

**IBSL & IBHL
COMPARATIVE
STUDY
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information!**



3

The comparative study

What is the comparative study?

The comparative study is a critical and contextual investigation of other artists' works. It is worth 20% of the marks you receive for your visual arts course. You will choose art and/or artifacts by different artists and from different cultures to analyse and compare. If you are taking the subject at higher level (HL) you will also show how these artists have influenced your art. Standard level (SL) students do not do this last part.

Through the comparative study you investigate the meanings and practices of art from different times and cultures. This will develop your analytical skills so that you can better understand the connections between making art and experiencing art. It will also develop your communication skills so that you can articulate your art ideas and intentions more clearly. You will move from description to interpretation.

The comparative study is uploaded for assessment as a PDF document. SL students submit 10–15 **screens** that examine and compare a minimum of three artworks, objects or artifacts, at least two of which need to be by different artists. The works selected for comparison and analysis should come from different cultural contexts. In addition to this requirement, HL students submit 3–5 screens that analyse the extent to which their work and practices have been influenced by the artworks examined.

There is no word limit – this is not an essay, although it might contain sections of more extended writing. You may well prefer annotation and visual presentations to communicate your ideas.

So what do I need to do?

1. Choose art from different cultural contexts that excites you and that is relevant to your creative practice.
2. Discuss with your teacher your choices and the timetable for completion.
3. Make a formal analysis of these works.
4. Conduct research.
 - Try to arrange to see at least one of these works in its original state.
 - Pose meaningful research questions.
 - Use a range of sources to answer these questions.
5. Analyse the content and context of the works, that is, their function and meaning.
6. Compare and contrast the works.
7. Present your ideas in a visually appropriate and engaging format.
8. Add a separate screen with your sources.
9. Upload your presentation for assessment.

Key terms

Screens: the term "screens" is used as a constant reminder that the final product for assessment is a digitally uploaded file that will be viewed on a computer monitor as a series of screens. "Screens" is used instead of "pages", which would imply that the original format was in book form, or "slides", which suggests an electronic presentation using software such as Microsoft's® PowerPoint® or Apple's® Keynote®. While all of these are valid tools for generating potential screens for the process portfolio or comparative study submission, they are not, in any way, prescribed.

Tip

If you are also writing an extended essay in visual arts, make sure you choose a different topic. You must not use the same material as in the comparative study.

Case study

In this section you can follow Kierlan as she prepares her comparative study. This is her introduction screen with a title that gives us a sense of what she will be exploring, as well as a connection to her own art at the end. The three illustrations help us to make visual links. She explains that she has seen the Chapman Brothers' sculptures and made her own copy of the Dali. She also introduces some of her ideas about the works.



TANZANIA East Africa Makondé ebony or ebony-like wooden sculpture
Image from Anami.com

LONDON'S EAST END JIVE AND DRUGS CHAPMAN AT WORK
IN THEIR STUDIO Image from Anami.com



Distortion of the human form

On the right is my copy of Salvador Dalí's 'Soft Construction with Boiled Beans (Remonition of Civil War)' 1941, which was the starting point for this study. Because I am fascinated by Surrealism I wanted to copy the painting really carefully. I then saw Jive and Drugs Chapman's sculptures at The Saatchi Gallery in London and realised that although they are made for different reasons they also distort the figure in a grotesque way to shock us. In this study I will compare the formal qualities of these western art works and the Makondé carvings from Tanzania. They all have different meanings, the Makondé style abstracts figures to represent Shetani spirits while the Chapman Brothers and Dalí use modern art to reveal our unconscious fears. All of the artists were influenced by their circumstances; Dalí's painting shows the disruption of the war in his home country; the Chapman Brothers were part of the YBA movement and Makondé art was a reaction to Portuguese colonialism. At the end of my study I show how I have used distortion in my ceramic sculptures.

Making choices

During the course your interests and understanding of art will develop and change. You will investigate a broad range of artworks first and then narrow down your interests as you see how looking at art can help to support and influence creative studio work. Build your knowledge by visiting museums and galleries, browsing the art shelves in a library, looking at art blogs, pin boards and artist websites. Discuss your interests with your teacher as they have the experience to suggest how to develop meaningful connections from what you like. Then review your interests to select what to investigate for the comparative study.

As you make your choice remember that:

- You should try to experience at least one of the works first-hand.
- They should come from different cultural contexts.
- If you are an HL student, the artworks should connect with your practical art work.

Tip



Think local. Even if you don't have a museum within reach, we are all surrounded by cultural artifacts worthy of study, such as textiles or architecture, and we live among the people who make them. There are many artists who are pleased to show their work to students. This will take more effort than downloading images by famous artists, but will lead to a more personal and original comparative study. Things that you have seen and experienced are also easier to write well about.

Exhibitions are often curated thematically. These can provide interesting juxtapositions of art from different cultures. Think of using these as starting points for your comparative study.

Thought boxes can be a helpful way to make decisions. Draw a three by three box and write ideas in the spaces. Don't reflect, just write down artists you like. Then draw another thought box. This time put into the centre the idea from the first set that most interests you, then fill the surrounding spaces with related ideas. Through this process you can narrow your choices.

Tip

Students often include extra works in the study; this is very successful when it enhances the contextualization of the principal works. However, students that present a sequence of unconnected works all analysed at the same level fail to achieve depth. It is strongly advisable to concentrate on three clearly defined and meaningfully linked artworks.

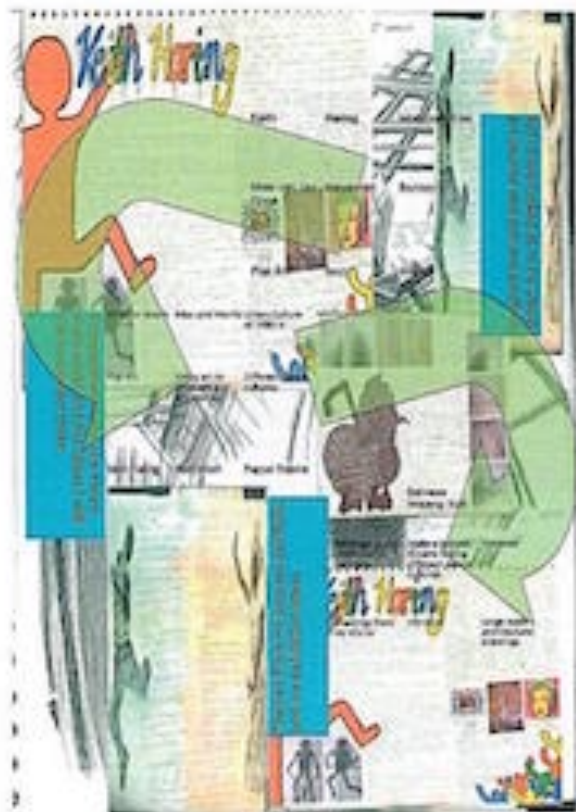
First thoughts:

Pop Art	Roy Lichtenstein	Damien Hirst
Jeff Koons	Graffiti	Guy Denning
Manga	M.C.Escher	Street Art

More focused thoughts:

Banksy	Jari	NYSF Crew
Keith Haring	Street Art	Guy Denning
Blek le Rat (Xavier Prou)	Ernst Pignon Ernst	Jon Matos

Comparative study first artist choice
Blek le Rat



Antonia has used three thought boxes: the first lists the artists she likes; the second the themes from her process portfolio and potential ideas for her final exhibition; for the third box she has extracted the three artists for her comparative study and some associated themes. Because she is an HL student it is important that she makes connections between her work and the artists that she studies. At SL you don't need to worry about this. Antonia then completed a study that compared three contrasting ways of showing movement: the hip hop-style paintings of Keith Haring, the Balinese shadow puppets of Wayang Kulit and the illustrations of Max Busch. She made a puppet theatre as part of her final exhibition so there were plenty of links to discuss in her connections screens.

Below are some examples of comparative study topics. These are all personal choices put here to suggest the range of ideas possible– not to copy!

As you make your choices remember that the main aim is to compare the artworks so ensure that the three works will lead to meaningful links, perhaps through sharing themes or subjects as with the topics suggested in the table. If they are completely unrelated then you are heading for trouble!

Connecting theme: Natural forms in architecture	A visit to Barcelona prompted this student's interest in Gaudi's use of organic forms in architecture and Art Nouveau. This led to research into the development of modernism in America, then the contemporary use of organic form in Hadid's computer-designed structures.
Fallingwater by Frank Lloyd Wright (1939), Bear Run, Pennsylvania, USA	
La Casa Milà known as "La Pedrera" by Antoni Gaudi (1906–10), Barcelona, Spain	
Burnham Pavilion by Zaha Hadid (2009), Chicago, Illinois, USA	

HL connections to studio work: her exhibition explored organic and man-made structures through abstract sculpture and painting of natural forms.



In this study I will compare two art; Art Nouveau and Modernism. Within these styles I will concentrate on how they are both inspired/motivated by natural form; in order to do so I will firstly look at Gaudi's Art Nouveau work; how it was inspired by Baroque and Gothic architecture and then I will look specifically at the building La Pedrera. To show the relationship to natural form I will investigate the forms used in La Pedrera by comparing the organic shapes. Then I will introduce modernism, its characteristics and how the movement started. I will concentrate on the house the falling water in specific and relate its forms to nature, equally showing that both houses, despite the difference in styles, are influenced by natural form. Then I will compare both to the contemporary building "The Burnham Pavilion" by Zaha Hadid

Connecting theme: Cultural signs and patterns	An interest in tattoos led this student to trace the significance of designs in three traditional cultures.
Tā moko examples of indigenous Maori tattoos	
"Nakamura Shikan as Kurikara Denshichi" by Toyokuni (1861) as an example of Irezumi, traditional Japanese tattooing	
Circus tattoos by Maud Wagner (1877–1961)	

Connecting theme: Monuments	Visiting the Iwo Jima monument started an interest in the nature of memorials. This student contrasted this with the anti-war sentiment of Kienholz's assemblage and then the political optimism of Tatlin's tower.
Portable War Memorial by Ed Kienholz (1968)	
Iwo Jima memorial (1954), Arlington, Virginia, USA	
Monument to the Third International by Vladimir Tatlin (1919)	
HL connections to his studio work: his exhibition included Pop Art-inspired assemblages and constructed forms partly suggested by these modernist approaches.	

Connecting theme: Photographs of children	This student compared three very different visions of childhood. She started with two American photographers, one documentary and one contemporary, then contrasted these with romantic images of children in Victorian photography.
"Virginia at Four" by Sally Mann (1989)	
"Migrant Mother" by Dorothea Lange (1936), MET New York	
"Hosanna" by Julia Margaret Cameron (1865), albumen print, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK	

Connecting theme: Textiles and cultural signs	This student started with photographs from her parents' wedding of ceremonial head scarves. She explored their tradition and meaning. She then looked at two examples of Japanese kimono design, one an actual kimono and one portrayed in a print.
Ichafu, south-east Nigerian head scarves	
Kimono, Japan, 1870-80, crepe silk (chirimen), paste-resist decoration (yuzen) and embroidery, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK	
"Bijin Playing a Biwa" by Gakutei, Ukiyo-e print, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK	

Connecting theme: The grotesque	An exhibition of work by Paul McCarthy prompted the student to explore the use of shock in art. The post-First World War satire of Grosz and the disturbing images of Bosch provided an interesting precedent.
"Suicide" by George Grosz (1916), Tate, London, UK	
"Train, Mechanical" by Paul McCarthy (2003-09)	
"The Garden of Earthly Delights" by Hieronymus Bosch, Prado, Madrid, Spain	
HL connections to studio work: he developed political and social satire through a series of caricature drawings and then a short animation.	

