

Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2020 AP[®] Art and Design Free-Response Questions

The following comments on the 2020 free-response questions for AP[®] Art and Design were written by the Chief Reader Designate, Dale Clifford, from the Savannah College of Art and Design. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

Please note: Each section of the AP Art and Design Portfolio Exams is considered a free-response question. Students respond to requirements of the Sustained Investigation section and Selected Works section. Artwork and written statements submitted for the Portfolio Exams are student responses.

2-D Art and Design

2-D Art and Design			
• Number of Students Scored	36,901		
• Number of Readers	388		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	4,481	12.1
	4	13,338	36.1
	3	15,223	41.3
	2	3,624	9.8
	1	235	0.6
• Global Mean	3.49		

Section #1

Task: Selected Works

Max. Points: 10

Mean Score: 6.63

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students were expected to present three digital images of works of art and design that demonstrate their understanding of and engagement with 2-D art and design, as well as written statements that describe the ideas, materials, and processes used to make the work.
- The group of works should demonstrate skillful synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas, as well as technical competence through application of 2-D art and design elements and principles.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, 2-D Art and Design Selected Works sections most effectively demonstrated competence in technical skills, such as the use of design elements and principles to create compositions.
- The written statements provided insight into the ideas that the students were pursuing.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connections between materials, processes, and ideas were unclear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful works demonstrated synthesis when the purpose for selecting materials and processes was clear. For example, instead of focusing on developing technical skills with the use of watercolor, successful works addressed why watercolor was selected and how it related to the idea.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experimentation with materials, processes, and ideas was, at times, limited to traditional and well-established conventions of art and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful works demonstrated attempts at experimentation, particularly with materials and processes, while using effective applications of 2-D art and design skills.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Superficial application of the use of elements and principles of 2-D art and design was apparent in many of the low- to mid-scoring photography portfolios. These portfolios often included images of well-designed subjects but did not utilize the elements and principles of design to further the composition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful photography portfolios used photography as a tool to investigate and explore the issues of 2-D art and design in more complex ways.

Based on your understanding of student responses evaluated at this year's AP® Reading, what advice do you offer to teachers to help them improve student performance for this section of the exam?

- Promote active and nonconventional experimentation with ideas, materials, and processes.
- Discuss a multitude of diverse and contemporary approaches to 2-D art and design that integrate ideas with the use of materials and processes.
- Help students avoid superficial and clichéd techniques and processes in their works.

Which resources do you recommend to teachers to help them better prepare students for demonstrating content knowledge and skill(s) required for this section?

- Leading Critiques in AP Art and Design Classes apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes
- AP Art and Design Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2018-19-ap-studio-art-exhibit
- AP Art and Design Program apstudents.collegeboard.org/art-design-program

Section #2**Task: Sustained Investigation****Max. Points: 24****Mean Score: 17.03*****What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- Students were expected to present 10 digital images (some of which should document process and may include details) of works of art and design that demonstrate a sustained investigation of an idea in 2-D art and design, as well as written statements that identify the question(s) that guided the sustained investigation and descriptions of the practice, experimentation, and revision that was guided by those questions.
- The group of works and written statements should demonstrate a sustained investigation through practice, experimentation, and revision that synthesizes materials, processes, and ideas and that demonstrate skillful application of 2-D art and design elements and principles.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, 2-D Art and Design Sustained Investigation sections most effectively demonstrated competence in technical skills, such as the use of design elements and principles to create compositions.
- Students embraced the freedom to pursue ideas that were meaningful to them and when the content was in response to personal concerns or events in the world around them, the perspectives were often refreshing and insightful.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress images were submitted as process images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress images merely show the stages of creating works of art and design. Successful process images included research, developmental sketches and media experimentations that provided evidence of thinking and the evolution of ideas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements of inquiry were merely questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A successful statement of inquiry includes an overarching idea that ignites creation. It addresses what a student is interested in learning or discovering by creating works of art and design. As the student responds to the initial statement, they should be prepared for the inquiry to evolve. Good questions will lead to additional questions. Instead of focusing on a technique or a material, the statement of inquiry addresses how the idea was explored.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works in many portfolios demonstrated relationships between materials, processes, or ideas but few achieved synthesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to process images, students should also include finished or fully realized works in the sustained investigation to demonstrate how they are integrating materials, processes, and ideas.

