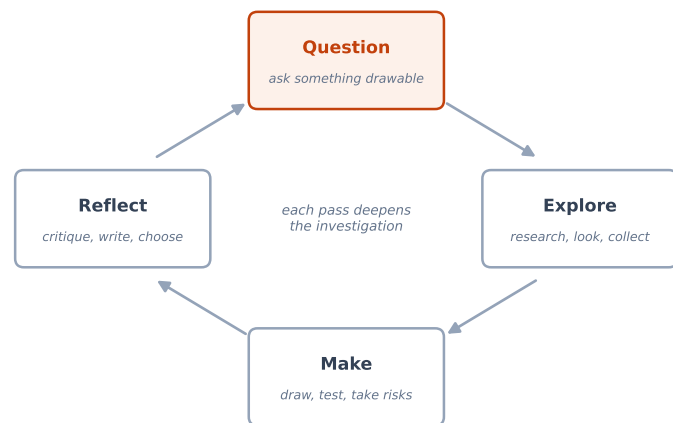


Investigate: Inquiry and the Artistic Process

AP Drawing

Inquiry and Asking Questions

Inquiry 探究 is the intentional process of questioning that guides exploration and discovery over time — the engine of CED Big Idea 1.



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

Investigation is a loop: each drawing answers a little and asks a little more

- A workable inquiry is open, personal, and visual — answerable *through drawing*, not through a paragraph.
- “How can line weight express my grandmother’s hands aging?” beats “I will draw hands.”
- Strong questions generate the next drawing: each work answers a little and asks a little more.
- Test a question by listing ten works it could produce. Fewer than five means it is too narrow.
- Questions may evolve mid-investigation — document the turn in your journal and written evidence.
- The **Sustained Investigation** 持续探究 is scored on how clearly the works relate to and develop the stated inquiry.

Sources of Ideas and Experiences

Artists’ **experiences** 经验 — surroundings, memory, culture, research — inform why, how, and what they draw. (CED 1.A)

- Ideas come from direct **observation** 观察, personal history, other school subjects, and other artists’ work.
- Document experiences as they happen: photos, thumbnail sketches, notes, collected objects.
- Ordinary subjects carry authority: the kitchen table you know beats a fantasy castle you don’t.
- Research feeds drawing — anatomy pages, historical costume, botanical structure all sharpen observation.
- Cultural sources (calligraphy, textiles, architecture) bring personal context into mark and composition choices.
- Keep a source wall or folder; when momentum dips, the collected material restarts it.

Materials, Processes, and Ideas

The CED names three working components: **materials** 材料 (physical substances), **processes** 过程 (actions), and **ideas** 想法 (concepts). Drawings happen where they meet.

- Every work is a decision triangle: *what* it is made of, *how* it is made, *why* it is made.
- Let one corner lead. An idea can demand a material (rust drawings about decay), or a material can spark an idea.
- Change one component at a time to see its effect — the fair-test habit works in the studio too.
- Name all three in your written evidence: scorers look for the connection explicitly.
- 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 writing.

Drawing in Context

Drawings mean more when you know when, where, and why they were made. **Context** 语境 is an investigation tool. (CED 1.C)

- Study **master drawings** 大师素描 as working documents: Leonardo’s studies, Dürer’s engravings, Rembrandt’s ink landscapes.
- Every tradition has a drawing language — Chinese ink line, Persian miniature, Renaissance chiaroscuro, manga screentone.
- Ask of any drawing: what was it *for* — a study, a record, a plan, or a finished statement?
- Historical technique is free training: copying a hatching system teaches decisions no video can.
- Place your own work in context: which artists share your question, and how is your answer different?
- Contextual notes in the journal strengthen written evidence and show intellectual depth.



Dürer's Melencolia I: historical engravings model mark-making and context

Evaluating Drawings

Critique 评图 — of your own and others’ work — is how an investigation steers. (CED 1.D/1.E)

- Use the four-step ladder: describe, analyse, interpret, judge. It keeps opinions grounded in what is visible.
- Speak the AP language: point to **visual evidence** 视觉证据 of skills, materials, processes, and ideas.
- Create distance for self-critique: turn the drawing upside down, view it in a mirror, or photograph it small.

- Ask one focused question per critique (“does the focal point read?”) instead of “is it good?”
- Written reflections after critiques become drafts of your Sustained Investigation writing.
- **Revision** 修改 decisions born from critique are exactly the development the rubric wants to see.



Ingres portrait drawing: critique names visible visual evidence of line and tone

Documentation and the Process Journal

Investigation must be visible. **Documentation** 记录 captures questions, tests, failures, and turns as they happen. (CED 1.B)

