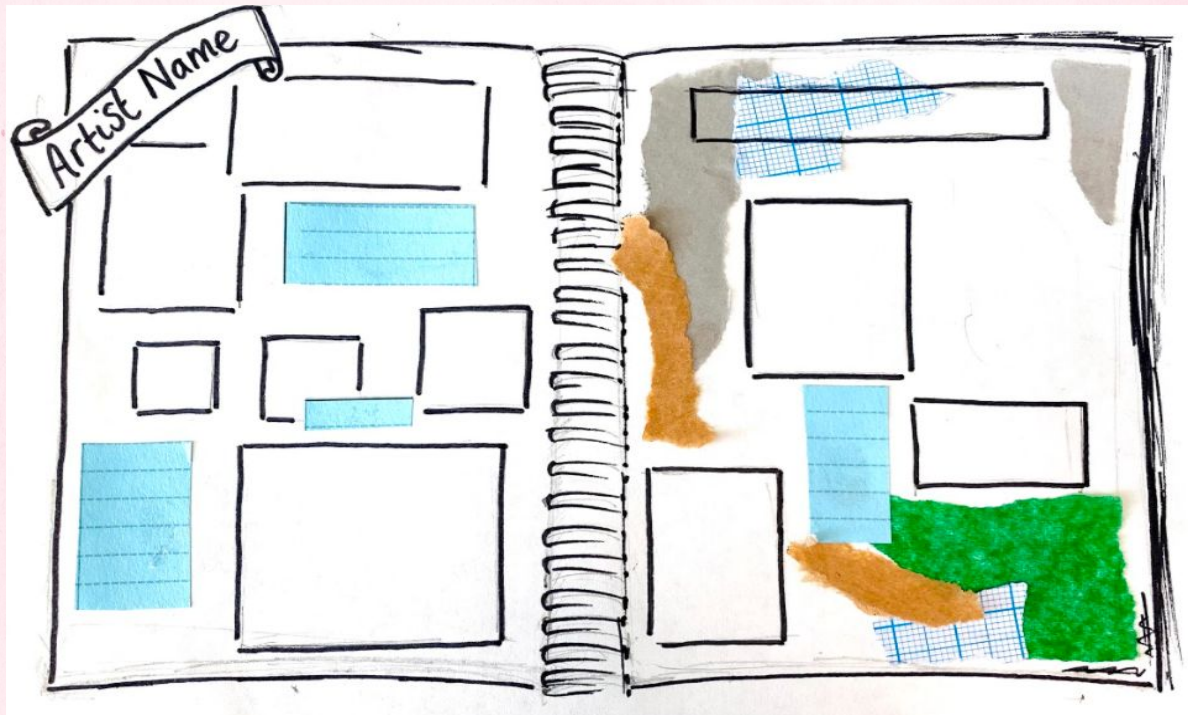
What is the artists work about?

How was the artwork produced? what techniques and processes were used? What is the art made from?

Make pages visually interesting using textures, layering and a range of different media.



# WHAT TO INCLUDE ON AN ARTIST RESEARCH PAGE - **SENTENCE STARTERS.**



## **Introducing the artist:**

-The artist I am researching is...  
... is inspired by... The media that ... uses is...

## **Why?**

-I am researching the work of .... because...  
The work relates to my work and project because...

## **Deconstruct their work.**

-In (name artist) art they explore a range of the formal elements. From looking at the artwork I can see that the artist uses...  
(Select the appropriate: Line, tone, texture, form, shape, colour, pattern and composition. Use page 1 to help you)

## **The content**

-(Artist name) work is mainly of...  
-The meaning of the work is all about...  
-... they created artwork by ... and the techniques that were used are...

## **Artist images:**

In this image ... the artist has...  
The title of this piece is...  
This artwork relates to my project

## **Personal Opinion**

-In my opinion I find (name artist) work ... this is because...

## **Transcription:**

This is my transcription of ... I have done this by...  
I was inspired by... and I learnt ...

## **Moving forward:**

I will use (name artist) artwork to inspire my own work by...  
(The artist) will continue to support the develop my own work by...