Connecting theme: The American land	An exhibition of Pollock's drip painting suggested to the student a comparative study about responses to the American landscape, from the symbolic art of the Navahos through the 19th century sublime to late 20th century land art.
Navaho sand art	
"Niagara" by Frederick E Church (1857)	
"Lavender Mist" by Jackson Pollock (1950)	
"The Lightning Field" by Walter De Maria (1977)	

What do we mean by culture?

The *Visual arts guide* defines **culture** as:

"learned and shared beliefs, values, interests, attitudes, products and all patterns of behaviour created by society. This view of culture includes an organised system of symbols, ideas, explanations, beliefs and material production that humans create and manipulate in their daily lives."

So all the artworks you will be looking at in your comparative study are expressions of culture. Your task is to explain this cultural context.

Everyone who writes about art does so from the viewpoint of their cultural identity. Until relatively recently the history of art was seen as a progression, or unfolding story, told from the perspective of western European civilization. *The Story of Art* (Gombrich, 1950) is a very good introduction to this way of seeing art.



My own silk painting and kimono stand

Orientalism Cultural links to my Art



I used a traditional kimono stand design to link with the orientalism of Whistler and Tissot.

I then painted the lower part with the interior 'oriental' scene from Tissot's painting.

The artificial roses represent my English culture, but also act as symbols for the prostitutes.

I wanted to recreate the exotic aesthetic of the nineteenth century painters but to use modern symbolism to subvert their colonialist use of culture.

- ▶ Evelyn has used her comparative study to explore the cultural issues of colonialism and gender evident in the orientalism of the 19th century. As she is an HL student she has then made connections to her exhibition work.

Edward Said, a post colonialist literary critic, said that '*orientalism remains inextricably tied to the imperialist societies that produced it, which makes much of their work inherently political, servile to power and therefore intellectually suspect*' (Edward Said, 2013)

'Rose and Silver: The Princess from the Land of Porcelain' (1863-4) by James Abbott McNeill Whistler (see right) clearly shows nineteenth century western fascination with Asian culture. The title of the painting portrays the East as a fantastical, mythical 'Land of Porcelain', while the female model is transformed into a Japanese princess, thereby exemplifying Western painters belittling orientalism.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Princess_from_the_Land_of_Porcelain

Although western artists have always taken ideas from other cultures, Picasso's "Les Femmes d'Alger" in 1907 marked the birth of a new questioning of the relationship between art, cultures and power. Picasso subverted the established western order, opening the way not just for the explosion of modern art, but also for the different readings of art history that exist today. Through reading an artwork we gain insights into the ideas of the time in which it was made, but we also reveal our own values. It can be useful to consider these four themes in relation to art criticism:

- colonialism
- gender
- nationality
- ethnicity.

Culture can be used to exert power. The gathering together of conquered peoples' cultural artifacts in national museums is an example of this. Gramsci described the idea of cultural hegemony, the use of culture to dominate over another group. This is evident through racism, colonialism and sexism. It is an area that has been explored by many contemporary visual artists and is an important theme in modern art criticism.

How to research

So far we have been analysing formal qualities of artworks by looking carefully at them. However, in order to be able to consider function, purpose and cultural significance you will need some background knowledge. This section is about how to find out that information.

Asking meaningful research questions

It is a mistake to consider research simply as gathering information. It is much better to think of it as finding answers to questions. What do you need to know? Discuss this with your teacher. Look at the function and meaning section in this chapter for suggestions of the questions you need to ask, as well as the advice below. Then write a list in your visual arts journal before you start your research.

Imagine that you are writing a comparative study that compares landscapes by Edvard Munch, Caspar David Friedrich and Vincent van Gogh. The task is not to find biographical information but to answer the following questions.

- Why did Munch use non-naturalistic colours?
- Why is Munch called an Expressionist artist?
- How did Munch use the landscape to express feeling?
- How was Munch influenced by Van Gogh?

Your teacher will help you to formulate meaningful questions for research. You may also find it useful to look at Bloom's thinking questions (1956). These will help you move beyond just repeating information when you research.

Tip



Make your task simpler by choosing artworks that are from obviously different cultural contexts. This will make the contrasts easier to explain.

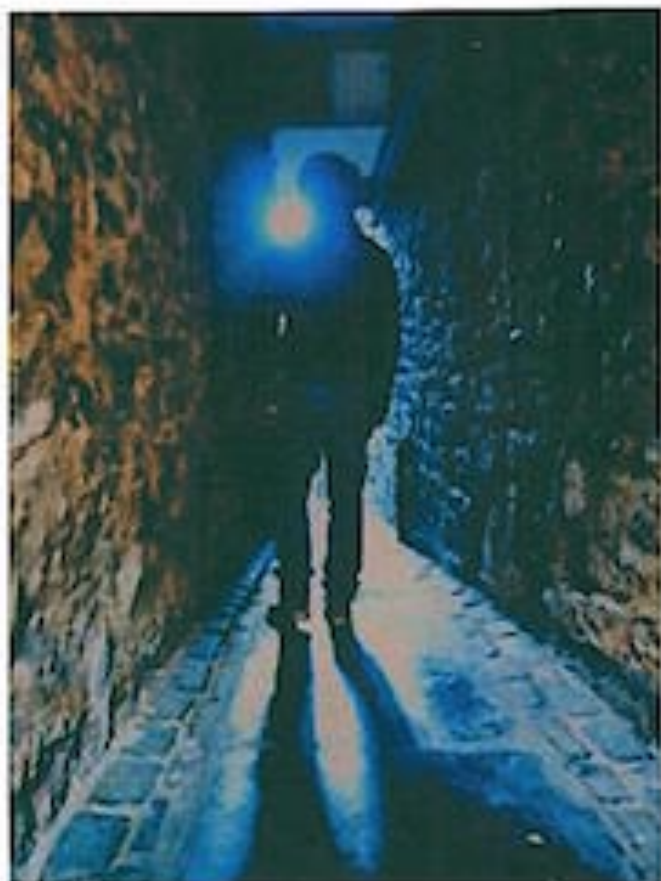
If the works are close in time you will have to consider the nature of the differences very carefully. For example, Edward Degas and Jean Renoir were both French 19th century artists associated with Impressionism. One was from a rich bourgeois background, the other poor and working class. These different cultural contexts did affect their art, but in a subtle way, which is difficult to explain. This can be resolved by choosing a third work that is obviously from a different culture, but linked thematically: perhaps a genre scene such as Japanese Ukiyo-e prints?

Tip



Why should I spend time asking questions?

Because spending a little time planning will save you a lot of wasted time looking up information that is not relevant. Filling your comparative study with research is not the aim of this task, you want to use selected knowledge to inform your investigation.



- ▲ Rory has applied his understanding of Munch's style when taking photographs of his brother in Edinburgh. This is a practical way of answering research questions. It helps him to appreciate the relationship between figure and surroundings, which he has then developed by using Expressionist colour in his painted study.

Below is a table with Bloom's categories of questions and examples of how you might apply them to the landscape assignment.

Category	Question words	Example
Evaluation	Judge, appraise, evaluate, assess	How effective is Munch's use of colour to express his feelings?
Synthesis	Compose, construct, design, predict	Make a colour study in Munch's style.
Analysis	Compare, contrast, examine, analyse	Contrast Edvard Munch's use of colour to that of Van Gogh and Caspar David Friedrich.
Application	Interpret, apply, use, demonstrate	Take a series of photographs influenced by Edvard Munch's compositions.
Comprehension	Restate, discuss, describe, explain	Describe the differences between Friedrich's and Munch's use of colour.
Knowledge	Who, what, when? Define, recall, list	List five key aspects of Edvard Munch's style.

Case study

Remember Kieran's introduction page on "Distortion of the Human Form"? She now has three different areas to research so that she can write about function and meaning. She has discussed these with her art teacher who has helped her to write these research questions:

1. Salvador Dali
 - What makes this painting a Surrealist work?
 - Why has Dali distorted the human form?
 - How does this painting reflect the Spanish Civil War?
2. The Chapman Brothers
 - Why have they made grotesque distortions of children?
 - Why did they choose moulded plastics for the sculptures?
 - Who are the audience for these artworks?
3. Makonde sculpture
 - Who made these sculptures?
 - What were they used for?
 - Why do they include distorted figures?

Now she is ready to start her research.

ART Research skills

Research is a skill. Learning where to find information and assessing the usefulness and accuracy of what you research is difficult. Ask your school librarian which online resources your school subscribes to. Then ask your teacher to help you devise a focused research question. Use the online resources to gather material for your answer, carefully citing each source.

How to find good research material

One of the difficulties when reading about art is that text is often written in a complex language that is very difficult to understand unless you already have background knowledge. If you don't understand what you are reading then it is useless, so start simple! An online encyclopaedia such as Encyclopaedia Britannica will give clear and easily understood information. Other good starting points are the major museum websites such as The Metropolitan Museum or The Tate Gallery. These have short, clearly written pieces of information and provide links to glossaries to explain specialist terms.

Once you have gained a foundation of understanding you will be better equipped to tackle journal, magazine and newspaper articles. Be a detective and follow the trail! For example, books on artists will have bibliographies leading you to other books and articles. Artist websites often have a list of reviews in the "Press" section. Websites such as Wikipedia have bibliographies at the end of their entries; follow these links to the original sources of the information. Blogs will lead you to exhibitions of contemporary artists; then you can check out the venue website or news reviews for more reliable information on that exhibition.

Try Google Scholar, Google books and The Google Art Project. Many newspapers have free online databases of past reviews, but your school librarian will help you find these and much more. They may also have access to subscription databases that contain thousands of specialist articles such as JSTOR and EBSCO Advanced Placement Source. If not then try your local library.

Tip



If you are researching a contemporary artist try sending them or their gallery an email; they might be willing to answer your questions directly! Museum and gallery curators are often pleased to help when approached directly by students so consider emailing the education department with your questions.

Case study

How is Kierlan going to answer her research questions on Dali?

- What makes this painting a Surrealist work?
- Why has Dali distorted the human form?
- How does this painting reflect the Spanish Civil War?

First she looks up Surrealism and the Spanish Civil war on Encyclopaedia Britannica. Then she reads more about Surrealism from the Tate Gallery website. She finds that "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans" is in the Philadelphia Museum. Not only do they have a good article on the painting, they also have a teacher's pack with all her answers.

Now the more difficult research.

How is she going to answer the questions on Makonde sculpture?

- Who made these sculptures?
- What were they used for?
- Why do they include distorted figures?

There is nothing much in the Encyclopaedia Britannica and the article on the MET museum website is very brief. The article on Wikipedia is confusing, but the bibliography mentions an exhibition in Paris in 1989 and at the Saatchi gallery in 1992. Searching for these gives her some information, but then she tries Google Books and finds part of *A Host of Devils: The History and Context of the Making of Makonde Spirit Figures* by Zachary Kingdon has been uploaded. This is very detailed and she learns all she needs to know about who the Makonde are and the history of their carvings.

Are your sources reliable?

The easiest way to find information is from websites, but anyone can write a web page so how do you evaluate if the information is accurate? When you look at a website consider the following questions.

1. Who is the audience?

Look at the style of language. Is it written for children or for an adult reader? Is the grammar and spelling correct? Often art comment is written by keen bloggers with little knowledge. It is better to seek out museum or academic websites for your research. The domain name (URL) can help. If the URL ends .ac.uk then it is written by a UK university; if it ends .edu then by an American university.

