

2-D Media, Materials, and Techniques

AP 2-D Art and Design

Drawing Media

Media are the materials an artist works with. Drawing media make marks directly on a surface and are the foundation of most 2-D work.

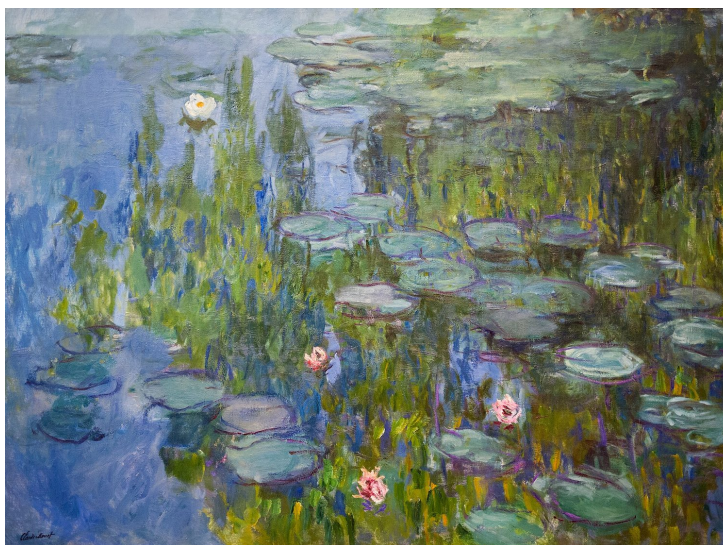
- **Dry media** : graphite (pencil), charcoal, conté, chalk and oil pastel, coloured pencil.
- **Wet media** : pen and ink, brush and ink, markers.
- Mark-making techniques: **hatching** , **cross-hatching** , **stippling** , blending, and scribbling.
- The **tooth** (texture) of the paper changes the line and value possible.

Drawing is used both to **investigate** ideas (studies and sketches) and to make finished works.

Painting Media

Painting applies pigment held in a **binder** to a surface, building colour, value, and texture.

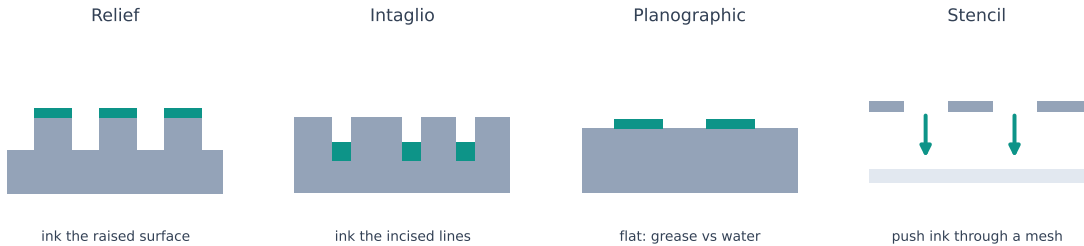
- **Watercolour** is transparent; **gouache** is opaque and water-based; **acrylic** dries fast; **oil** dries slowly and blends richly.
- The **support** and **ground** (paper, canvas, board; primer or **gesso**) affect how paint behaves.
- Techniques include washes, **glazing** , wet-on-wet, dry-brush, and impasto.



Oil painting builds colour in layers: media choices shape surface, value and space

Printmaking

Printmaking transfers an image from a prepared surface (the **matrix**) to paper, so many copies (an **edition**) can be made.



AP Art 2-D · Media · four printmaking families (side-view cross-sections)

Relief prints from the raised surface; intaglio from incised lines; planographic from a flat greasy image; stencil pushes ink through a mesh

- **Relief** (linocut, woodcut) – ink sits on the **raised** surface; cut-away areas stay blank.
- **Intaglio** (etching, engraving) – ink sits in lines **cut below** the surface.
- **Planographic** (lithography) – image and non-image areas are on the **same level**, using grease and water.
- **Stencil** (screen printing) – ink is pushed **through** open areas of a mesh.

The matrix is reversed, so the printed image is a mirror of the plate.



Dürer's engraving Melencolia I: in intaglio the lines are cut into a metal plate, and the fine, dense lines that engraving allows build deep shadow and rich detail

Collage and Mixed Media

Collage assembles found materials onto a surface; **mixed media** combines two or more materials or processes.

- Collage glues papers, photos, fabric, or found objects into a composition.
- Mixed media layers processes – for example, drawing over paint, or print with stitching.
- These add **actual texture** and unexpected meaning; a found material (a ticket, a map) can carry meaning beyond its look.

Photography and Lens-Based Media

Photography makes images with light and a lens; the elements and principles apply to the frame just as in any 2-D work.