# ANALYSING A WORK OF ART

When deconstructing works of art it is important we consider several different aspects. Use the information provided below to help you structure your writing on your sheets and in your sketchbooks.

MAKING AND CONSTRUCTION: Which materials and techniques have been used to make the artwork?

What processes/ methods are involved?

How have the media/materials used affected the final product?

If alternative materials had been used, how would this have affected the outcome?

DESCRIPTION/CONTENT Describe the artwork. Story, theme, atmosphere.

Who or what is the artwork about?

What is being represented?

When and where was it made? From what culture?

FORMAL STRUCTURE/ ELEMENTS Composition. How are the formal elements (line tone, colour, texture, shape, space and form) organised in the construction of the artwork? Structure. Are there any mathematical concepts involved eg golden section, theories of perspective, balance symmetry and scale. Does the artwork suggest movement or is it static? Is there a sense of order?

PERSONAL RESPONSE How does the work make you feel? In what way does it affect your senses, emotions thinking/intellect? Is there a relationship between the mood of the artwork and the viewer?

LANGUAGE What codes, conventions and symbols are evident in the artwork? Are elements of the image related or similar to other experiences? Relates to recall memory and imagination. Does the image fit into a particular genre?

PURPOSE Does the work have a function? Is there an external need? Where would you expect to find it? Is or was there a particular audience? What is its reason for being?

MOOD Investigate the mood, atmosphere and feeling that the artist is trying to convey.



# WRITING ABOUT AN ARTIST WORK:

When writing about an artists work use the information from the previous page to help structure your work and to add greater depth to your writing. You may choose to use the sentence starters below to help you.

- (Name) is a (painter, printmaker etc), and they work with...
- (Artists name) is a landscape /portrait painter/ abstract painter.
- The main theme(s) of ... work is (natural forms/ people in their life, rural landscapes/machinery etc)
- When I researched ... I was fascinated by...
- I have chosen this artist because... It links to my work by...
- The colours that this artist uses are... And it gives the feeling of...
- The surface of the artwork is...
- Now I have looked at this artist I am going to...
- My work reflects their work as I have... (comment on the media, colour scheme and/or the subject matter or theme.)
- I could make my work more like the artists work by...
- Moving forward this has informed my work by...