2. Who is the author?

This should be evident. Paste their name into a new tab to see what else they have written. It is always helpful to know whether they are objective in their comments. If you can't find out who wrote it then you might wonder why they did not want to add their name. Alternatively it might be a corporate author – this is often the case for museum websites.

3. Is it objective and accurate?

Is the website promoting a particular set of beliefs? This might distort the accuracy of the information.

Van Gogh's ear

Did Van Gogh cut off his ear? This episode has become an art legend and is an example of how you might find varied answers to the same question on the internet. It is often presented to exaggerate the wilder aspects of Van Gogh's character and to emphasize his instability. Although most of the accounts correctly include the few known facts, such as the dispute with Gauguin who was staying and painting with him in Arles, writers then fill in what might have happened with colourful details often suggesting that he removed his entire ear.

"As the pair approached a bordello, their row intensified, and Gauguin cut off Van Gogh's left earlobe with his sword – either in anger or self-defence.

He then threw the weapon in the Rhone. Van Gogh delivered the ear to the prostitute and staggered home, where police discovered him the following day, the new account claims." (Samuel, 2009)

"Vincent van Gogh didn't actually cut off his entire left ear, just a little piece. This happened when temperatures flared with Paul Gauguin, the artist with whom he had been working for a while in Arles. Van Gogh's illness revealed itself: he began to hallucinate and suffered attacks in which he lost consciousness. During one of these attacks, he used the knife. He could later recall nothing about the event." (The Van Gogh Museum, 2015)

None of the stories are false; they are just presented differently. The Van Gogh Museum is an academic institution and so is the most likely to have accurate information about Van Gogh.



How to reference your research

The *Visual arts guide* states:

"Every image used within the comparative study must be appropriately referenced to acknowledge the title, artist, date (when this information is known) and the source".

The same applies when you include your own artwork.

A citation is a way of telling the reader that your information has come from elsewhere. A reference is the detail of who wrote this original information, when they wrote it and where it came from. The sources screen is a list of all the references from your comparative study.

As you research you will need to keep a list of references so that you will be able to cite them in the study and then compile your sources screen. Look at the case study to see how to do this.

Assessment criteria for the comparative study

Part 1: Comparative study		Marks	Total
A	Analysis of formal qualities	6	30
B	Interpretation of function and purpose	6	
C	Evaluation of cultural significance	6	
D	Making comparisons and connections	6	
E	Presentation and subject-specific language	6	
F	(HL only) Making connections to own art-making practice	12	42

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Tip

Properly citing your sources shows that you have researched thoroughly and that you know how to distinguish between other people's ideas and your own original comment. If you don't do this, then you are committing plagiarism (copying). The IB can disqualify your work and remove your certificate or diploma. Simply listing your references on the sources screen does not mean that you can then copy the words freely into your study. You must still use quotations and citation at the point of use as described in this section.



▲ "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans [Premonition of Civil War]", Salvador Dalí (1936)

Case study

Kierlan has found good information from the Philadelphia Museum website about the Dalí painting that is in their collection. Here is part of the museum text.

"Though it is likely that Dalí changed the title after the military coup to add to the seemingly prophetic power of his unconscious mind, a volatile climate of social and political struggle had existed in the country for years. Dalí began his studies for Soft Construction with Boiled Beans in 1935, sketching the hideously deformed anatomy of the colossal creature."

Kierlan makes these notes in her visual arts journal:

- He prepared for the painting in 1935, before the civil war.
- He changed the title so that it would seem that he had anticipated the war.
- Spain was in a state of social and political struggle.

And she records where she read this: Education: Philadelphia Museum of Art <http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/51315.html>.

This is new knowledge to her and however she decides to use this information she must tell the reader where it came from. This is what she writes on her comparative study screen,

"Dalí began the painting in 1935 by sketching the deformed figure, but he changed the title to make it seem as if he knew there was going to be a civil war. (Education: Philadelphia Museum of Art) However, I think that even though he did this the painting still reflects the suffering of the Spanish people at this time."

She has put in a reference so we know where the ideas came from and then made a personal response to the information. She will also put this reference onto her sources screen.

Introducing quotations

Simply adding quotations to your screens will not show that you have understood their relevance to your study. Instead introduce them and then respond by expanding or explaining the ideas.

Case study

Kierlan finds Dali's description of "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans" on the Philadelphia Museum website. She can make a direct quote:

"Dali described this painting as being 'a vast human body breaking out into monstrous excrescences of arms and legs tearing at one another in a delirium of auto strangulation.' (Education Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2015) We can see this from the way the limbs transform from soft flesh to gnarled stone like forms in the feet and hands creating a nightmare surrealist vision."

Or she can paraphrase:

"The monstrous human forms according to Dali break out into a delirium of auto strangulation. (Education Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2015), which is typical of his "paranoiac critical" method."

In both cases she has linked and developed Dali's words to other ideas with her own comment.

<p>[Kash] [Kington]</p> <p>Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent Johannesburg Art Gallery</p> <p>Education: Philadelphia Museum of Art</p> <p>http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/51315.html</p> <p>[Education]</p> <p>[Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent, Johannesburg Art Gallery]</p> <p>Britannica School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Salvador Dali, [2015]. In <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i>. Retrieved from http://school.eb.com/levels/intermediate/article/273904http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/141224/Salvador-DaliStock Photo - SPANISH CIVIL WAR (1936-1939) Anarchist fighters from the National Confederation of Labour in Barcelona in July 1936Stock Photo - Makonde carvers with ebony carving in Dar es Salaam TanzaniaFiona Bradley, "Dali, Salvador." <i>Grove Art Online, Oxford Art Online</i>. Oxford University Press, Web, 22 Mar. 2005. <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T021196>. <p><i>Twentieth Century Painting and Sculpture in the Philadelphia Museum of Art</i> (2000), p. 76. Look up proper details</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>[1] Salvador Dali, <i>The Secret Life of Salvador Dali</i>, translated by Haskin M. Chevalier (New York: Dial Press, 1942), p. 352.</p> <p>[Chevalier, 1942]</p>	<p>List of Sources.</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p><i>Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent</i>. Johannesburg Art Gallery. [n.d.]. Johannesburg.</p> <p>Chevalier, H. M. [1942]. <i>The Secret Life of Salvador Dali</i>. New York: Dial Press.</p> <p>Education. [n.d.]. Retrieved December 25, 2015, from Philadelphia Museum of Art, http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/51315.html</p> <p>Kash, S. L. [n.d.]. <i>Makonde</i>. Retrieved March 2005, from <i>Grove Art Online, Oxford Art Online</i>. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T053338>.</p> <p>Kington, Z. [n.d.]. <i>A Host of Devils: The History and Context of the Making of Makonde Split Carvings</i>. Retrieved from Google Books: https://books.google.co.uk/</p>
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- ▲ This is Kierlan's list of sources which she will upload with her completed comparative study. She used the citation tool in Microsoft Word to compile her references as she went along. This helps to ensure academic consistency in her list. Remember to cite the illustrations too.

The roses will be red. Red uses an
symbolical of love & lust, passion.

However, red connotes
danger & blood, thereby
reflecting
the violence
prevalent
in prostitution.

The roses
will be botanically
shown. The petals to
be both dye and acrylic
paint will be used to
create the vibrancy of
the red.



All the top of the
kimono there will be
showing red roses taken
from my stage of African
tribal art & the "Jurnal
in Jambanja" the
magazine published.

This will include the beautiful,
elegant designs of traditional
Japanese Kimonos & will present
the artistic challenge & beauty of
the contrast.



The background colors will be a very dark,
blackish green, like that of the
"Olympic". The darkness
of the colors makes the
brightness of the red stand out
the blue-grey effect reflects
the seriousness of
such practices how they
are often conducted in
shady places. The
background will be
stained with dye

Part of the
red of the roses will
be dripping down.

This will be done
with acrylic
paint rather than
dye to prevent the
dye running into
each other. The meaning
of red reflects the loss
of control the prostitute
has on her situation.

Everything has become
blurred - the lines between
her emotions & her "professionalism".
Low wages look like blood
dripping down → passion overflowing,
violence overflowing.

Towards the bottom

The roses will be dying, low wages
shown by fading &
fading petals. This is to reflect
the rot in the lives of the
prostitutes, the carelessness
involved. They are decaying,
possibly physically and also
emotionally. The dead flowers
show the heartlessness &
street prostitution.

This is a design for the
front & back of the kimono. It
will be made of washed silk that will
be dyed in a special professional way.
The silk will be folded and made to
show the shape of the
kimono.

The hemline will be frayed & torn to
demonstrate the interior raggedness
beneath the exterior elegance and
the emotional distress the prostitute
experiences. The hemline also represents
the deterioration of the prostitute's
situation as she gets older and
therefore less desirable.

▲ This student has made careful annotation on her watercolour drawing of a Kimono.

Visiting museums, exhibitions and galleries

We understand a work of art in real life differently from a reproduction. The unfamiliar context of a museum or gallery makes us look at objects differently, in a more focused way, and we tend to give them a different value than we would if placed elsewhere.

Experiencing in real time and space at least one of the works for your comparative study is important. This might be through a school museum or gallery visit, or perhaps seeing an artwork displayed in a public space. You could organize this visit yourself, or make it part of a holiday trip. Or you might be lucky enough to visit an artist's studio.

Wherever and however you see art it is important to record your experiences carefully. It is possible to see a lot of art in a short time by wandering through a museum, but if you are going to leave with really useful material for your comparative study it is important to slow down. An hour of focused first-hand observations in front of one work of art will provide invaluable material for you to use later.

Prepare your visit

Arrive with an objective. Scan the museum/gallery website to make a selection of works that you think you want to see. Check that the work is on display! Then download information and make some preliminary notes in your visual arts journal. You might change your mind when you arrive if you are inspired by something new, but this preliminary research will still have been useful.

Record your observations

Your visual arts journal will be vital for recording your experiences when seeing original artworks in context. Most museums allow photography (except for special exhibitions) so use your camera to record the way the artwork is displayed, to give a sense of scale and to note the details on the exhibit label. If the work is three-dimensional record the kinetic experience of moving around the work.

It is tempting to rely on just your electronic record to refer to later, but in order to properly understand artworks you will need to slow down so that you achieve an in-depth response. Change the pace of your looking by doing one or more of the following:

- a **schematic** drawing with annotations
- a written description
- a focused drawing.

In the example on the next page, a student has used their visual arts journal to make careful notes during a visit to an exhibition of sculptures by Anthony Gormley. Notice the clear drawing style, which has helped to record the shapes and distinctive features of the sculptures. The journal page shows quick and effective note taking.



▲ We become accustomed to viewing artworks as reproductions. However, the experience of seeing the original artwork in a museum, such as this painting by Chuck Close, is quite different. We can properly understand the impact of scale or the handling of media.

1. Visit the artist's website to see the original artwork and any related information.

2. Read the artist's biography and any related information.

3. Read the artist's statement and any related information.

4. Read the artist's interview and any related information.

5. Read the artist's exhibition history and any related information.

6. Read the artist's critical reception and any related information.

7. Read the artist's influence and any related information.

8. Read the artist's legacy and any related information.

9. Read the artist's impact and any related information.

10. Read the artist's significance and any related information.

Key terms

Schematic: as in a diagram, like the simplified figures of a man or woman on the doors of bathrooms in public places or the characters in the television show *South Park*.

