

Present & the Portfolio

AP Drawing ■ Topic 7

AP Drawing



What we will cover

- 1 The portfolio structure
- 2 Sustained Investigation
- 3 Selected Works
- 4 Writing about your work
- 5 Presentation & image quality
- 6 The scoring guidelines
- 7 Academic integrity



The AP Drawing portfolio

The exam **is** the **portfolio** – there is no timed test. Two sections, submitted digitally.

Sustained Investigation is 60% of the score; **Selected Works is 40%**. Weight your time accordingly.

The AP Drawing portfolio, in detail

AP Drawing portfolio — submitted digitally in early May

Sustained Investigation

60%

15 images: works and process
written evidence: inquiry
and how it developed

Selected Works

40%

5 strongest works
identification: materials,
processes, ideas

AP Drawing · Present · the two sections of the AP Drawing portfolio

15 images + writing (60%), 5 works (40%)

The exam **is** the **portfolio** — there is no timed test.

The two sections, and the calendar behind them

Sustained Investigation

15 images showing inquiry, practice, experimentation and revision, plus written evidence

Selected Works

5 works showing **drawing skills**; they may come from **inside or outside** the investigation – choose your strongest five, wherever they came from

the AP Digital Portfolio

everything uploads through it; your teacher reviews **before** final submission

plan backwards from May

photography, writing and selection each take real calendar time – none of them is a last week

Selected Works is judged on **skill alone**, so a strong drawing that never fitted the investigation still belongs there.

The two sections at a glance

Sustained Investigation – 60%

15 images of works *and* process

+ written evidence naming the **guiding question**

scored on inquiry + practice, experimentation, revision

Selected Works – 40%

5 works showing skilful **synthesis**

+ materials, processes, ideas and :
scored on drawing skills + synthesis

Images should **tell the story of the inquiry**, not just show finished pieces – detail and **in-progress** shots are allowed.



Sketchbooks document process and revision

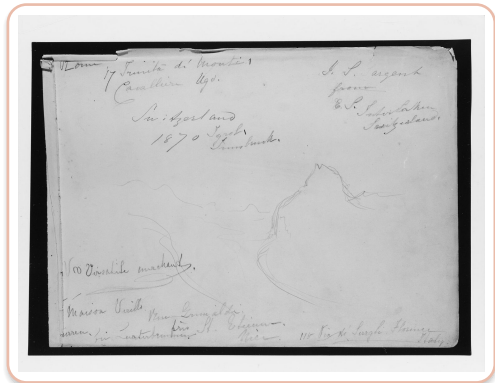


Writing about your work

Writing speaks to viewers who cannot ask you questions.

- stay within character limits – concise and **specific**
- state the guiding question **clearly**
- name materials precisely in every caption field

Relevance rule: if the text could sit under someone else's portfolio, it is too generic.



Written evidence starts in the journal next to studies

The written evidence is short, factual and load-bearing

what it does

it **directs the scorer's attention** – it does not decorate the images (CED 3.D/3.E)

concrete nouns and verbs

“compressed charcoal on gessoed cardboard, lifted with erasers” beats “mixed media”

CED vocabulary

name the skills and the three components in the exam's own words

draft early, cut hard

character limits **reward the specific and punish the vague**

Write what you *did*, not what you hoped. Every adjective you cut makes room for a material, a process, or a decision.

Presentation and image quality

A 5-level drawing shot with glare reads as a 3. Reshoot anything you hesitate over.

Even lighting, sharp focus, true colour. Crop to the work; avoid glare and keystoneing. Keep resolution high.



Document process and finished pieces in clean light

Scorers see photographs, not originals

the consequence

photograph quality **is** portfolio quality (CED 3.F)

lighting

even, indirect daylight, or a **two-lamp** setup at 45 degrees from each side

avoid

glare, shadows falling across the work, and **keystone distortion** from an angled camera

square on

camera parallel to the work, centred – or the rectangle photographs as a trapezium

check values on screen

a washed-out photo **erases the light-and-shade skill** you spent weeks building

This is the cheapest place in the whole course to gain or lose marks, and the only one where an afternoon's care protects a year's work.



The rubric ladder

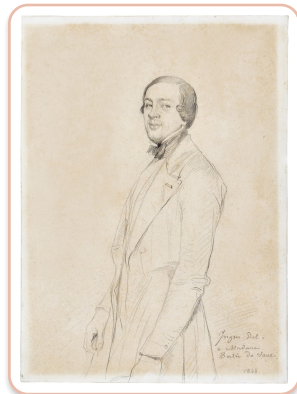
Both sections are scored against **published scoring guidelines** .
Readers use **visual evidence** *plus*
your writing.

Aim your evidence at the **top** of the ladder – and design with the criteria in mind, **not to a formula**.