3-D Art and Design

3-D Art and Design			
• Number of Students Scored	5,281		
• Number of Readers	388		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	378	7.2
	4	1,685	31.9
	3	1,927	36.5
	2	1,104	20.9
	1	187	3.5
• Global Mean	3.18		

Section #1

Task: Selected Works

Max. Points: 10

Mean Score: 6.15

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students were expected to present six digital images (two views each of three works they created) that demonstrate their understanding of and engagement with 3-D art and design, as well as written statements that describe the ideas, materials, and processes used to make the work.
- The group of works should demonstrate skillful synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas, as well as technical competence through application of 3-D art and design elements and principles.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, 3-D Art and Design Selected Works sections demonstrated good competence in using design elements and principles to activate space.
- Technical skills with media and the relationship to ideas were moderate to good.
- Overall, the written statements provided an insight to the ideas that the students were pursuing.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections among materials, processes, and ideas were unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful works demonstrated synthesis when the purpose of selecting materials and processes was clear. For example, instead of focusing on developing technical skills with the use of clay, successful works addressed why clay was selected and how it related to the idea.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on the embellishment of the surface of the 3-D form rather than focusing on its spatiality and context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses demonstrated an engagement with 3-D art and design issues, including the use of occupied and unoccupied space and how the form exists in a place and a contextual environment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving photographic views of the 3D form that do not help depict how the form occupies space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses used the two views of the 3-D form to show how the form exists in space from two dramatically different vantage points so that the reader could better evaluate how the form engaged space.

Based on your understanding of student responses evaluated at this year’s AP® Reading, what advice do you offer to teachers to help them improve student performance for this section of the exam?

- Discuss how 2-D art and design and 3-D art and design relate to one another and how they differ.
- Help students use drawing as a way to further the development of their 3-D art and design skills.
- Emphasize the importance of selecting materials and processes that correlate with the ideas that they are investigating.
- Discuss different aspects of spatiality.
- View and discuss diverse contemporary approaches to 3-D art and design.

Which resources do you recommend to teachers to help them better prepare students for demonstrating content knowledge and skill(s) required for this section?

- Leading Critiques in AP Art and Design Classes apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes
- AP Art and Design Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2018-19-ap-studio-art-exhibit
- AP Art and Design Program apstudents.collegeboard.org/art-design-program

Section #2

Task: Sustained Investigation

Max. Points: 24

Mean Score: 16.32

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students were expected to present 10 digital images (some of which should document process and may include different views and/or details) of works of art and design that demonstrate a sustained investigation of an idea in 3-D art and design, as well as written statements that identify the question(s) that guided the sustained investigation and descriptions of the practice, experimentation, and revision that were guided by those questions.

- The group of works and written statements should demonstrate a sustained investigation through practice, experimentation, and revision that synthesizes materials, processes, and ideas and that demonstrates skillful application of 3-D art and design elements and principles.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, student responses demonstrated moderate to good competence in the investigation of an idea through 3-D art and design.
- Students embraced the freedom to pursue ideas that were meaningful to them and when the content was in response to personal concerns or events in the world the perspectives were often refreshing and insightful.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress images were submitted as process images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress images merely show the stages of creating works of art and design. Successful process images included research, developmental sketches and media experimentations that provided evidence of thinking and the evolution of ideas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements of inquiry were merely questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A successful statement of inquiry includes an overarching idea that ignites creation. It addresses what a student is interested in learning or discovering by creating works of art and design. As the student responds to the initial statement, they should be prepared for the inquiry to evolve. Good questions will lead to additional questions. Instead of focusing on a technique or a material, the statement of inquiry addresses how the idea was explored.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works in many portfolios demonstrated relationships between materials, processes, or ideas, but few achieved synthesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to process images, students should also include finished or fully realized works in the sustained investigation to demonstrate how the student is integrating materials, processes, and ideas.

