

Scaffold for Art Inquiry

Questions about an Artwork

Subject Matter, Art Elements & Principles, Technical Features, Function, Care, and Reproduction



LOOK

What Can I See in
in the Artwork?

CHOOSE

What Choices Will I
Make in My Artwork?



Questions about an Artist's Background

Artist's Life, Physical Environment, Culture, and Artworld,



LEARN

What Can I Learn
about the Life and
Times of an Artist?

SEEK

What Art Ideas Can
I Get from My Own
Life and Times?



Questions that Compare Artworks

Style, Art Influence, and Theme



COMPARE

How Does This Artwork
Compare with Other
Artworks?

EXPLORE

What Ideas Can I Get
by Looking at Other Art?



Questions about Meanings and Goals

Artist's Intention, Art Specialist's Understanding, Cultural Understanding, and Personal Viewpoint



INTERPRET

What Does This Artwork
Mean?

PLAN

What do I Want to
Achieve with My
Artwork?



Inquiry about Artworks



What can I see in the artwork?

- **SUBJECT MATTER:** What people, places, or things, if any, are shown in this work?
- **ELEMENTS:** What elements (line, shape, color, value, texture, 3D form, and space, etc.) did the artist use?
- **PRINCIPLES:** How did the artist organize the elements using design principles (balance, emphasis/focal point, rhythm, contrast, pattern, etc.)?
- **TECHNICAL FEATURES:** What tools, materials, and processes did the artist use?
- **FUNCTION:** What function or purpose, if any, does/does this artwork serve? For whom?
- **CARE:** Does the artwork look different now from when it was new? How?
- **REPRODUCTION:** How can I tell whether I am looking at an original artwork or a reproduction?



What can I learn about the life and times of the artist?

- **ARTIST'S LIFE:** What are the background and life experiences of the artist?
- **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS:** What natural and built environments has the artist experienced?
- **CULTURE:** What people, places, activities, and ideas are part of the artist's culture? (nationality, religion, politics, popular culture, inventions, economic conditions, etc.)
- **ARTWORLD:** What art training, traditions, movements, and expectations may have influenced the artist?



How does this artwork compare with other artworks?

- **STYLE:** How does this artwork look like other artworks? (by the same artist or within its art movement, or in its cultural style)?
- **ART INFLUENCE:** What artists or artworks do I think might have influenced this artist?
- **THEME:** What other artworks are associated with the big idea underlying this artwork?

What does this artwork mean?



- **ARTIST'S INTENTION:** What can I find out about why the artist wanted this work to look as it does?
- **ART SPECIALISTS' UNDERSTANDING:** How do art specialists (critics, other artists, art historians, art teachers, patrons, etc.) understand this work?
- **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:** How do I think this work might be understood by members of my culture who are not art specialists? or by members of another culture or subculture?
- **PERSONAL VIEWPOINT:** What do I think this work is about? How might my own personal experiences affect how I understand it?

Inquiry through Art Making



How do I want my artwork to look?

- SUBJECT MATTER: Will my work have subject matter?
- ELEMENTS: What one or two elements (line, shape, value, color, texture, 3D form, space, etc.) is most important for the success of my artwork?
- PRINCIPLES: What design principles (balance, emphasis/focal point, rhythm, contrast, pattern, etc.) can I use to organize the elements into an interesting and unified composition?
- TECHNICAL FEATURES: What tools, materials, and processes will work best for my artwork?
- FUNCTION: Will my work have a clear or not-so-obvious function?
- CARE: What can I do as I create my artwork (or store it or exhibit it) to ensure that it stays in good condition?
- REPRODUCTION: What aspects of my artwork might be difficult to capture in a reproduction? (for example in a photograph or a scan)



What art ideas can I get from my own life and times?

- ARTIST'S LIFE: What ideas can I get from my life?
- PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS: What ideas can I get from my physical environment?
- CULTURE: What ideas can I get from my culture?
- ARTWORLD: What ideas can I get from my own, or some other artworld?



What ideas can I get by looking at other art?

- STYLE: What visual characteristics do I tend to use in my art? Do I want this work to be similar in style to other works that I, or other artists, have made?
- ART INFLUENCE: What inspiration can I draw from other artists or from their work?
- THEME: What can I learn from artists who have expressed a big idea similar to the theme I'm interested in?



What do I want to achieve with my artwork?

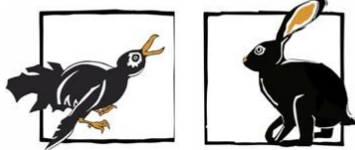
- ARTIST'S INTENTION: What is my goal as an artist?
- ART SPECIALISTS' UNDERSTANDING: How would I like my work to be understood in the artworld? Which artworld?
- CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING: Do I want my work to reflect or impact my culture? How?
- PERSONAL VIEWPOINT: How might other people's experiences affect how they respond to my artwork?

Cycle for Creative Art Inquiry

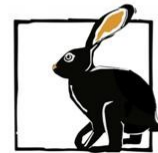
1. Begin your inquiry by using Questor's questions to investigate an artwork that interests or inspires you in some way.



4. Coming full circle, use Questor's questions as springboards to formulate your own independent questions to guide you in developing new art ideas that extend or refine your work or perhaps lead you in a new direction as an artist.



3. Use Questor's Questions to critically reflect on your work in process or to seek feedback from a classmate.
Jack's questions can also help you judge whether your work is successfully completed.



2. Use Jack's questions to help you find ideas for your own art and draw inspiration for preliminary plans or sketches.