Selecting the five

The Selected Works are judged on **drawing skills** and **synthesis** – they need **not** belong to the investigation.

Select with fresh eyes: thumbnail print-outs, three viewers – **overlap wins**.



Selected Works: craft and skill must read at a glance

Presentation, and what the scores actually mean

consistent backgrounds

neutral and consistent backgrounds make a sequence read professionally

a detail shot

a second image of one work, close in – use it where surface or mark quality matters

crop tightly

to the work itself; a photograph of a work on a messy floor reads as carelessness

the scale

scores 1–5 arrive in July, and college credit policies vary

what actually matters

the rubric habits are the real prize – they outlast the number

preponderance of evidence

scorers judge on the balance of what the portfolio shows, not on its single best image

A portfolio is scored as a **body of evidence**. One outstanding piece cannot carry fourteen that show nothing, and the reverse is also true.

Academic integrity

Plagiarism **cancels scores**. The College Board checks, and teachers must **certify** originality.

- work from **sources** you did not create must move **far beyond duplication** and **cite** them
- **generative AI** may **not** make your work – policy allows it only as a **documented exploration tool**, never as the artwork

Cite every reference photo you **did not take**. One missing citation risks the **whole** portfolio; thirty seconds of typing removes the risk.

Whose work it has to be

the rule

the portfolio must be your own work; borrowed images and AI tools have strict rules

citation is not enough

substantially copying another artist's work – even cited – cannot demonstrate *your* idea development

what citation is for

acknowledging a source you *worked from*, not licensing a copy

draw from life

and from your own reference photos wherever possible

the practical gain

it also **simply teaches more** – a photograph has already made the decisions a drawing should make

the self-interest

your own seeing is the only truly unique material you have

The integrity rule and the artistic argument point the same way: a copied image cannot show *your* inquiry, which is the one thing the Sustained Investigation is scored on.

Exam tips

- **Photograph like it matters, because it does** – a 5-level drawing shot with glare and keystone reads as a 3. Reshoot anything you hesitate over.
- **Fill every caption field with specifics.** “Willow charcoal, subtractive erasing, on toned Ingres paper” does scoring work; empty or vague fields waste free marks.
- **Check the relevance rule:** if your written evidence could sit under someone else’s portfolio unchanged, it is too generic – tie every sentence to your images.
- **Select the five with fresh eyes:** thumbnail-size printouts on a table, three trusted viewers, overlap wins.
- **Cite every reference photo you did not take** – one missing citation risks the whole portfolio; thirty seconds of typing removes the risk.



Worked example – writing the evidence

Write the identification for a Selected Work: a charcoal portrait built from torn newspaper.

- Materials: “Compressed charcoal, torn newsprint, matte medium on cold-press paper.”
- Processes: “Collaged newsprint ground, then subtractive charcoal; erased to reveal text.”
- Ideas: “How words written about a person compete with the face itself.”

Three fields, ≈ 100 characters each: factual, not poetic. The image **shows**, the writing **states** – never describe what is already visible.

The rubric's language ladder



AP Drawing · Present · the scoring guidelines' language ladder

The rubric's language ladder: aim every piece of evidence at the top descriptors

Selected Works: Demonstrating Skills

The Selected Works are your five strongest statements – each judged on written evidence, drawing skills, and synthesis.

- Pick for range *and* strength: together, the five should cover the whole drawing-skills list.
- Each work carries an **identification** : materials, processes, ideas – about 100 characters per field, so make every word count.
- Quality beats concept here: flawless craft and a full value range are what a 5 looks like.
- Strong candidates: the observational tour de force, the chiaroscuro drama, the expressive figure, the synthesis piece.

Choosing images, and ordering them

prove the writing

choose images that **show** what the text claims: question stated, tests shown, development visible

order deliberately

scorers read the 15 as a **sequence** – build a narrative arc, not a chronological dump

check at scoring size

view each candidate as a **small thumbnail** and at full zoom before choosing; details matter at both

the failure mode

a work that is beautiful and proves nothing about the inquiry costs you a slot

Every one of the 15 has a job. If you cannot say in one sentence what an image is evidence of, replace it.

Topic 7 – key takeaways

1

60 / 40

Sustained Investigation 15
images; Selected Works 5

2

Shoot it well

a 5 shot with glare reads as a 3 –
reshoot any doubt

3

Be specific

if it could sit under another
portfolio, it is too generic

4

Integrity

cite every source; AI may explore,
never make the work

Check yourself

- 1 What percentage is the Sustained Investigation worth?
- 2 How many Selected Works, and what are they scored on?
- 3 May generative AI produce a portfolio artwork?
- 4 What is the “relevance rule” for written evidence?

Answers 1. 60% 2. 5 – drawing skills and synthesis 3. no – only as a documented exploration tool 4. it must not fit anyone else’s portfolio