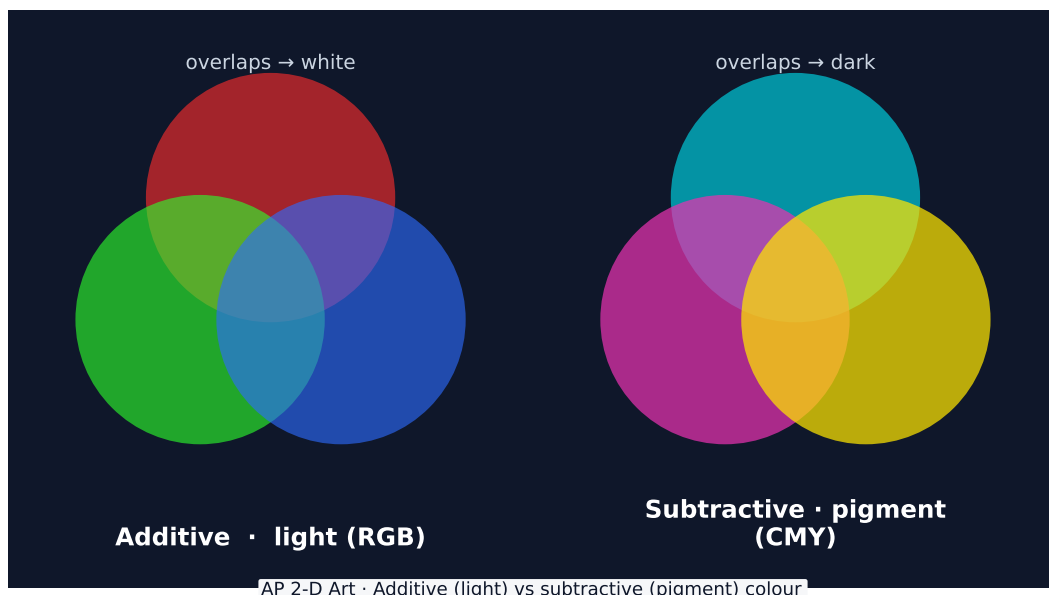
Alfred Stieglitz's The Steerage, a famous early art photograph: the gangway, funnel, and figures form a strong geometric composition, so the elements and principles apply to a photo too

- Key controls: framing, **focus** , **exposure** (light), **depth of field** , and viewpoint.
- The rule of thirds, leading lines, and negative space compose a photograph.
- **Editing** (cropping, contrast, colour) is part of the creative process, not just correction.

Digital Art and Design

Digital media create and edit images on a computer or tablet, working in layers.

- **Raster** images are made of pixels (photo editing, digital painting); **vector** images use maths paths and scale without losing quality.
- **Layers** let an artist build, mask, and revise without damaging earlier work.
- Digital colour uses **RGB** (screen, additive) or **CMYK** (print, subtractive); keep files **high-resolution** for the portfolio.



Mixing light (RGB) brightens toward white; mixing pigment (CMY) darkens toward black

Graphic Design and Illustration

Graphic design communicates a message visually; **illustration** makes images that support or tell a story.

- Design combines **type**, image, colour, and layout to reach a viewer or client.
- **Visual hierarchy** guides the eye to what matters first, through size, weight, and placement.
- **Typography** – typeface, size, spacing, alignment – is a core design tool.
- Design and illustration are **problem-solving**: the audience and message shape every choice.

Worked example (writing about process). When your written evidence must explain a **material and process**: “I used charcoal on toned paper because its soft,

smudgeable line let me build deep shadow quickly, and I lifted highlights with an eraser to suggest form.” Notice the shape – name the medium, say *why* you chose it, and connect it to the **idea** you were exploring. Listing a material with no reason earns little.

Exam tips

- Match the **medium** to the intended effect, and justify the choice.
- For **printmaking**, state **relief** versus **intaglio**, and remember the printed image reverses.
- Explain **transparent** versus **opaque** paint, and **layers** and **vector** versus **raster** in digital work.
- Treat **collage** and **mixed media** materials as meaning, not just texture.
- In **graphic design**, show a clear visual **hierarchy** serving the message.

Vocabulary card meanings

binder: The substance that holds pigment together on a surface. Watercolour: Paint thinned with water, usually transparent on paper. gouache: Opaque water-based paint that can cover what is underneath. acrylic: Fast-drying paint whose pigment is held in a plastic medium. oil: Paint whose pigment is held in a slow-drying fat from seeds. support: The surface a picture is made on, such as paper or canvas. glazing: A thin transparent layer of colour laid over a dry layer. Printmaking: Making pictures by transferring ink from a prepared surface. matrix: The block or plate that carries the image to be printed. edition: The number of prints issued together, which may be pulled from more than one plate. Relief: A print taken from ink sitting on the raised parts of a block. Intaglio: A print taken from ink held in lines cut down into a plate. Planographic: A print from a flat surface, where image and blank areas are level. Stencil: A print made by pushing ink through openings in a sheet. Collage: A picture built by sticking pieces of paper or other materials down. mixed media: A work that combines more than one material or method. Photography: Making an image by recording light. focus: How sharp the chosen subject is in a photograph. exposure: How much light is allowed to reach the sensor or film. depth of field: How much of a scene, from near to far, looks sharp at once. Editing: Changing a picture after it has been captured. Digital media: Artwork made or stored as computer data. Raster: An image built from a grid of pixels. Layers: Separate stacked levels in a digital file that can be edited alone. Graphic design: Planning type and images so a message is clear. illustration: A picture made to explain or accompany a text. type: The lettering chosen for a design.