1. Visit the artist's website to see the original artwork and any related information.

2. Read the artist's biography and any related information.

3. Read the artist's statement and any related information.

4. Read the artist's interview and any related information.

5. Read the artist's exhibition history and any related information.

6. Read the artist's critical reception and any related information.

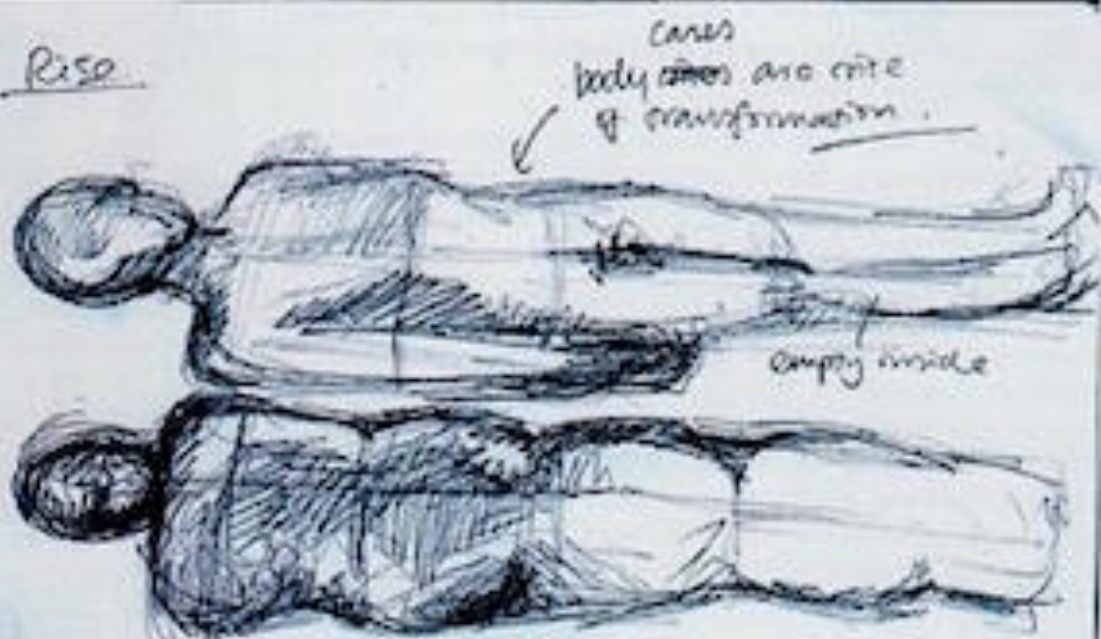
7. Read the artist's influence and any related information.

8. Read the artist's legacy and any related information.

9. Read the artist's impact and any related information.

10. Read the artist's significance and any related information.

Rise



Gormley - "I agree to become next"

- ↳ go into another level of existence
- "recapture for sculpture an area of human experience which has been hidden for a while"

This work's idea + significance is not only on the piece itself, but also behind it + the process of making it.

These are the sculpture of (actually world) of Gormley

himself.

- ↳ It's to do with very simple things:
 - what it feels like to look out a sea
 - what it feels like to be cold / drowned
 - what it feels like to be absolute alone, quiet.
- just aware of the passage of air around the body

★ Both the memorial of a particular action + time
(containers of memory)

When you look at it, you would feel
a great one body core and actually having
spirit - core in old in them → memory



▲ Clear line drawings and notes make this a really effective record of looking at Antony Gormley's sculptures.

Consider the cultural and architectural context of the work

We look at objects differently in an art gallery because we arrive with the expectation of a new experience. The surroundings help to create this special atmosphere. In a modern gallery the neutral white space is evenly lit and devoid of distractions. The audience is sometimes subdued and visitors tend to show the same respect that you might expect of those visiting a shrine or place of worship. They are full of expectation and heightened sensibility. Even if you put everyday objects in this context we see them differently.

In a traditional gallery, the rich surroundings, ornate frames, gold and expensive wall coverings help to create a sense of value.

How to make formal analysis of art in a gallery

Describe the formal qualities using the seven formal points from earlier in this guide.

Materials and technique: Consider how the work was made. How did the artist start? Another way of answering this is to ask: How would I make a copy of this work? Where would I start? What materials would I need? Take a really close look at the surfaces. Usually you can see the underpainting and raw surfaces that the artist has worked on by examining the edges of a painting. With sculptures and artifacts you will need to consider the combination of processes of construction or reduction, modelling or casting and so on.

Curation: How is the work exhibited? Consider the architecture and decoration of the room. (And of the museum.) Consider the decisions made by the curator. Why here? Why with the other works of art in the gallery? Is there a deliberate dialogue between the exhibits? Ask how it could be displayed differently. Would this change the meaning? These are factors that you will want to consider in relation to your exhibition component in time too.

Presentation: The framing or lack of it; the pedestal or lack of one for a sculpture. How might you present it differently? Who made these choices and why? Not necessarily the artist, but perhaps a gallerist or previous owner. Or perhaps it is in the original frame designed by the artist.

Provenance: What is its **provenance**? In other words, how and why did it come to be exhibited here and in this way? Answering this question will help consider the contextual meaning.

Key terms

Provenance: this is the term used to describe the history of who has owned an artifact or work of art.

Tip



You will find information about the provenance of an artwork on the museum label or on its website. For example, the provenance for Dalí's "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans" is given as:

"With Julien Levy Gallery, New York, by 1937 (on consignment from Peter Watson?); Stendahl Art Galleries, Los Angeles, purchased from the artist, November 4, 1937; sold to Louise and Walter C. Arensberg, Los Angeles, 1937; gift to PMA, 1950." (Education Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2015)

Sculpture I- William Pye

The 'Rolling P' was the sculpture at The Yorkshire Sculpture Park which I first looking at the most and wished to look into further. The sculpture was placed in front of a white, light brown stone background, which created a contrast with the reflective, silver stainless-steel sculpture. The placement of the sculpture portrays the idea of a garden, which is natural and contains earthy colours and materials like rock, plants and flowers! and an unusual man-made substance and peculiar shaped object being thrust into the middle of the nature. In some way though, both materials compliment each other, particularly because the sculpture has water running down it in a way that is known as the roll-wave concept. This is when water flows over a smooth surface to create a pattern where a thin film of falling water is pulled by surface tension into rhythmic wave patterns. The movement is subtle and often appears to dissolve the substance of the sculpture behind it, leaving it looking translucent. The movement of the water can even be seen from afar.

The sculpture has kinetic properties because it makes the audience interact with it as it changes in relation to our movement around it, it is also viewed as experiential, as we the audience make the sculpture and it will be different for each person viewing it. It can be said that a sculpture is truer and more real because we can touch it, and it is 3-Dimensional... whereas a painting is just a picture or representation of something.

Pye says that this sculpture is "a member of a family of pieces which... (were) inspired by a photograph by Edward Weston. This is of a section through a nautilus shell and suggested to me the idea for a vertical sculpture that was a direct development of my ongoing roll-wave series."

From an early age Pye had a fascination with water and all the different forms which it took. Movement, reflection and the use of light in his earlier sculptures first led him to consider using water as a material for his artistic expression. He also used the natural world as a source of inspiration, which can be seen through the natural forms that his sculptures take. He believes that the natural world is interpreted through metal and water, with such simple concepts producing objects of great sophistication and beauty.

Pye uses water with his sculptures in a variety of ways, which includes the cascade concept, the flowing bowl concept, the deflection concept, hydrostatics, jets, reflection, the roll-wave concept, sprays, the starburst concept, to topography concept and spouts. Each different concept can completely change the look of a sculpture, giving it a whole new meaning.



Yorkshire Sculpture Park, England
 The 'Rolling P' sculpture by William Pye
 The 'Rolling P' sculpture by William Pye

▲ This student was excited by William Pye's fountain during a visit to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. She used this experience as a starting point for her comparative study that compared modern with Baroque fountains. Notice how the first two paragraphs are entirely based on her personal experience of the work in context. This is reinforced by her photographs and gives an authenticity to her later comments on Pye's intentions.

TOK



Consider these questions in relation to a museum experience:

- Why are some objects treated as art?
- Why do we put artifacts into museums?
- How does an object's function and significance change when it is exhibited in a special place?
- How does the cultural value change?
- How is cultural power exerted by the museums of past empires, such as the Louvre in Paris or the British Museum in London?
- Do ethnographic museums preserve past cultures or destroy them by taking artifacts away from their true context?

Duchamp believed that the urinal became a work of art because it was presented as such by the artist. It is more accurate to suggest, however, that the urinal becomes a work of art when it is successfully exhibited in an art gallery/museum.



◀ Sophie has thought very carefully before placing the lines which analyse composition onto the images. Read her text as a fine example of formal analysis and comparison. Her choice of images with their linking theme of the sea makes this especially meaningful.

In order to move beyond simple expressions of taste, the “I know what I like” approach, you will need to apply thinking skills to write about the artworks that you have selected. Analysing art can be divided between the how and the why. Firstly, describing what we can see and understanding how it was made is the critical analysis of the formal qualities. Secondly, analysing why it was made is the contextual function and purpose. A good approach is to consider artworks first for their form, then for their content, and finally for their context, although of course these things are always interrelated.

The formal elements of art section gave you the tools to make a formal analysis, as they are needed for both your process portfolio and the comparative study. You will now need to apply this analysis to the works you have selected for your comparative study.



▲ This is a really effective practical exploration of the formal qualities in architecture. Even without the text we have a clear understanding of how cantilevers, mass and space are evident in modernist building. Think about creative practical ways of showing formal qualities in the works you are exploring.



▲ Jessica was excited by Alexander McQueen's culture collaging in fashion. On this screen she explores how Nick Knight has photographed one of McQueen's creations to emphasize the negative and positive shapes. She has cleverly used collage to juxtapose Ukiyo-e prints. This effectively meets the 'creative' descriptor for presentation too.



Discobolus, Artist and Figure, Circling cup by Painter Cleonides, 6th-5th BC, Athens, Louvre Museum, Paris, France

Composition: Carefully designed with the figure fitting into a circular format to create a sense of movement. There is a balance between the negative and positive areas.

Line: the lines describe the edges of the forms to give a sense of 3D. The bulges and flow of the muscles are very realistic.

Form: the Greek artist is more interested in the rhythm of shapes than in showing realistic forms.

Space: the image is flat; there is no depth, but the artist has created the illusion of space in the negative black areas surrounding the athlete.

Light: Cleonides is not interested in showing the effects of light.

Colour: the rich black glaze acts as a foil to the warm terracotta tone. This glows with energy even in the fine lines.

Texture: the smooth surface of the ceramic sets the precision of the flowing painted lines

- ▲ This example screen compares formal qualities using the 'Seven Formal Points'. Observations are successfully identified and presented. Note that by showing the similarities and differences between the two works of art we better understand how the images were made.

Composition: the circular forms of the woman and the tub are contained by the cropped edges. The inclusion of the shelf makes our viewpoint from above very clear.

Line: like the Greek cup there is also a clear use of line to define objects.

Form: as well as Tim Degas has used chiaroscuro with the light striking the model's back to give a realistic sense of form.

Space: there is a convincing illusion of depth created by the light and shadow as well as through perspective.

Light: Degas has used pastels to render the subtle modulation of light.

Colour: Tim has used desaturated oranges and grey blues to create a subtle complementary contrast. The warm/cool theme is also repeated across the image.

Texture: he is interested in the different textures of the metal tub, the reflecting plane of the porcelain and especially the waxy quality with which flesh absorbs light.

Artist: Edgar Degas (1832-1870), The Tub (1869), Orléans Museum, Paris, France



Comparing Formal Qualities

How three artists have made images of horses?

Researched from: The Thames and Hudson Introduction to Art (2015)



Leonardo Da Vinci: 'The Horse', c.1490.

Materials: Pen and ink and wash with red chalk.

