

RESPONDING TO ART: THE TEACHER AS A QUESTIONER AND LISTENER

QUESTIONING STRATEGIES AND ART RESPONDING MODELS

OVERVIEW

1. What is art responding?
2. Why is responding to art important?
3. What skills do students learn from responding to art?
4. How do you determine which works of art students will respond to?
5. Five productive enquiry models
6. How to extract rich ideas out of your students
7. What skills do teachers need for art responding tasks?

VIDEO

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVzcknOWpaE>

Questions:

What is the teacher doing?

What are the students doing?

How can YOU get students to think deeply?



Camouflage Self-Portrait. 1986. **Andy Warhol**, American, 1928 - 1987. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen on canvas

Look at the painting closely. What do you see?

What more can you see?



Camouflage Self-Portrait. 1986.
Andy Warhol, American, 1928 -
1987. Synthetic polymer paint
and silkscreen on canvas

Engage

What do you think of this image?

What does it make you feel?

Is it painted long ago? How do you know?

Explore

Is this a usual way to paint a portrait? Why or why not?

Use similes to describe his hair e.g. his hair is like a firework set ablaze

What pattern covers his face?

What might this pattern mean?

What does it make you wonder?

Do you think his hair is real? What might this say about him?

What colours are used?

What might the colours tell you about his personality?

Explain

- *Celebrity, leader of Pop Art*
- *When you think of 'Pop' what do you think of?*
- *Shows moment Andy was photographed*
- *Year before death*

Elaborate

What might black be symbolic of?

What opposites do you find in the artwork?



Camouflage Self-Portrait. 1986. **Andy Warhol**, American, 1928 - 1987. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen on canvas

WHAT IS ART RESPONDING?

- Examining form, content and context to extend appreciation and enjoyment of art.
- Questioning and reflecting on what we see in artworks to become more critically aware.
- Art criticism – making reasoned judgments.



WHY IS RESPONDING TO ART IMPORTANT?

- Children generally make judgments based on the subjective (an aesthetic or felt response to what they see).
- Suspends judgment (whether they like the artwork or not) until students look at the artwork more objectively.
- Connects to VELS, AusVELS art responding standards, and VCE analytical frameworks.
- Teaches children how to verbalise the visual.
- Art class is one of the *only* places students will learn art vocabulary.
- Encourages students to look at artworks with openness, to appreciate and enjoy their inherent qualities and to understand there are **no** definitive answers in art.

WHAT SKILLS DO STUDENTS LEARN FROM RESPONDING TO ART?

- Personal learning
- Interdisciplinary Learning
- