A n a l y s i n g A r t w o r k

**Part 1**

**Initial Response**

What do you bring to the artwork? Record what your **initial thoughts and feelings** are.

**Introduction**

What is the name of the artwork, the artist and when was it made?

Why have you chosen to look at this artist/artwork and what relevance does it have to your project?

**Visual**

What is your first reaction to the artwork? What was the first word that came into your head when you saw it? What did you notice first? Do some parts of the artwork draw your attention more than others?

**Emotional**

Does it make you feel a particular way? Describe why or how it makes you think like that?

**Memory/ Experience**

Does it remind you of anything? Why? Have you seen or experienced something like this before? When or where eg at home, at a place you have visited, on TV?

**Part 2**

**Contextual Understanding**

Before you complete this section you must carry out **research** into the artist’s **life and work**. This will help you to **examine the influences which shaped the creation and reading of a work of Art.** Make sure you write this in your own words and that your responses are full of your own personal insights and interpretations of the facts. You must answer some of the questions from each category.

**The Artist**

Find out the artist’s name, dates they lived and the country he/she lived or worked in. Who/ what was the work made for? Was it commissioned for a friend or made for a particular location? Do we see it in its original location or elsewhere?

**Background**

PERSONAL CONTEXT: Can the background of the artist tell us why the work was created?

How has the artist’s work been affected by events that happened in his/her life?

Was the artist influenced by any personal relationships and how?

WIDER CONTEXT:

How does the work link with the social, cultural or political history of the time? Do you think these circumstances have influenced how it was made? Does it reflect the ideas or values of the time? Are there ways of telling when it was made? Is the date significant? Eg a time of war or social/technological change?

**Associations & Influences**

Is the artist associated with an art movement and why? What type of genre would you associate the work with? *(portraiture, history painting, landscape, still life etc).* Does it fit into more than one type or can it not be classified? How does it link to other art of the period? *(literature, film, music, fashion, design, theatre*) Which other people have influenced this artist? How does it link to other disciplines such as religion, science, technology, culture, technology or psychology?

 **Ideas & Intentions**

**Summarise** what you have learnt with **thoughtful, personal and informed responses.**

* Write what **you know** the artist is trying to communicate in his/her work? What is the artist trying to say or represent? Does it have a symbolic or moral meaning? Do you think the work is successful in communicating the artists ideas?

**Part 3**

**Formal Elements**

This section allows you to investigate the artwork by examining **how the it has been made**. This is done by you looking and visually analysing what you see.

Carefully consider which Formal Elements to analyse and talk about the work in depth. Remember to **ANALYSE** (examine in detail in order to discover meaning) NOT DESCRIBE (explain superficially how it looks) Try to **use what you have learnt in the Contextual Understanding** section to help you answer the questions.

**Label**

Label your chosen piece of artwork with artists name, title, date, place, materials and size.

**Written Analysis**

# Subject Matter (What is the work about?)

What is in the work? Does it have a focal point or emphasis? What objects/images has the artist depicted in the Art?

Is there a narrative? What is happening and where is it set? Does the Art tell a story? Where does the story come from? How are objects/images used to show/tell the story? Does it depict an event or a social issue? Has something happened or is it about to happen? What point is the artist choosing to make? What do you think?

*Visual Study Suggestion: Explore subject matter by producing a line study (no tone).*

# Composition (How is the work arranged?)

How are the different objects arranged in the painting? How is the background arranged? How important is the background? How is the foreground arranged?

Is the work symmetrical/ asymmetrical? How does this contribute?

Is there a central object? How are the other objects arranged around this?

How does the artist draw your eye to the most important parts of the painting?

Is it random or carefully designed?

*Visual Study Suggestion: Analyse the composition with a line drawing (no tone).*

# Materials/Techniques/ Processes

What material(s) has the artist used? Has the artist used mixed media? How has he/she used the materials together?

How has the artist applied the materials? What tools have been used?

Are there any key techniques that he/she has used? What processes have been used to create the artwork?

*Visual Study Suggestion:* Do a visual analysis of part of the work experimenting with appropriate materials/techniques. You may want to focus on one area such as texture, colour or application of materials.

# Colour

Has the artist used colour emotionally or descriptively?

What are the dominant colours? How are they organised?

Does the artist use harmonious or complementary colours?

How does the use of colour differ in the foreground & background?

How does the artist’s choice of colour affect the mood/feel of the artwork?

*Visual Study Suggestion: Produce a colour study of the artwork.*

# Mood/Atmosphere/ Environment

What mood/atmosphere does the artwork create? List at least 8 words to describe the mood/atmosphere. Back these up with evidence. What do you think the artist wants you to think or feel when you look at the work?

How does the artist create this mood atmosphere? Think about composition, colour and the choice of subject matter. How would it affect your senses if you could leap into the Art? What would you be able to see, hear, smell etc. If there was a person in it, how would you feel to be around them?

**USE THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF ART DOCUMENT TO HELP WITH YOUR ANALYSIS OF FORMAL ELEMENTS/QUALITIES**

**Visual Study**

Completerelevant high quality relevant visual study to support your comments. *(There are suggestions for types of studies you could make under the headings)*

**Part 4**

**Concluding Response**

This section allows you to make an informed personal response and confirm how you will apply what you have learnt to your own creative inquiry. Look back on **what you have learnt** about **how and why** the artwork was produced and record **as many different ideas** as you could USE the knowledge you have gained.

**Value**

* Why is looking at this particular artist/ artwork so important to your own art work?
* What is the most important thing you have learnt about the artwork?
* If you like, love or dislike the work explain why. On what basis do you decide if an artwork is of value to you? (ideas, skill, originality, meaning, relevance, difference?)
* If your opinion of the artwork has changed while you have been studying it? Record how and why.

**Applying Knowledge and Understanding**

* How could the artist’s ideas and intentions influence your own ideas and what you intend to do in your own work?
* How are you going to use what you have learnt about how the artwork was made in your own work?

Formal Elements

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