

Investigate: Inquiry & Process

AP Drawing ■ Topic 5

AP Drawing



What we will cover

- 1 Inquiry & asking questions
- 2 Sources of ideas
- 3 Materials processes & ideas
- 4 Drawing in context
- 5 Evaluating drawings
- 6 Documentation



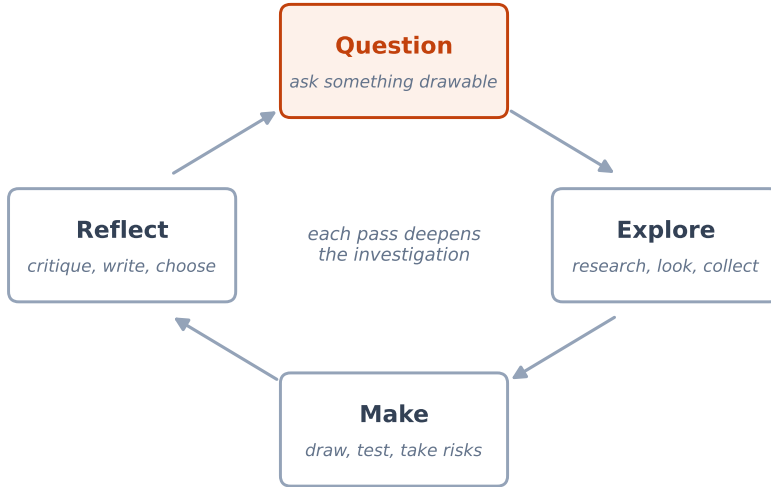
Inquiry – the engine of Big Idea 1

Inquiry is the intentional questioning that guides discovery over time.

A workable inquiry is open, personal and visual – answerable through drawing, not through a paragraph.

The **Sustained Investigation** is scored on how clearly the works relate to and develop the stated inquiry.

Investigation is a loop



AP Drawing · Investigate · the inquiry cycle: question, explore, make, reflect

Worked example – testing an inquiry question

✗ *“I will draw hands.”*

A subject, not a question. Nothing to discover.

✓ *“How can line weight express my grandmother’s hands aging?”*

Open, personal, and answerable **in drawings**.

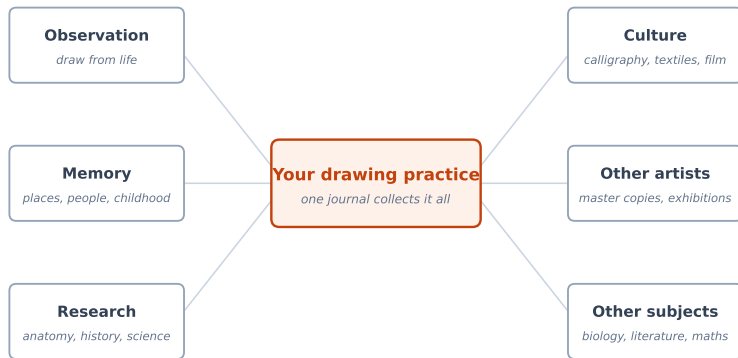
Test it: list ten works the question could produce. **Fewer than five means it is too narrow.** Questions may **evolve** mid-investigation – document the turn.

Where drawing ideas come from

Your **experiences** inform why, how and what you draw – observation, memory, research, culture, other artists, other subjects.

Reflecting on experience **sparks the question**; documenting it makes a **resource** you can return to.

Where drawing ideas come from, in detail



AP Drawing · Investigate · six sources that feed a drawing practice

observation, memory, research, culture

Your **experiences** inform why, how and what you draw – observation, memory, research, culture, other artists, other subjects.

Where ideas come from, and how to keep them coming

document as it happens

photos, thumbnail sketches, notes, collected objects – gathered **before** you need them

the ordinary wins

“the kitchen table you know beats a fantasy castle you don’t” – authority comes from knowledge, not from subject

a source wall

a folder or a wall of collected material; when momentum dips, **the collection restarts it**

master drawings

study Leonardo’s studies, Dürer’s engravings, Rembrandt’s ink landscapes as **working documents**, not finished objects

Ideas do not arrive on demand. Collecting continuously means that on a flat week you have material to work from rather than a blank page.

Materials, processes and ideas

Every drawing is built from three interacting components :

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.

Use the **CED's own vocabulary** in written evidence – materials, processes, ideas, experimentation, revision. It connects your claim to the rubric **instantly**.

