Investigate: Inquiry and Process

AP 2-D Art and Design ▪ Topic 4

AP 2-D Art and Design

What we will cover

1. Inquiry & asking questions
2. Sources of ideas
3. Materials processes & ideas
4. Art in context
5. Evaluating work
6. Documentation

1

Inquiry

Inquiry – the engine of Big Idea 1

Making begins with **inquiry** 探究 – asking questions that guide a **sustained investigation** 持续探究 over time.

> Questions evolve: early questions lead to new questions as the work develops.

> Good questions can be simple: who, what, when, where, why, how, what if, and why not.

Worked example – framing an inquiry question

✗ A topic, not a question

"My investigation is about the ocean."

Nothing to test – it cannot drive many works.

✓ A real question

"How can I use colour and texture to show the ocean shifting from calm to dangerous?"

The strong question names an idea *and* points to the visual choices you will test – exactly what raises a portfolio's score.

Worked example – framing an inquiry question, in detail

AP Art 2-D · Investigate · the artistic-process inquiry cycle

Inquiry drives a cycle: ask a question, investigate, make, reflect – and let each answer raise the next question.

2

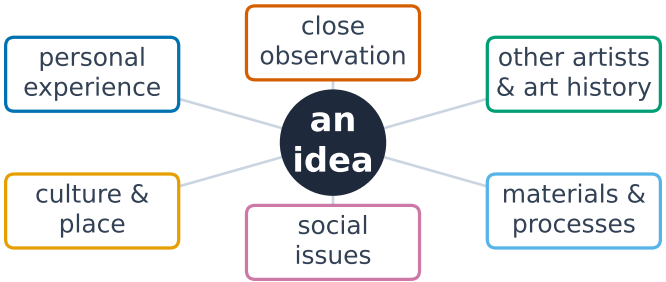
Sources

Where ideas come from

Your **experiences** 经历 inform why, how, and what you make – any event: real surroundings, imagined ideas, communication, research.

> Ideas come from **observation** 观察, memory, other disciplines, and other artists' work.

Where ideas come from, in detail



AP 2-D Art · Where sustained-investigation ideas come from (mind map)

experience, observation, culture, materials

Your **experiences** 经历 inform why, how, and what you make – any event: real surroundings, imagined ideas, communication, research.

Materials, processes and ideas

Every work is built from three interacting components 材料、过程与想法:

Materials – what it is made of

Processes – how it is made

Ideas – what it is about

> They interact: a material suggests a process; a process shapes an idea.

Investigating all three expands what you can make – and influences how viewers interpret the work.

3 Context & evaluation

Art and design in context

Context 语境 is when, where, how, why and by whom a work was made and viewed.

- artists work within or challenge traditions worldwide
- comparing works reveals materials, processes and ideas

> Acknowledging influences shows **integrity** 诚信 – never copy without credit.

Hokusai in context: historical works teach composition

Evaluating art and design

Evaluate with visual evidence against specific **criteria** 标准 – as the AP scoring guidelines do.

- name materials, processes and ideas, and how they connect
- ask whether they show **synthesis** 综合

> Informal critique as you work; formal critique with peers or a teacher.

Critique names visual evidence of line, tone, composition

How the portfolio is judged

Lines of inquiry	Sustained Investigation is built on **lines of inquiry**: a question you keep asking through the work, not a theme you illustrate.
How it is evaluated	Work is **evaluated** on the inquiry, the practice, and the revision – what changed between images, and why.
The written evidence	Two short texts must state the inquiry and describe how materials, processes and ideas developed.
The trap	Fifteen finished pieces with no visible revision score below twelve that show the question being tested.

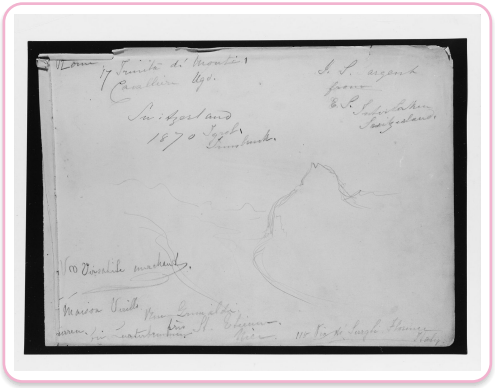
> Show the experiment that failed. Evidence of decision-making is the thing being marked.

4 Documentation

Documentation and the process journal

Documentation 记录 becomes a resource: images, notes, tests, written reflection.

> A **process journal** 创作日志 records questions, experiments and revisions over time.



Process journal: inquiry notes and experiments

The colour wheel and colour harmonies

Return to the color wheel when choosing harmonies for a series

Exam tips

- Frame the work with an open **guiding question**, not a closed yes/no one.
- Draw on varied **sources** – observation, experience, research – and cite your influences.
- Aim for **synthesis**: materials and **processes** chosen because they carry the idea.
- Evaluate through **critique** using the elements and principles, then plan a **revision**.
- Keep a **process journal**: record experiments and failures as evidence of inquiry.

5 Recap

Worked example – sharpening an inquiry

A student writes "I will make art about pollution." Turn it into a workable inquiry question.

- "Art about pollution" is a topic, not an inquiry – it asks nothing, so it cannot develop.
- A workable question is open, personal, and answerable through image-making.
- "How can layered transparency show what a river hides?"
- Test it: list ten works it could produce. Fewer than five ⇒ still too narrow.

The inquiry must generate the next piece: each work answers a little and asks a little more. Score comes from how the works develop the question – not from the topic.

Topic 4 – key takeaways

1 Inquiry

an open guiding question, not a topic – and it evolves

2 Sources

observation, experience, research – and cite influences

3 Synthesis

materials and processes chosen because they carry the idea

4 Journal

record experiments AND failures as evidence of inquiry

Check yourself

1. "My investigation is about the ocean." Why is this weak?
2. Name the three interacting components of any work.
3. What does synthesis mean?
4. Is a documented failure worth keeping in the journal?

Answers **1.** it is a topic, not a question – nothing to test **2.** materials, processes, ideas **3.** the parts work together for one effect **4.** yes – it is evidence of inquiry