Technique: The smooth paper has allowed him to make fluid marks with the chalk. He has combined crisp fine lines with more soft focus and smudged marks.

Process: He has combined contour drawing with gesture. He has shown the outlines of the horse's anatomy. Because Leonardo dissected animals he had an accurate knowledge of the forms, which he has been able to capture in movement. His corrections and changes—pentimenti—are a record of the process of making the drawing. They record the movement of the artist's hand in time.

Comparison: His attempt to capture movement through the drawing process is a scientific recording approach that anticipates Muybridge's photographic

Edward Muybridge

Materials: He has used photography which was invented in the 19th century and relies on light sensitive material to record an image.

Process: He set up cameras in a line with cables stretched so that when the horse galloped past it tripped each camera in turn taking a sequence of still photographs. This proved that when a horse gallops all its legs are off the ground at the same time. Because the human eye can't see movement that fast previously horses were portrayed differently before he took these images.

Technique: This was called chronophotography and relied on using time lapse photography to create the illusion of movement. This was the first step in the development of motion pictures and then of film.

Comparison: Muybridge was a scientist, not an artist. He is using visual means to better understand how the world works. However, this is similar to Leonardo's intentions. This new way of seeing was an important influence on modern art.



Horse of Han - Han dynasty, China - 206 B.C image from Harry Stein photos.

Materials: Cast bronze (an alloy of copper and tin)

Technique: This was created using the lost wax technique.

Process: The artist would have modelled an armature and then built the forms with clay, then a thick layer of wax is added, with the surface detail carved into it such as the mane and saddle. Then it is covered in sand to make a hard outer casing. Small holes are drilled so that when the mould is heated the molten wax can run out, leaving a space that the molten bronze can fill. When it is cool the casing is removed. It is then polished, but over time this sculpture has created a patina because of exposure to the elements.

Comparison: The complex process has meant that the artist must keep the form of the horse simple. For strength he must have all four hooves touching the ground. This horse does not show movement like the other two instead the artist has created a strong recognisable image.

- ▲ This example approaches formal analysis by considering materials, techniques and processes. Notice how by placing the three works on the same page they make a really effective comparison too.

This print by Utagawa Yoshitora (right) (歌川 吉徳), an artist who was active from 1800-1860, is a prime example of a medical Japanese woodblock print. These woodblock prints were produced mostly to inform the Japanese public about prevention and treatment of common illnesses like cholera and measles, subjects like pregnancy, or as drug adverts. This particular print is about caring for patients with measles. I chose to focus on this print because it shows formal qualities processed by a large number of prints from this time.

Use of text, involved with the rest of the composition means it is not exclusively pictorial but also informative via text. Also note the distinctive flat label (top right) that is seen on nearly all prints of this kind.

The colours used are natural and non-offensive. The common colours in this particular print are blues and greens, which, interestingly, are the usual colours associated with health in modern western society. Blacks and reds are used sparingly but confidently.

Minimal interior setting that merely hints at their environment, isometric perspective

Figures whose features are defined by black lines, gives clarity

Grainy gradient background interworked with graphic and abstract style

The position of the figures and the furniture (especially the black bordered decorative board) in the foreground implies that the setting is a room but the rest of the composition has no regard for this.

Source
<http://www.thingy.com.au/>

Tagged by artist



- ▲ Ella used annotation to consider the formal qualities of Ukiyo-e prints. This is a very effective method as it allows her to make each point clearly and then support it by directly showing an example in the image.

Colour in Ukiyo-e Prints

The formal qualities of the prints by Utagawa Yoshitora that I have been studying are shared by all the Ukiyo-e woodblock artists like these on this screen.

They use black to frame the colour and to enhance its value.

The colours add to the spatial quality of floating.

The colours, I imagine, are faded due to time but originally they would be bright colours. The prints are built on colour harmonies by using analogous colours such as blues and greens, these are then contrasted with reds and oranges, often on the clothing which are active and lively. They also use desaturated colours especially in the backgrounds to work against the stronger saturated colours that fill the shapes of the figures. Ivory white is often used to suggest purity and to give the effect of light. It is usually framed by creams such as in the image of the geisha that I have copied above. They also use warm against cold blue contrasts. Because they were printed from separate blocks the colours were designed very carefully.

- ▲ This screen is the companion to Ella's analysis of formal qualities in the prints of Utagawa Yoshitora. Here she has used her watercolours to act as a background to comments about the use of colour in Ukiyo-e prints. Notice the colour samplers that are an effective way to capture an artist's palette.

How to interpret function and purpose

"Looking is not indifferent. There can never be any question of 'just looking'."
Victor Burgin (1982)

Your next task is to investigate the function and purpose of the works, although you will have begun to open out ideas as you described the formal qualities.

Many pieces will fulfill more than one function, for example, a wedding dress is: symbolic both of a culture and of a rite of passage; aesthetically beautiful and at the same time a practical item of clothing.

All art is made for a reason. The aim of this section is to help you consider the "why and what for?" of the artworks you have chosen to study. But remember, art rarely has a straightforward purpose. Artists often make their work deliberately **ambiguous** and rather than giving definitive answers, consider the multiple functions that your artwork may have.

Questions to ask

You will need to first research the cultural context in which the artwork was created. Refer to the research section in this chapter to guide you. When you have read about the history and context of your artworks, then you will be equipped to answer these questions.

Why was this artwork made?

Some possible answers:

For status: to enhance the power or social standing of the owner. To display wealth (through the use of precious materials, skilled craftsmanship or the creative originality of the artist).

For ritual: as a part of a religious celebration, or as a votive offering to ask for forgiveness, as an **icon** to worship, to alleviate suffering or to attain spiritual enlightenment.

For education: to teach. For example, religious works which tell a story or have a **narrative**. Images are especially important when much of a population are illiterate, such as the Christian frescos of the Renaissance or the political murals of the Mexican revolutionary artists.

To understand the human condition: through the representation of abstract concepts and feelings. Modern art does this by means of **metaphor** and **allegory**. For example, the 9/11 memorial in New York, the legacy of colonialism shown by Doris Salcedo's "Shibboleth" (2007), a fissure running through the floor of the Tate Modern in London, or the existential works of Giacometti.

As propaganda: art that contains a strong polemical (one-sided) message aimed to distort the truth for political advantage.

As documentary: to record an event. For example, Goya's etchings of the atrocities of the Napoleonic wars, or the work of war photographers such as Don McCullen. Similarly, social realism seeks to use art to show the lives and suffering of ordinary people, such as the FSA photographers in 1930s America aiming to promote change.

Key terms

Ambiguous: having more than one possible interpretation. The meanings of most works of art are ambiguous.

Tip



You will find the highlighted words useful tools in your analysis of meaning; they are defined in the glossary.

Tip



Evaluation of cultural significance

It is important to comment on the cultural significance of your selected artworks. In order to do this well you will need to understand the original cultural context in which they were made. However, before you start the task, it is worth pausing to consider your own cultural context, as we are all influenced by the values and beliefs with which we have grown up. Think about your cultural identity and what makes you different to others. Remember that these differences influence the way you interpret the world, the art that you are interested in and the judgments that you will make about it. Awareness of our personal viewpoint can help us to be more objective in our opinions, less prejudiced and more international-minded.

TBX

L'ART EST INUTILE, RENTREZ CHEZ VOUS

Jean Vautrier

This translates as "Art is useless go home". Vautrier makes use of irony to question the value of making art. In utilitarian terms the statement is correct. Yet humankind has expended considerable energy and resources in the making of cultural artifacts. Consider what justifications there could be for this. When the Taliban destroyed the ancient Buddhist sculptures at Bamiyan they claimed that the act was partly in protest at the money being paid for the statue's upkeep, which could have been better spent on the starving people of the region. What do you think?

🗣️ Social skills: defining our cultural identities

In pairs draw a Venn diagram. Write each of your names in an oval. Now fill your ovals with all the aspects of your life that define your culture. Any aspects you share with your partner go in the middle, where the ovals overlap.

Here are some suggestions:

- Personal details: religion/beliefs, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age
- Signifiers: dress, make-up, hairstyle, music, dance, food, language, customs, rites of passage (how do you celebrate birth, coming of age, marriage and death?)

When you have finished, discuss with other students. Perhaps you can divide into different cultural groups within the class.

Which aspects of cultural identity do you think are most important in relation to your judgments of visual art? Perhaps gender and religious belief?

Tip



The introduction

Your first screen will introduce your study. Make the content very clear by including:

- a title
- illustrations of the main works you will analyse
- explain any linking theme or framework.

Adding a personal touch, such as mentioning where you have seen the works or what attracted you to them, can make your work more interesting.

To question: In the past art was used within the constraints of strict **convention**, but in modern societies the role of art is often to subvert accepted ways of doing things, or to make us see with fresh eyes. **Irony** is often used to subvert convention: by choosing a disjuncture of scale; by **juxtaposing** imagery that would not normally be seen in the same context; by using an unexpected or inappropriate media; by using an inappropriate style, such as being soft and gentle for a gruesome act, and, of course, by using humour. For example, Margaret Wertheim's group project to crochet a coral reef, "transforming the hard and wet into the fluffy and dry", this is ironic and its purpose is to disrupt conventional ways of seeing the world. Appropriation is another way in which artists question the values of contemporary culture by recycling imagery. Most collage relies on the juxtaposition of images to suggest new meanings, or to disrupt the established order of the world.

For self-expression: for the personal expression of the artist. Although this is considered the artist's main motivation by a modern audience, there are in fact few artists who create art purely for themselves. Even if they are financially independent, which is rare, they will always be working for an audience. However, artists such as Van Gogh and Edvard Munch by examining their personal psychological traumas through their art help us to better understand the human condition – what it is to live, suffer and die.

For contemplation: to enjoy art for its **aesthetic** beauty; sometimes this is called "art for art's sake". In western culture the principal function of art was to be aesthetically pleasing. The Romantic movement in the 18th century changed this, considering emotions such as terror to be more powerful than beauty. Some modern art has also challenged ideas of the beautiful. Aesthetics depends on cultural context as there are different ideas of what is beautiful. Consider the classical aesthetic, that is, from ancient Greece and Rome; the machine aesthetic (this is what the Futurists aspired to – the sensual curve and gleam of a car bonnet, for example); the modern aesthetic (the pure forms and white surfaces of early modernism) or the postmodern aesthetic (the late 20th century fashion of combining completely opposing styles).

For decoration: pattern, colour, texture all serve to give variety and life to our surroundings. Decoration is the primary function of many of the artifacts in our daily lives, from the patterns on ceramics to the stripes on your trainers, and the same is true of the original purpose of many objects that are now in museums.

For catharsis: as a release from powerful emotions. This is an ancient Greek idea that to see images of violence helps us to control or release our feelings of aggression through art rather than in action. Shocking the spectator is a method of achieving this. Think also of gothic film and images of death and destruction.

Who paid for this artwork?

Consider who is paying for the materials and the artist's labour. The piece may have been made to a specific order, that is, commissioned. There may have been a contract drawn up by the patron (the person who pays for an artwork). The patron may have been a religious individual or group, the state, or a wealthy private individual. Art dealers arrange contracts with their artists. Contemporary gallerists provide studios and a wage for their artists in exchange for a set number of artworks.

Where was it created for?

Art is often made for a specific place. Consider whether this was a public or private space. Was the work made for the private contemplation of a few privileged people or for many to admire? Perhaps for a religious or a secular building. Was it designed for a specific architectural setting?

Who is looking?

Consider the audience, the viewer, the spectator. The next section considers how you might present answers to these questions, but first consider them in relation to function. Who are we when looking at this artwork? What are the ways in which we regard the figures?

