

HERE'S HOW TO SHOW YOUR CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

25% of your GCSE!

Artist's Life

- Where and when was the artist born?
- Was he/she part of a group of artists or an Art movement?
- Which other artists influenced him/her?
- Who did he/she influence?
- What was the subject matter of their work usually (e.g figures, still life, landscape?)
- Were they a founder of a new type of art?

Content

- Which artist created this piece of work? What is it called? When was it created?
- What can you see in the art work?
- What materials have been used?
- How have the materials been used? (technique)

Formal Elements (the bits that make up the picture)

- Describe the colour scheme. What colours can you see? are they all warm or cold colours? Are there any colours that contrast each other (make each other stand out)?
- What shapes can you see? How large/small are they? How many are there?
- Are there any patterns or lines? Where?
- Is there any text? Where? What does it say?
- How would you describe the texture of the picture? Does it look rough/smooth etc?
- Where are the light and dark areas? Are there shadows?
- Does the image look 3D or quite flat? Where?

Visual Language (the message behind the picture)

- What mood do you get from the picture? How does it make you feel? Why?
- What time of day/time of year do you think it is?
- If there's writing, what do you think it means?
- What do you think the image is about? What does it remind you of? What does it make you think about?

Composition (how the picture has been put together)

- How are the shapes and lines arranged?
- Are there any gaps?
- What do you notice first in the picture?
- How do the formal elements guide your eye around the image?
- Can you draw a diagram to show the compositional design?
- Have they used the rule of thirds, framing, fill the frame, leading lines, balancing elements, depth, symmetry, pattern, negative space?

Personal Opinion & Analysis (get higher marks for analysis!)

- Do you like the image? Why? Which bits in particular?
- Is the work typical of a movement or group of artists (e.g Cubism)?
- Is the work typical of the artist's overall style? Explain why it is similar/dissimilar to their other work.
- What does the art work make you think/feel? Which elements force you to think/feel this?
- Explain the differences between his/her earlier work to his/her later work.
- What did the artist say about his/her work?
- What did other people think to his/her work?
- How has the work inspired your own work? What specifically do you like about the work/style that you will develop into your own work?

Try these sentence starters:

At first glance...

The work contains...

The colour scheme is...

The eye is first drawn to the...

I particularly like the.... Because...

The work reminds me of...

The work is similar to...

The title of the work suggests...

This is in contrast to...

There isn't very much...

This suggests...

Considering... it could be suggested that...

The relationship between....

KEY WORDS

Tone, Shade, Light, Dark, Colour, 3D, Line, Texture, Composition, Mood, Emotion, Shape, Pattern, Meaning, Symmetrical, Proportion, Scale, Style, Detail, Colour wash, Media/material

"I think that... because..."