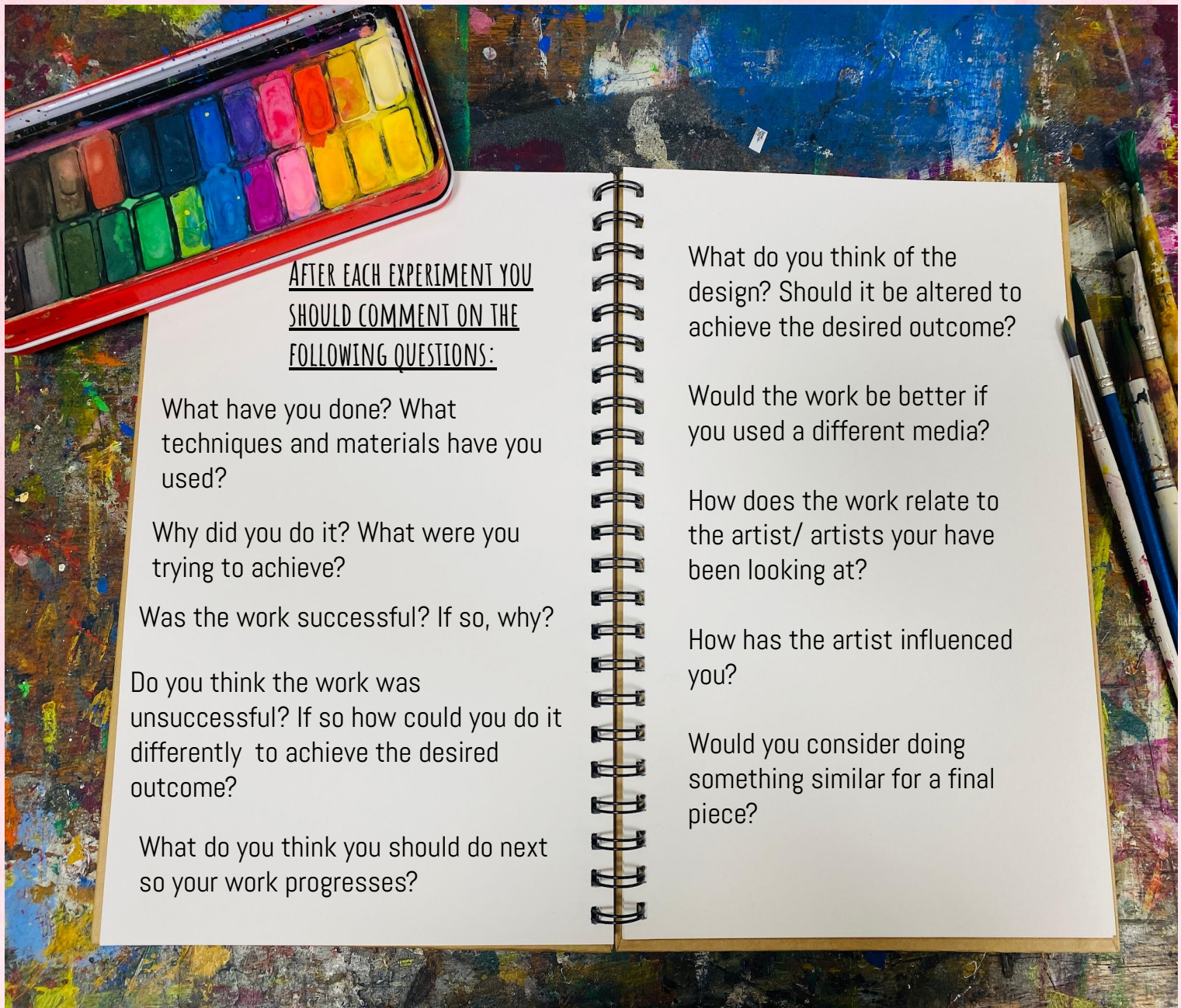
## EXAMPLE

Angie Lewin is a printmaker who works with lino and woodblock. Her prints are of plants and she is inspired by English hedgerows. I have chosen this artist as I am really inspired by her stylised work and the muted colours she uses. The lino and woodblock create smooth flat areas of colour. In particular I find it fascinating the way she has given a traditional theme a modern look. Now I have looked at her work I am going to photograph various grasses and seed heads to work from and observe



# EVALUATING YOUR OWN EXPERIMENTS

When completing your experiments the key to scoring high marks is to always try to make your work look better as you progress through your project and to record these improvements in your sketchbook, sheets and project work. Every experiment should be EVALUATED in a thoughtful way.



## AFTER EACH EXPERIMENT YOU SHOULD COMMENT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

What have you done? What techniques and materials have you used?

Why did you do it? What were you trying to achieve?

Was the work successful? If so, why?

Do you think the work was unsuccessful? If so how could you do it differently to achieve the desired outcome?

What do you think you should do next so your work progresses?

What do you think of the design? Should it be altered to achieve the desired outcome?

Would the work be better if you used a different media?

How does the work relate to the artist/ artists you have been looking at?

How has the artist influenced you?

Would you consider doing something similar for a final piece?

When evaluating your work the GCSE examiner will expect you to use key art vocabulary, you will be marked on the **Appropriate use of key words.** Use the key word lists and the glossary at the front and the back of this booklet.



What was I trying to achieve?

What message did i want to express or what did i want the viewer to think or feel?

Why have I done this?

What inspired you?

Is the work successful?

Does it achieve the effects described in the last box?

What have I done?

Explain the processes, techniques and materials used.

How could I improve the work?

How could I have changed it to make it more successful?

## EVALUATION FLOW CHART

**Start here:** Answer as many questions as possible using **KEY WORDS** in full sentences.

How does the work relate to my artists?

Think: subject, colour, technique, material, message, style...

How could I use it to develop my project?

What will I do next? Think research, experiments, primary images, theme, message, artists...