The CED's three components, and how to vary them

materials

the physical substances – charcoal, ink, thread, found paper

processes

the actions – stippling, washing, tearing, stitching, printing

ideas

the concepts the work is about

let one lead

an idea can **demand** a material (rust drawings about decay), or a material can **spark** an idea

change one at a time

the fair-test habit works in the studio: vary one component and see what it does

they are statements

charcoal on torn paper and fineliner on smooth film are different *statements*, not just different looks

This vocabulary comes **straight from the CED glossary**. Use the exact words in your written evidence – the scorer is reading for them.



Drawing in context

Context is **when, where, how, why** and **by whom** a drawing was made and seen.

- artists work **within** or **challenge** drawing traditions
- comparing drawings reveals materials, processes and ideas

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



Dürer Melencolia I: historical mark systems as context

Reading a drawing in its tradition

every tradition has a language

Chinese ink line, Persian miniature, Renaissance chiaroscuro, manga screentone

ask what it was *for*

a study, a record, a plan, or a finished statement – the purpose explains the choices

copying is training

reproducing a hatching system **teaches decisions no video can** – and it is free

and it is evidence

a copy annotated with what you learned belongs in the journal

Historical technique is not homage. It is a set of solved problems you can borrow from, once you have understood what problem each mark was solving.

Evaluating drawings

Evaluate with **visual evidence** against specific **criteria** – the same move the scoring guidelines make.

- name materials, processes and ideas, and **how they connect**
- ask whether they show **synthesis**
- **critique** can be informal or formal

Revision from critique is the development the rubric wants.



Critique names visible evidence: line, tone, composition

Critique that produces a next step

the four-step ladder

describe, analyse, interpret, judge – in that order, so opinions stay grounded in what is visible

create distance

turn the drawing upside down, view it in a mirror, or photograph it small – all three break familiarity

ask one question

“does the focal point read?” beats “is it good?” – a focused question has an actionable answer

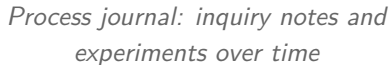
then write it down

written reflections after critiques become drafts of your Sustained Investigation writing

Judgement comes last. Most unhelpful critique is judgement arriving first, with the description skipped.

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

Date everything. Photograph journal spreads as you go.



What a process journal must actually contain

document with anything quick

phone photos, taped-in tests, dated notes, thumbnail storyboards

record the why

two lines at a decision point today **saves reconstructing your thinking in April**

photograph stages

a **before/after revision pair** is gold for the portfolio

keep tests physically

paper swatches and media trials taped into the **process journal**, with outcomes noted

the distinction

a true journal, not a decorated diary, is the difference between **claiming** inquiry and **showing** it

The journal is not preparation for the portfolio. For the Sustained Investigation it *is* much of the evidence.

Exam tips

- **Write the inquiry as one clear sentence and pin it above your desk** – every scoring row of the Sustained Investigation asks how the work relates to it.
- **Scorers must SEE the investigation:** tests, failed starts, and revision pairs are evidence; a folder of unrelated finished drawings is not.
- **Date everything.** “Over time” is a scored idea – dated journal pages prove development without a word of explanation.
- **Use CED vocabulary in written evidence** (materials, processes, ideas, experimentation, revision) – it connects your claims to the rubric instantly.
- **Photograph journal spreads as you go**, not in April: process documentation shot in a rush looks like what it is.



Worked example – sharpening an inquiry

A student writes “I will draw hands.” Turn it into a workable inquiry question.

- “I will draw hands” is a **subject**, not an inquiry – it asks nothing, so it cannot develop.
- A workable question is **open**, **personal**, and answerable **through drawing**.
- “How can line weight express my grandmother’s hands aging?”
- Test it: list **ten** works it could produce. Fewer than five $\Rightarrow$ still too narrow.

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

Topic 5 – key takeaways

1

One sentence

write the inquiry down – every scoring row asks about it

2

Open & visual

answerable through drawing; ten works or it is too narrow

3

Show the work

tests, failed starts and revision pairs are the evidence

4

Date it

“over time” is scored – dated pages prove development

Check yourself

- 1 “I will draw hands.” Why is this not an inquiry?
- 2 How do you test whether a question is broad enough?
- 3 Why date every journal page?
- 4 Is a failed start worth photographing?

Answers 1. it is a subject, not a question 2. list ten works it could produce 3. “over time” is scored 4. yes – it is evidence