जैन प्रतमि

(Jain statue)

Cultural context

This style is of Anvikha, a nature spirit from a Jain temple. Jainism is an ancient Indian religion that teaches that the way to freedom is to live free of attachments and they are concerned for the wellbeing of every creature in the universe. By treating both animals and plants with equal respect as humans. Anvikha was the standard specific to the twenty-second Tirthankara (teachers preaching the Jain philosophy) called Bahubali. Statues such as this one would have been erected in temples for Jains to worship. This statue was commissioned during King Shaka's reign of the Western Kingdom where the great Jain scholar, Shantipala, lived.

Function and purpose

This statue would have been worshipped in order for it to be every day. Rather than worshipping the individual of the Tirthankara, Jain worship the ideal of perfection that the Tirthankara have brought to the world. In Jain temples, offerings are made to pictures and statues of Tirthankaras and gods. This statue would have been one of many statues worshipped in a Jain temple.

Material, conceptual and cultural significance

As a religious icon, this statue has a large cultural significance. However, the significance should not be overstated. Every Jain temple would have extensive statues to worship in addition to offerings into the wells, as the significance of this individual statue would have been diluted and rather it was the idea of the form to worship. Jain were more concerned about the objects themselves.

FORMAL QUALITIES

The sculpture is made from marble, which was a popular stone by the classical century in India. It is carved in high, however, the central figure is no longer attached to the background, it has a more three-dimensional appearance as well as standing out more.

Jain figures tend to have little clothing and this statue is no different. There are some elaborate details in the jewelry around the arms, legs and feet. This decoration could be seen as an attempt to make the figure and therefore, typical of the Digambara Jain view that women are not allowed to be naked in public.



From (Jain Temple)
Inscribed steel with the Jain Anvikha
A.D. 1034, Central India

However, the figure's face is quite open and she adopts a serene, S-shaped which suggests that she is not trying to hide or cover-up — which is contradictory to the Digambara view as naked women are meant to get accustomed of being naked.

This statue shows Anvikha mourning a war (at the bottom right of the statue) with her sons which presents her as both necessary and strong.

Source:

<https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20190301-jainism>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/jainism>

Freya has effectively combined an analysis of formal qualities with careful consideration of cultural significance. Her combination of word processed text and handwritten comments are very effective.

A useful way of considering this question for a modern audience is to use the concept of **the gaze**: this is the word art historians use to refer to how we look at a figurative image, particularly the spectator's gaze, the gaze of the viewer at an image of a person. It was a term first used by Laura Mulvey, a feminist film theorist. More recently the art critic James Elkins has described the different types of gaze you might experience when you look at a figurative painting in a gallery:

"You, looking at the painting, figures in the painting who look out at you, figures in the painting who look at one another, figures in the painting who look at objects or stare off into space or have their eyes closed. In addition there is often the museum guard, who may be looking at the back of your head, and the other people in the gallery, who may be looking at you or at the painting. There are imaginary observers, too: the artist, who was once looking at this painting, the models for the figures in the painting, who may once have seen themselves there, and all the other people who have seen the painting – the buyers, the museum officials, and so forth. And finally, there are also people who have never seen the painting: they may know it only from reproductions... or from descriptions." (Elkins, 1996)

The gaze is a way of considering the social power relationships between the observer and the observed that are implied by figurative images, especially with respect to the male gaze and the female gaze: men gaze at women; women gaze at themselves; women gaze at other women; and the effects of these ways of seeing. Consider these ideas in relation to contemporary media. Is this statement still true?

Tip



Be careful with the word "simple". You can describe works as being "simple", meaning straightforward or direct and uncomplicated, for example, Van Gogh's sunflowers have a simple composition. However, avoid saying "simplistic" unless you intend to suggest that what you are describing lacks meaning.

Thinking skills

Consider these views on 'the gaze'. What do you think of the speakers' opinions?

"In advertising males gaze, and females are gazed at." (Fowles, 1996)

"The gaze signifies a psychological relationship of power, in which the gazer is superior to the object of the gaze." (Schroeder, 1998)

In *Ways of Seeing* (1972) John Berger observed that:

"... according to usage and conventions which are at least being questioned but have by no means been overcome – men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at."

Berger argues that in European art from the Renaissance onwards women were depicted as being:

"aware of being seen by a [male] spectator. ... Women are depicted in a different way to men – because the 'ideal' spectator is always assumed to be male and the image of the woman is designed to flatter him."

◀ Jessica shows her textiles skills on this screen. Machine-embroidering a copy of the silk patterns as well as distressing fabric to create an appropriate background has helped her to understand the relationship between materials and meaning. Notice how a gallery sketch has been presented on a final screen, making this much more personal than simply pasting in a photograph of the robe.



Case study

Klerlan has brought much of her research together onto one screen that considers the audience for both Dali and Makonde art using the McFee model.

Audience's World	Audience	Artwork	Artist	Artist's World
<p>The western collectors were by the abstract forms of sculptures that linked with Surrealism. Colonialists wanted souvenirs of their time in Africa. Excited by the imaginative power of the anthropomorphic figures.</p> 	<p>The first audience were fellow Makonde tribespeople; the works held cultural and religious meaning.</p> <p>Post Colonial audience: The sculptures were adapted to sell to German and Portuguese officials.</p> <p>Western patrons changed the style of the art. They wanted sculptures of humans and animals in the traditional African blackwood. They were then sold in Dar es Salaam and exported to Europe this is how artists like Dali saw them</p>	<p>ESKIMBA East Africa Makonde ethnic wooden sculpture www.kerry.com</p> 	<p>The artist is unknown. An ancient culture: This sculpture style is influenced by traditional Makonde sculptural traditions when they were made by tribesmen in kinship groups who were not artists.</p> <p>Makonde women with ebony carving in Dar es Salaam. www.alfamy.com</p> 	<p>The Makonde plateau in Tanzania was colonized by the Portuguese. In the 1910's they worked under a colonial system and then for the tourist trade. The carvings became so popular that the sculptors moved to Dar es Salaam to work. Those who remained behind kept to the traditional uses for sculpture. In 1920 the carving trade was nationalized by the government</p>
<p>Republican soldiers in Spain during a Spanish Civil war battle 1937 www.pinkys.com</p> <p>Spain was in a state of social and political struggle. The Spanish Civil War started in 1936. Europe on the brink of World War, divided between Fascism and Communism.</p>	<p>Fellow surrealist artists were very competitive showing artworks together. Surrealism was becoming very popular amongst art dealers and especially an American audience. Dali was selling work to collectors.</p>		<p>He was becoming famous. He was political, but his sister was tortured by the fascists and his friend Lorca was shot by the republicans so he was very effected by the civil war.</p> <p>Dali 'Soft Construction with Boiled Beans' 1935 www.alfamy.com</p>	<p>Dali was part of the Surrealist group who met regularly and showed each other their work. They shared ideas about the subconscious and art. Influenced by the ideas of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan.</p>
<p>Sources: 'Makonde' Sidney Littlefield Kasfir. <i>Grove Art Online</i>. Oxford Art Online. Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent 'A Host of Devils: The History and Context of the Making of Makonde Spirit'. Zachary Kingdon (curator). Philadelphia Museum of Art. http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/51315.html</p>				

Donald Rodney

During my research and previous skin-themed project I came across the work 'In the House of my Father' by Donald Rodney. The piece is an up-close photograph of the artist holding a small sculpture of a house. The house is made from skin that the artist had removed during a medical procedure to treat his sickle cell anemia, a condition that affects individuals of African, Caribbean, Eastern Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Asian ancestry (Tate, Hanson, 2002). The house also exists as an individual artwork. The works are a part of a collection that is dedicated to the artist's father, who died while the artist was in hospital. This piece combines ideas of family, origin, ethnicity, medical themes, health and skin. Rodney, who was constantly conscious of his own cultural identity as a black artist living in London, went on to form the 'Black Art group'. The work, although addressing a condition exclusive to a specific group of people, also discusses less culturally dependent themes like family and skin.



'In the House of my Father' – Donald Rodney, 1995; Photo

Copyright © 2002 Tate
http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/rodney-in-the-house-of-my-father



My Photos of my grandmother's hand and my own hand.

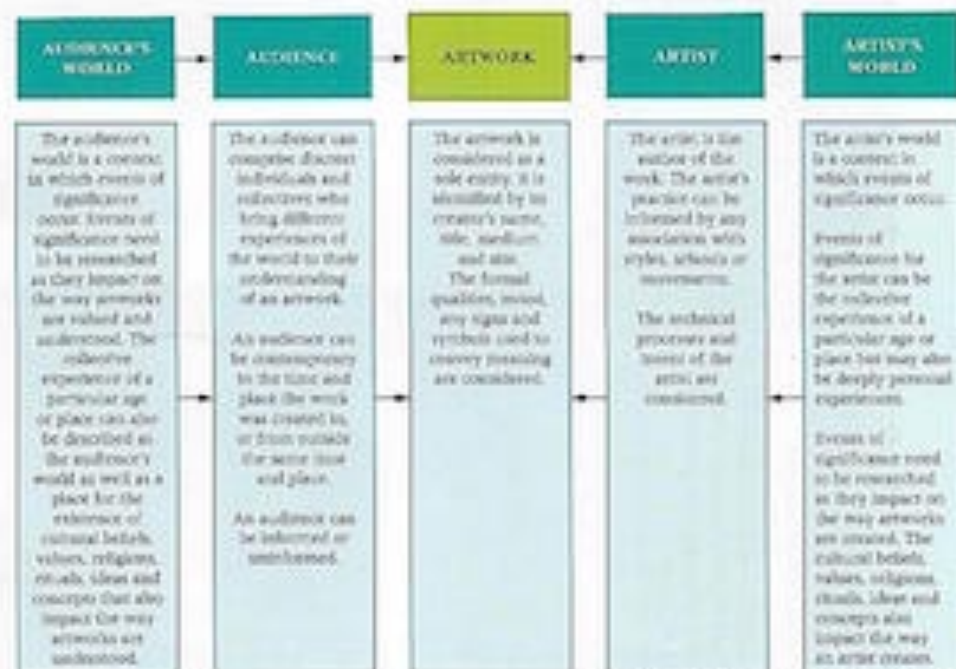


The house itself is symbolic of Rodney's illness. It concerns the fragility of existing within a structure that is unable to support the host. The house is surrounded by the hand, which can be seen as a threat to the house, extending the image of the house as fragile. The position of the hand suggests that the body the hand is connected too is not conscious, as it is sprawled across sheets. The notion of illness and mortality can be seen here. These observations are possible once the viewer transcends the initial reaction of revulsion towards the skin. However this work is not macabre or gory. It has more in common with a child picking scabs than a silence-of-the-lambs-esque work of skin wizardry.

- ▲ In this student's work the simple act of photographing her hand and that of her grandmother illuminates the meanings suggested by Donald Rodney's piece. Notice how she reflects on our response to the use of skin. She has used her own feelings about the work to explore function and purpose rather than reading the ideas of others.

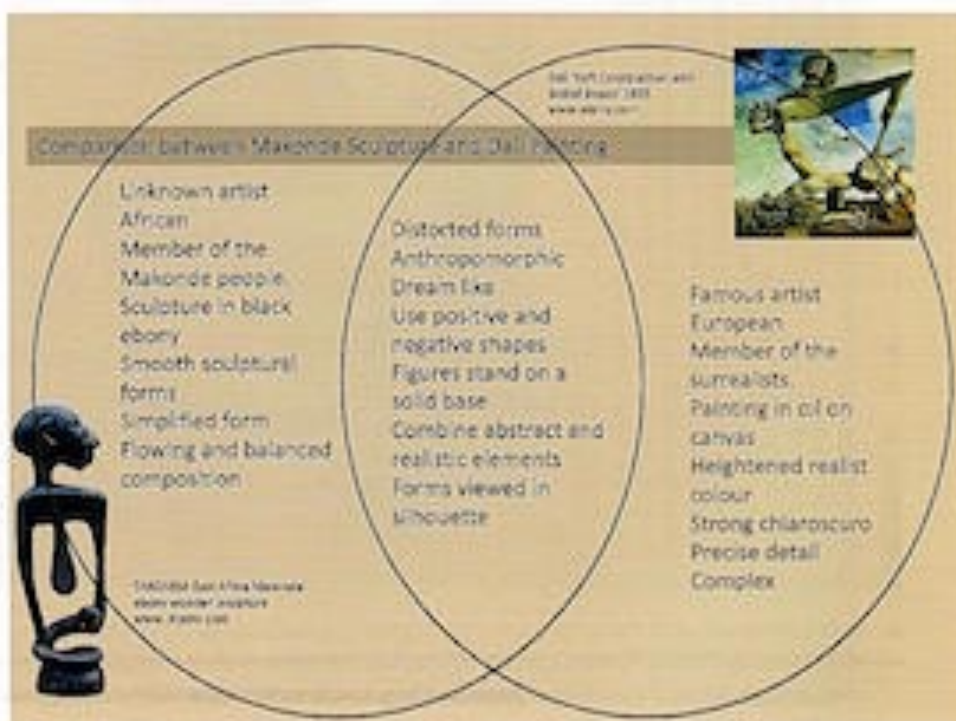
What do we mean by context and audience?

We have considered cultural significance and the viewer; now you can link those ideas with function and purpose to explore the context of the artworks, that is, the time and place that they were created and the audience. A useful way of doing this is to use June King McFee's conceptual framework (1978).



Visual arts teacher support material

To complete the table, you will need a good understanding of why and for whom the artworks were made.

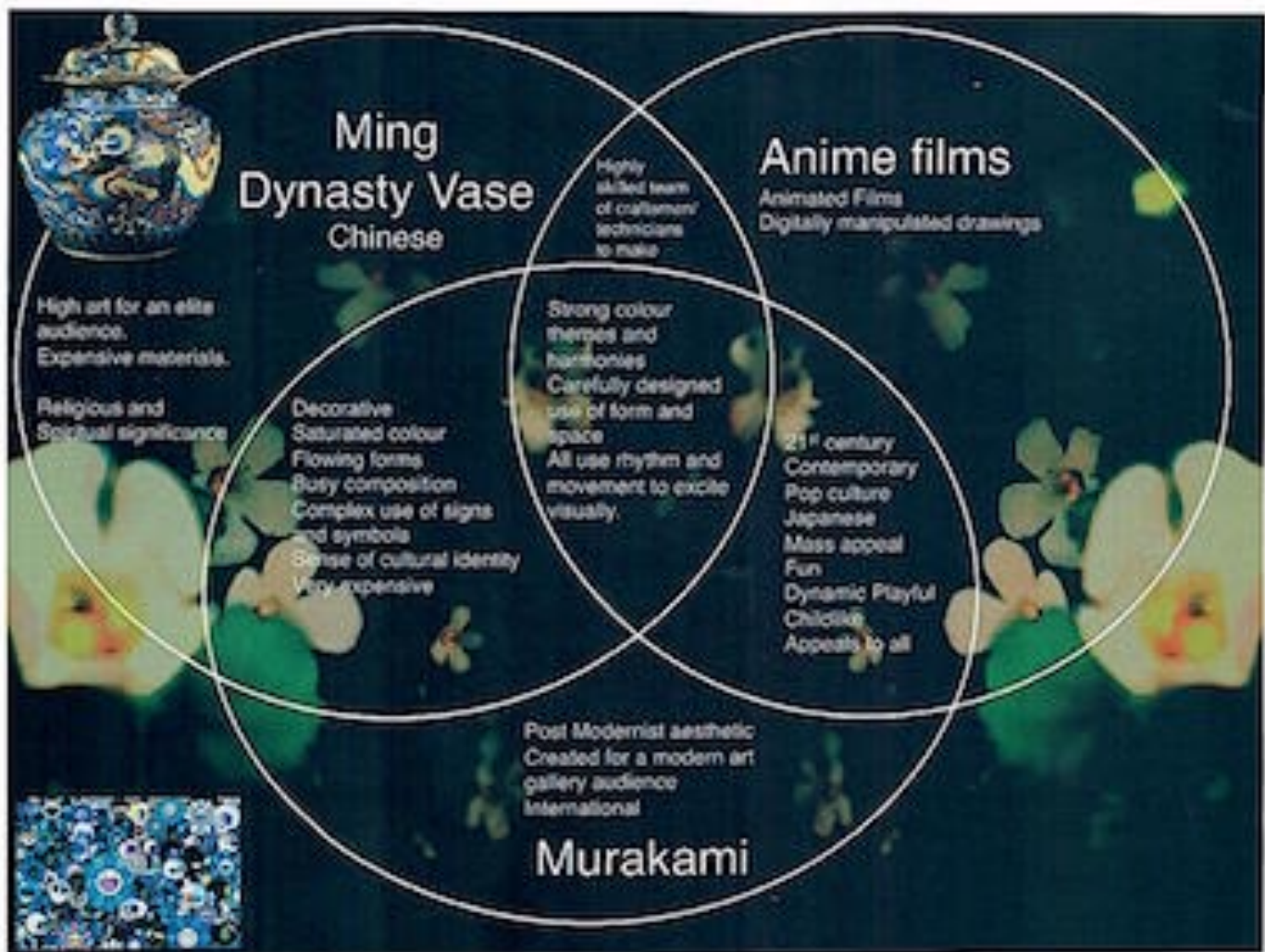


How to make comparisons

This component is called the comparative study for a reason: you are expected to compare and connect art from different cultures! Always keep in mind that you are comparing the artworks, not the artists.

A straightforward way to start this is to use a Venn diagram. This will clarify the similarities and differences. But don't rely only on these, as they can be rather reductive and simplistic: you end up pointing out the obvious and irrelevant such as there is a duck in this painting and a pigeon in that one! You can see diagrams here that have been done well, where the important stylistic, technical or thematic differences are shown. It is much better to concentrate on themes that connect the works rather than treating this as a listing exercise and it is really important to use evidence to support your comparisons, perhaps by juxtaposing details from different works. All the works need to be compared at some point, but not at the same time, so concentrate on developing insightful comment rather than lists.

Remember the suggestion at the start of this chapter was that you look for thematic links when you choose your artworks. If the works you have chosen lack common themes, this is where you will now find it hard to draw meaningful comparisons. The very best studies



Maori Woodcarving in comparison to Amanda Hensher

Maori woodcarving was brought to New Zealand by the Maori ancestors in around 1300AD, but the origin of this woodcarving is unknown. One Maori story passed down through generations is that the art of woodcarving was brought to their ancestors by Ruatapuake, a cultural hero. Ruatapuake's son offended Tangaroa, the god of the sea, and was consequently turned into a carving to adorn the god's table. Ruatapuake found his son having been told where to find him by two wooden carved posts, and even now, based on this legend, it is said that a good carving 'speaks' to you, whereas a lesser example remains silent. In this way all Maori carvings have a strong sense of being linked to mythology and stories, much like the work of Amanda Shelsler. This is intriguing to the viewer as these stories have been passed down through countless generations of Maori's and thus forges a way for modern viewers to relate and wonder about the roots of this ancient art form.

http://www.interpict.com/links/default.asp?element=products&id=ic_ratuata_maori_carving_32.jpg

This example of a woodcarving I find particularly powerful, as it has more human features than many others. It is both abstract and realistic, especially in its striking and powerful stare. The markings on its face and behind are traditional Maori designs - bold and mathematically precise, each pattern holding a different meaning.

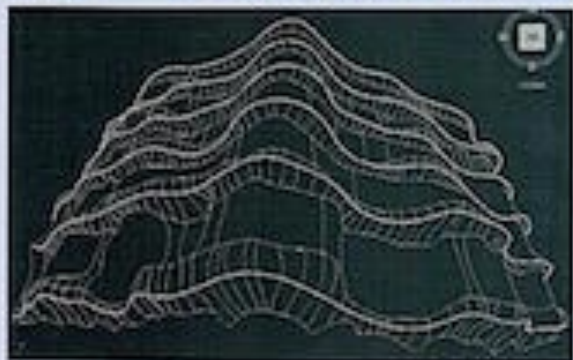
Although this is not an ancient example of a woodcarving, it was made in a very traditional way, the art having been passed down through generations. A variety of carving tools are used to achieve the final sculpture. I find it both fascinating and inspiring to see how a culture such as that of the Maori's has been able to hold on to so many of its roots and traditions. The final effect is strong and striking, with a much tighter relationship between the form and its decoration than the work of Shelsler. Rather than trying to achieve two works of art in one as Shelsler effectively does, the Maori's work to create a single, unified piece. In addition, the 3-dimensional form itself is stronger than Shelsler's. The eyes, nose, mouth, ears and hair of the face are well defined and very geometric. To the viewer this would make the sculpture come across as self-assured with a clear purpose to invoke an emotional response. This may manifest itself as awe or even fear. <http://www.noordrport.com/portrait.html>

Amanda Shelsler is an Australian artist who uses a juxtaposition of the human form and illustrative work in order to create a link between a person and a story. Although the relationship between the two is not always obvious, this allows the viewer to make their own decisions about how they relate and thus the works affect everyone differently. This is similar to the Maori woodcarvings in that Shelsler sculpts her pieces with a story in mind.



<http://amandashelsler.com/>
Accessed: 26/01/16

- ▲ This comparison focuses on different audiences.



Above is my photograph taken from the roof of the house and below is my AutoCAD drawing of the facade to analyse the flowing art nouveau forms inspired by nature.

Function and Purpose:

Gaudi's 'La Pedrera' was commissioned by the wealthy Milà family in Barcelona (1900-10)

Buildings can be considered as labels, the upper class use their houses as a way of showing their wealth and success, this allowed Gaudi to develop a different style to make it stand out. For that period La Casa Milà was cutting edge, as nothing similar had been seen before. The family Milà asked Gaudi to build their house, because he was a famous architect, so they could expose their wealth and moreover have a house with a good functionality, a factor which it is assumed an expensive house includes. This is clearly seen as it follows that houses in hotter countries need small windows to keep the interior cool and to include balconies. The colour scheme is also an important consideration, with lighter tones. The facade is made up of curved cast iron balustrades, brick parabolas, forming the shape of flowing waves. Not only in the facade but also the house includes a lot of abstract structure, due to the irregular shaped roof and variable ground plan.

▲ This student has used their freehand sketches together with drawing to make a very coherent and well-presented sequence of pages.

► This student has made effective use of graphics to compare the visual forms in the architecture of three different buildings as well as developing the contrasts in her text.



The main difference between these buildings is the form in which they were designed and built. Casa Milà is a prime example of the 'Art Nouveau' style, which was a reaction to the rigid, symmetrical forms of the 19th century. It was designed by Antoni Gaudí, a Catalan architect who was inspired by the organic forms of nature. The building's facade is a masterpiece of organic architecture, with its curved, undulating lines and intricate details. In contrast, the modern building at the bottom is a prime example of 'Organic Architecture', a style that seeks to harmonize human habitation with the natural world. This building, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, features a facade that resembles the roots of a tree, with its horizontal lines and naturalistic forms. The cross-section diagram in the middle illustrates the unique, curved roof structure of Casa Milà, which was designed to provide shade and protection from the sun. The text on the right side of the page discusses the historical context of these buildings and the architectural styles they represent. It highlights the contrast between the traditional, symmetrical forms of the 19th century and the organic, flowing forms of the early 20th century. The text also mentions the influence of nature on these architectural styles and the role of architects like Gaudí and Wright in creating buildings that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing. The overall design of this page is visually appealing and effectively communicates the key differences between the two architectural styles.