# DESCRIBING ARTWORK AND ART KEY WORDS

## DESCRIBING COLOUR



Think about your overall impression of the colours used in the artwork, how they look and feel, how the colours work together, how they fit with the subject of the picture, how the artist has arranged these. Are there any specific colours you can identify?

Natural, clear, compatible, distinctive, interesting, lively, stimulating, subtle, sympathetic.

Artificial, clashing, depressing, discordant, garish, gaudy, jarring, unfriendly, violent.

Bright, brilliant, deep, earthy, harmonious, intense, rich, saturated, strong, vibrant, vivid. Dull, flat, insipid, pale, mellow, muted, subdued, quiet, weak.

Cool, cold, warm, hot, light, dark. Blended, broken, mixed, muddled, muddied, pure.

Complimentary, contrasting, harmonious monochrome..

## DESCRIBING TEXTURE

Can you see any different textures within the artwork? Do the textures help create a mood or effect? Does the lighting or the use of media highlight these textures?

Flat, Polished, smooth.

Raised, rough, coarse, cut incised, pitted, scratched, uneven, hairy, sticky.

Soft, hard.

Shiny, glossy, reflective. Satin, silk, frosted, matte.

## DESCRIBING COMPOSITION

Look at how the elements in the artwork are arranged, the underlying structure (shapes) and relationships between the different parts, how your eye moves around the composition.

Arrangement, layout, structure, position.

Landscape format, portrait format, square format,

Rule of thirds. Negative space Positive space.

Foreground, background middle ground.

Centred, asymmetrical, symmetrical, balanced

Unbalanced, lopsided space.

Overlapping, cluttered, chaotic. Separate, spacious, empty, repetitive, free flow, fragmented, rigid,

## DESCRIBING ATMOSPHERE

What is the mood or atmosphere of the subject of the artwork and how is it expressed? What emotions do you experience looking at it?

Calm, content peaceful, relaxed tranquil.

Cheerful, happy joyful, romantic.

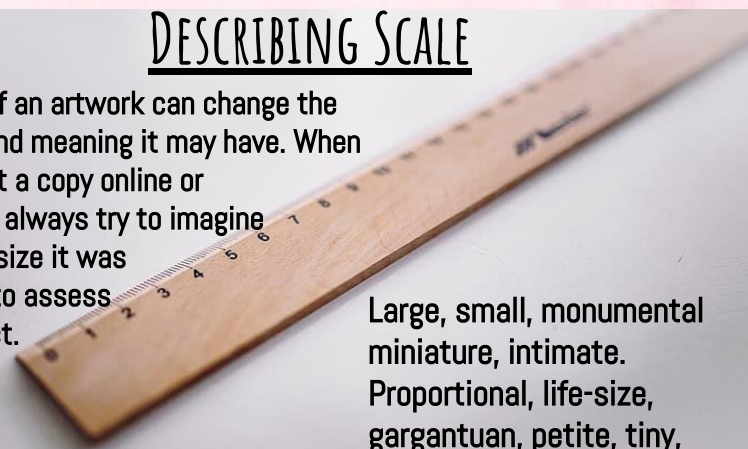
Depressed, miserable, sad, sombre, tearful.

Aggressive, angry, chilling, dark distressing, frightening, exciting, stimulating, thought-provoking .

Boring, dull, lifeless, insipid.

## DESCRIBING SCALE

A scale of an artwork can change the impact and meaning it may have. When looking at a copy online or in a book always try to imagine it at the size it was created to assess its impact.



Large, small, monumental miniature, intimate. Proportional, life-size, gargantuan, petite, tiny, insignificant, unrealistic.



# DESCRIBING ARTWORK AND ART KEY WORDS.

## DESCRIBING MESSAGE

Look at the artwork carefully, consider all of the elements you have looked at and the subject. What message do you think the artist is trying to express? Is there a meaning? An emotion?

Mysterious, complex, simple, basic, story, symbolism, concept, issues, meaning. Social comment, political, environment, sexual, religious.

## DESCRIBING SUBJECT MATTER

It may feel like you are stating the obvious but if you think of how you would describe an artwork to someone who is not familiar with it or hasn't seen it/ not looking at it. You would tell them the subject quite early on.

Abstract, surreal, realistic, photo-realistic, hyper-realistic.

Cityscape, buildings, man-made, urban, industrial.

Fantasy, imaginary, invented, mythological.

Figurative (figures), portraits, interiors, domestic.

Landscape, seascape.

Still life.

## DESCRIBING VIEWPOINT AND POSE

Consider the angle or the position we're seeing the subject of the artwork. How has the artist decided to present it. This element may not be relevant if the piece is abstract.

Front, side, three-quarters, profile, rear, angle.

Close up, far away, life, size, birds eye view.

Upwards, downwards, sideways.

Standing, sitting, lying down, bending.

Gesturing, moving, resting, static.

## DESCRIBING STILL LIFE

Before you get into what the individual objects in a still life artwork are, whether they are themed, related or dissimilar, look at them overall and describe this first.

Antique, battered, damaged, dusty, old, worn.

New, clean, shiny.

Functional, decorative, fancy.

Domestic, humble, commercial, industrial.

Close up, macro, enlarged.

## DESCRIBING TONE AND CONTRAST.

Don't forget to consider the tone or the values of colours too, plus the way tone is used in the artwork as a whole.

Dark, light, mid.

Flat, uniform, unvarying, smooth, plain.

Large/small tonal range. varied, broken. constant. changes.

Graduated, contrasting, dramatic, strong, subtle.

## DESCRIBING LINE, SHAPE AND FORM

Think about the overall shapes in the artwork and the way forms are depicted. What sense of depth and volume is there?

2D, flat, abstracted, simplified, stylised.

3D, realistic, natural, sense of depth and space, sharp, detailed.

Blurred, obscured, overlapping, indistinct, distorted, exaggerated, geometric, linear, long narrow.

Hard-edged, soft edge. flowing, delicate, simple, bold, thick, thin.



# VISUAL ART VOCABULARY AND GLOSSARY

When you are writing about your work or the work of others it is important that you use keywords and terms correctly.

Below are some of the key words and terms that may be useful to you, many of which are commonly misused! Check your own understanding before using them to discuss your work.

Abstract	Abstract art is art that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality but instead used shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks to achieve its effect.
Asymmetrical	Something which is unbalanced or has unequally proportioned elements. The opposite to symmetrical.
Broken colour	Dabs or small amounts of colour around the image.
Complimentary colours	Colours which are opposite each other on the colour wheel.
Composition	The arrangement of elements within a work of art.
Contemporary	The term contemporary art is loosely used to refer to art of the present day and of the relatively recent past.
Contrast	The brightness range of the subject or the scene lighting. High contrast scene- has a wide range of blacks and whites
Depth	The illusion of space within an image
Distorted	A shape that has been changed and no longer proportioned or realistic.
Flat tones	Something which has a very small or tonal range, something without shading.
Focal Point	The most important part of the image where the eye is first drawn to.
Geometric	Refers to the shapes such as circles, triangles, squares etc
Genres	Genres are types of painting. These were laid out in the seventeenth century (in order of importance) history, portrait, genre (scenes of everyday life), landscape and still life.



## VISUAL ART VOCABULARY AND GLOSSARY

Harmonic colours	Colours which are next to or near each other on the colour wheel.
Impasto	Impasto refers to an area of thick paint or texture in a painting.
Impressionism	Impressionism developed in France in the nineteenth century and is based on the practice of painting outdoors quickly and spontaneously 'on the spot' rather than in a studio from sketches.
Kitsch	Kitsch is the German word for trash, and is used in English to describe a particularly cheap, vulgar and sentimental form of popular commercial culture.
Medium	Medium can refer to both to the type of art (painting, sculpture, printmaking) as well as the material an artwork is made from.
Monochrome	An image using only white and one colour (usually black)
Negative space	The space around the outside of the object.
Organic	A work which may look or have shapes which are free flowing and rounded.
Plane	A plane surface is a flat surface, and any distinct flat surface within a painting or sculpture can be referred to as a plane.
Relief	A relief is a wall-mounted sculpture in which the three-dimensional elements are raised from a flat base.
Saturation	How bright a colour appears The lowest saturation is black & white
Symbolism	Late nineteenth century movement that advocated the expression of an idea, as if a mirror has reflected on it.
Symmetrical	Something that looks the same on one side as it does on the other
Tone	The lightness and darkness of something- this could be shade, or how dark or light the colour appears.
Triptych	An artwork in three panels or separate sections.