Drawing

Drawing			
• Number of Students Scored	20,486		
• Number of Readers	388		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	% At
	5	3,182	15.5
	4	8,259	40.3
	3	6,810	33.2
	2	1,999	9.8
	1	236	1.2
• Global Mean	3.59		

Section #1

Task: Selected Works

Max. Points: 10

Mean Score: 6.84

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students were expected to present three digital images of works of art and design that demonstrate their understanding of and engagement with drawing issues, as well as written statements that describe the ideas, materials, and processes used to make the work.
- The group of works should demonstrate skillful synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas, as well as technical competence through application of drawing skills.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, Drawing Selected Works sections effectively demonstrated competence with technical skills, such as the use of traditional drawing tools and processes.
- Technical skills with media and the relationship to ideas was good.
- Overall, the written statements provided insight into the ideas that the students were pursuing.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connections among materials, processes, and ideas were unclear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful works demonstrated synthesis when the purpose for the selection of materials and processes was clear. For example, instead of focusing on developing technical skills with the use of charcoal, successful works addressed why charcoal was selected as it related to the idea.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focusing on drawing predominately from photographic images, especially photographic images from the public domain rather than ones that were created by the student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The most successful drawn responses demonstrated the effective use of drawing elements (line, light, shade, rendering of form in space, surface manipulation, illusion of depth, mark making) that moved beyond elements merely associated with Drawing and the photographic image. When photographs from the public domain were used, they were transformed in the service of the student's idea.

Based on your understanding of student responses evaluated at this year's AP® Reading, what advice do you offer to teachers to help them improve student performance for this section of the exam?

- Discuss the relationships and differences in drawing, 2-D art and design, and 3-D art and design.
- Promote the idea that drawing encompasses more than just rendering.
- Help students understand how drawing can be used as a process of thinking and as a way to create visual ideas.
- Observe and discuss the histories of drawing in different cultures and across the world while linking historical approaches to drawing with contemporary ones.

Which resources do you recommend to teachers to help them better prepare students for demonstrating content knowledge and skill(s) required for this section?

- Leading Critiques in AP Art and Design Classes apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes
- AP Art and Design Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2018-19-ap-studio-art-exhibit
- AP Art and Design Program apstudents.collegeboard.org/art-design-program

Section #2**Task: Sustained Investigation****Max. Points: 24****Mean Score: 17.39*****What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- Students were expected to present 10 digital images (some of which should document process and may include details) of works of art and design that demonstrate a sustained investigation of an idea through drawing, as well as written statements that identify the question(s) that guided the sustained investigation and descriptions of the practice, experimentation, and revision that was guided by those questions.
- The group of works and written statements should demonstrate a sustained investigation through practice, experimentation, and revision that synthesizes materials, processes, and ideas and that demonstrate skillful engagement with drawing issues, including the elements and principles of design.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, student responses demonstrated moderate to good competence in the investigation of an idea through drawing.
- Students embraced the freedom to pursue ideas that were meaningful to them and when the content was in response to personal concerns or events in the world the perspectives were often refreshing and insightful.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress images were submitted as process images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress images merely show the stages of creating works of art and design. Successful process images included research, developmental sketches and media experimentations that provided evidence of thinking and the evolution of ideas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements of inquiry were merely questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A successful statement of inquiry includes an overarching idea that ignites creation. It addresses what a student is interested in learning or discovering by creating works of art and design. As the student responds to the initial statement, they should be prepared for the inquiry to evolve. Good questions will lead to additional questions. Instead of focusing on a technique or a material, the statement of inquiry addresses how the idea was explored.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works in many portfolios demonstrated relationships among materials, processes, or ideas, but few achieved synthesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to process images, students should also include finished or fully realized works in the sustained investigation to demonstrate how the student is integrating materials, processes, and ideas.

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Expose students to artists and designers throughout history who have created work as a means to investigate an idea and as a process of inquiry.
- Share with students that the creative process is more expansive than just rendering or completing a final image. The act of making can include diagrams, taking notes, creating ideas, and recording perceptions of the world.
- Encourage students to write throughout the academic year about their ideas and relate their use of verbal language to the visual realm of their work. Provide weekly prompts so that students can reflect on what they have created, which can then inform what they will create.
- Promote the activity of sketching as a way to research, to invent, to perceive, and to analyze.

Resource 1

As we start the 2020-21 academic school year, the College Board AP Art and Design community has resources available to you!

In this session Rebecca A. Stone-Danahy, AP Art and Design Director, and M. Colleen Harrigan, AP Art and Design Online Teacher Community Moderator, will provide participants guidance and insights on the following:

- The AP Art and Design Course and Exam Description (CED)
- Resources available on the AP Online Teacher Community
- A breakdown of the portfolio requirements and scoring
- Student portfolio samples for 2-D, 3-D, and Drawing

To review the recorded session, please click the following link: youtu.be/JrmuDKd-m2I