How to present your comparative study

Your work will be awarded marks for presentation. It should be clear, coherent, engaging and creative. The comparative study will be uploaded for assessment as a document file (PDF). The system does not support animations or animated slide transitions, so don't waste time planning these. You may well wish to use software such as Microsoft's PowerPoint® or Apple's Keynote®, but there are no prescribed ways of presenting your study – it really is your choice. Look at really well-designed web pages, for example, those of the major museums, or online magazines, for solutions as to how to effectively combine text and image.

The examples in this book will show you ways that other students have made good presentations, but here are some extra pointers.

- Ensure you show things clearly. In other words, the text must be legible. Avoid subtle overlays, distracting backgrounds, small text (less than 12pt) or complex fonts.
- Blocks of text look better and are easier to read than continuous lines that span the entire screen (as in a magazine or on a web page).
- Never split your text across illustrations.
- Consider creating a consistent design for your screens. This will look good and save you time redesigning each one.
- Avoid downloading pre-designed templates; these are rarely appropriate to the artwork being presented, besides this is a visual arts course and you are expected to show your personal visual skills.
- Make style choices that are visually appropriate to the works you are presenting. Do not use decoration, but choose colour schemes and fonts that enhance the artworks. For example, a gothic font is not appropriate for text about an Andy Warhol print, but could be for an Alexander McQueen dress.
- Remember that graphics and visuals can show information more effectively than just words. Try to achieve a balance between the two.
- Some of the examples in this book are scanned sketchbook pages – as long as they are easy to read this is a perfectly acceptable way to present a comparative study.
- Do not scan pages that are illegible and then provide a typed transcript – this is not considered to be clear and coherent presentation.
- Juxtaposing images can effectively communicate comparisons, especially when supported by simple annotation.
- Make your study engaging. This means being creative in the design of screens so they are appealing to read. Perhaps using collage, photography, sketches or even models to explore and explain concepts.

Reflection: The bold and direct visual qualities of the Mexican artists allowed me to make a print which has a strong narrative message. If I had not looked at their works I would not have considered it possible to combine so many different elements of what I wanted to say in the same image. I have combined the symbolic elements – such as the flags – the key political figures, myself and the angry crowd just as Siqueiros does.

This is my own choice of composition and I was strongly influenced by the different styles of the Mexican Revolutionary artists.



The presence of the artist:

The artists that I have studied such as Gotta and Rivera sometimes included themselves in their compositions to make them more personal and real. They used this to emphasise that the artist is the witness of the event. I have inserted myself into the composition on the bottom left, with an unopened umbrella and a book in hand. They symbolise my neutral view on this protest. The umbrella shows that I am part of Hong Kong, unopened because I am in the UK. I want my voice to be heard in a calm and educated way.

I wanted to make a print that would use the visual ideas from the Mexican revolutionary artists, but which would be about my own times and experiences. As I was in the UK during the HK umbrella protests I had to rely on photographs. **Colour Comparison:** I wanted to use colour in a very simple way. Diego Rivera and Pozzati used strong clear visual language that could be understood by the illiterate population. The registration of the colours is not perfect, but this fits with the rough and quick production of political protest art such as Potemkin's prints. **Composition Comparison:** I wanted to use the same composition methods as the Mexican Artists:

Shallow depth

Out of proportion with scale used to show importance

Two types of figures: Simplified human forms and then clear detailed portraits

Crowded scenes with no intervening space or negative areas.



Above: Marcel by José Garmezán Orozco

In traditional Chinese culture words are sometimes written upside down to add a secondary meaning. In the case of my composition the words are added to make it look more similar to my Mexican Revolution composition. This means unity, unless it's upside down nature implies that China and Hong Kong are not united or unified although unity is meant to arrive slowly according to the Sino-British declaration and HK Basic Law in the time frame of 50 years. It is not uncommon to read words upside down, hence the unsettled nature adds to this political response. This is intended to be a political response just as the mural by Orozco.

- ▲ Anson was interested in the student protests in his home city of Hong Kong. This led him to research the art of the Mexican Revolution. His research suggested to him how he could respond in the studio to events that were important in his life using a similar approach to that taken by the artists he had read about. He did not use painting but print to explore the visual language of these artists.

Notice how Anson has flagged up the connections with his paragraph headings. He has made the visual connection very clear by placing the Siqueiros mural next to his print so that we can readily see the similarities. However, this is not a copy. Instead he has told us how the composition style has affected his own work.

How to make connections to your own art

If you are taking this course at HL your comparative study will conclude with three to five screens that analyse and reflect on how the study has influenced your development as an artist. You will need to show connections between one or more of the works that you have studied and your own creative work.

When you are assessed for this task it is your understanding of the ideas and the extent to which you have linked processes and practices in a meaningful way that is being looked at. The quality of the artworks is not being assessed here, as you will probably have included these in your exhibition or process portfolio where they will be assessed for the skill and ideas; rather it is how you have made meaningful and informed connections that matters. So the writing here has a different purpose to your exhibition text even though you will be describing some of the same works.

To prepare for these screens, reflect and review what you have already written about other artworks. Your visual arts journal will be useful in this task. You may well want to take key points that you have made about other artists from earlier screens to now directly link to your work.

To help start your reflection consider these three ways in which your own practice might have been influenced.

- 1. Formal qualities:** Refer back to the formal qualities section of this guide and apply these to your artwork. Are there connections in the approach to colour, light, form and texture? Look for specific similarities that you can demonstrate. Perhaps, for example, you started using saturated colours for the first time in response to a vibrant painter that you were studying.
- 2. Technique and media:** Artists are frequently inspired to change their working methods by seeing what others have done. Perhaps you were triggered to change scale, format or to try a new medium. Perhaps you began to use paint more freely. Or maybe you were encouraged to be more accurate and attentive to detail. Again look for evidence.
- 3. Concepts:** How does the function and purpose of the works you studied connect with your creative idea development? There might be a strong political or social connection. Are there cultural links? You might have taken aspects of cultural style to develop. Perhaps you have applied different cultural insights to the context of your art.
- 4. Presentation:** You will need to explain connections visually by juxtaposing your artwork with examples that you have studied. These don't need to be large, just clear so that the links are obvious. Often cropping details is the most effective way of showing this. As elsewhere in the study, annotation and lists can be just as effective as longer written passages to show your thought process.

Tip



There are three aspects to address on these final screens:

- reflect on the outcomes of your investigation
- identify connections between one or more of the artworks and your own art-making
- explain how these influenced your development.

Many students forget to reflect on the outcomes of their studies of the artworks. But the most common mistake is to discuss creative ideas and process on these screens without making explicit connections [with words] to the artworks studied. This is a different task to the descriptors that are included in your process portfolio and exhibition, so don't use the same text! And remember to include images of your art-making to support the links.

Tip



Here are some key points to consider for your connections screens.

Making connections: Have you been able to make meaningful links?

Development: Have you demonstrated how your thinking/ approach has changed over time?

Reflection: Have you paused to consider what you have learned?

Analysis: Is there precision to your comments? Have you shown detail and depth?

Making Connections



Chris Offili
'Adam
and Eve'

Similarities to my work:

- I have used the same pose with the man's hand reaching for the woman's pregnant belly.
- I have used a cartoon like style for my sculpture, with simple outlines.
- I have used a modern take on symbolism by placing the apple inside the woman.
- I have mixed together unusual materials, using plaster, wire and a real apple. Offili uses real elephant dung in his paintings!



Cranach
'Adam and Eve'
1528

Similarities to my work:

- I have used the biblical story for my sculpture like Cranach.
- I have posed the two figures so that they appear to be having a conversation.
- I have used the symbol of the apple.



Reflection: In my sculpture above I wanted to recreate the intimacy of the two works of art that I had studied, but to do this in an original way.

- ▲ Julia compared different artists' portrayal of the story of Adam and Eve in her comparative study. This is one of her connections slides. She has taken a more straightforward approach than the other examples by using bullet points, but this is effective. Her sculpture is really original; she is not attempting to copy style or technique. Instead she has been inspired by the ideas of the artists, especially the way they have used symbolism.

Tip



Signal the connections between the artworks and your work clearly by using the names of the artists and the titles of the artworks studied. Then give clear evidence in words and images of the link. Trigger phrases such as these will help.

- I was influenced by ...
- The aspects of the artworks I studied that most affected my development were the way that ...
- As I developed my ideas I considered how the artworks that I had studied ...
- The ideas from this artist that are most evident in my work are ...
- This influence is evident in my use of ...
- My choice of colour/forms shows how I was influenced by ...
- I then developed the concepts I had researched into ...
- The influence can be seen in the way that I ...

Communication skills

In pairs, explain how your personal artworks have been influenced by other artists. Are these descriptions convincing? Suggest to each other ways that the ideas could be more clearly communicated.

Making Connections to Francis Bacon

Francis Bacon the Influences in my work

- Shock to the audience
- Distorted forms
- Influenced by symbolism
- Responding to the links and
- Use of second hand photographic sources
- Expressive paint handling

Reflection: I used a mixture of a photograph of the original painting with a sculpture of a figure and a photograph of a painting of a figure. I used a photograph of a painting of a figure and a photograph of a painting of a figure. I used a photograph of a painting of a figure and a photograph of a painting of a figure.

Me and my work sculpture in the churchyard

◀ Brianna has made a thematic comparative study that considers several artists' responses to conflict including Goya, Francis Bacon and Marina Abramovic. Here in her final connections slides she has concentrated on her response to Francis Bacon's "Three Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion". The screens include her painted copies of the work, which give a good sense of her exploration of his style, but she has then reinterpreted the painting in new forms. She clearly explains how it is in her final painting that the influence of these artists has become assimilated into a personal work of art rather than being just a transcription. Notice the use of bullet points to reinforce the main links between her work and Bacon's. These slides are also legible, visually appropriate and engaging with their sombre olive green and blood red theme.



Connections to my work

On the left is my final exhibition piece. Here the influence of Bacon and Abramovic is more hidden. I have used my own pictorial style and the life size textile limbs break out into the space to confront the viewer. In this and in my performance (on the right) I want to shock the viewer. This is similar to the artists I have analysed in the comparative study. I feel that in this piece I moved away from consciously imitating artists and instead to a more individual response that used their ideas/process rather than their style.



There were four stages in the development of my work from the study of Francis Bacon. The first stage was to explore the expressive nature of his forms through photography (the top left below); then a reconstruction in terms of the screaming mutilated figure that is central to his paintings; this became part of my performance piece that in turn was influenced by Abramovic; the final stage was to develop this into a personal pain and terrible response using the imagery of the Holocaust (above).

In the photographs below I wanted to capture the sense of confinement that is so important to Bacon's placement of the figure. There is a link to the Post War theme "Geometry of Fear" where organic forms, such as the human figure, are trapped by architectural spaces. I chose the shower cubicle because it has the perfect empty associations of a torture room that Bacon suggests in his interiors, as well as the disturbing paper that suggested harsh surgical instruments. Similarly I used the steel armature for my performance that was inspired by the sculpture form that Bacon's figure perched on.



I responded to the expanding form of Bacon's figure. I wanted mine to have the same sense of awkwardness.