# Photography Annotation

## Sentence Starters:

### General:

- \* In this image I can see
- \* It is evident in this image that
- \* Demonstrated within this image is
- \* When analysing this image
- \* The photographer has

### Composition:

- \* The technique used in this image
- \* The composition in this image is
- \* When looking into this image
- \* I can see that the photographer has used composition techniques such as
- \* Using this image as inspiration I am going to explore using the same compositional techniques by

### Mood:

- \* The mood in this image is
- \* I feel that the atmosphere is this image is
- \* \_\_\_\_\_ in this images emphasises the mood in the image by
- \* One of the important factors of this image is
- \* The feeling given by this image is

### Manipulation:

- \* Manipulation is a key in this image because
- \* It is clear to me that manipulation has been used to
- \* Manipulation has been used to emphasise
- \* A combination of \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ has been used to manipulate this image by
- \* If I were to further develop my work I would look to manipulate it by \_\_\_ inspired by

### Lighting:

- \* Lighting plays a key role in this image because
- \* The lighting in this image
- \* \_\_\_\_\_ coupled with lighting demonstrates the
- \* The bold use of \_\_\_ lighting shows
- \* The lighting technique used in this image is

### Texture:

- \* Textures in this image demonstrates
- \* Texture is a key feature of this image because
- \* Texture used in this images helps to
- \* I can see that the photographer has used texture to
- \* In this image I can see that texture has

### Model and Props:

- \* The model affects this image by
- \* The effect of the props in this image is
- \* The careful placement of
- \* In this image the key feature is
- \* The positioning of the model enables the photographer to

### Costume:

- \* Costume plays a key role in
- \* The photographer has carefully used costume to
- \* The affect that the costume has had on this image is
- \* Costume and \_\_\_ have been used together to
- \* The style of this image is heavily influenced by the costume used to

### Make-up:

- \* Make-up has been used to
- \* The dramatic use of make-up
- \* The photographer has carefully considered the use of make-up in this image by
- \* It is clear to me that the make-up in this image
- \* Developing my work further I would like to experiment with make-up, in the style of this image because

### Technical:

- \* The technique used in this image is
- \* The use of \_\_\_ in this image creates
- \* Technical knowledge and understanding has been shown in this image by
- \* By combining techniques such as
- \* I can see that the photographer has used



# COMPOSITION:

Negative space  
Focal point  
Foreground  
Middleground  
Background  
Rule of Thirds  
Simplicity  
Framing  
Leading Lines  
Balancing Elements  
Symmetry and Patterns  
Viewpoint  
Depth  
Cropping  
Experimentation  
Arrangement  
Layout  
Structure  
Position  
Landscape  
Format  
Horizontal  
Vertical  
Angled

# LIGHTING:

Artificial  
Gentle  
Natural  
Harsh  
Night  
Dark  
Haze  
Shading  
Highlight  
Shadow  
Evening  
Intense  
Soft  
Fall of light  
Midday  
Tone  
Blend  
Intense  
Saturated  
Bright  
Luminous  
Clash  
Mixed  
Soft

# MOOD:

Feeling  
Alive  
Disturbing  
Imposing  
Atmosphere  
Exciting  
Nostalgic  
Delicate  
Expressive  
Sad  
Depressing  
Fresh  
Dignified  
Humorous  
Calm  
Peaceful  
Tranquil  
Romantic  
Depressed Tearful  
Chilling  
Distressing  
Energetic  
Stimulating  
Thought-provoking

# TEXTURE:

Coarse  
Glaze  
Matt  
Smooth  
Thin  
Rough  
Splatter  
Flat  
Jagged  
Shiny  
Thick  
Polished  
Raised  
Cut  
Pitted  
Scratched  
Uneven  
Sticky  
Soft  
Hard  
Glossy  
Reflective  
Frosted  
Sheer 14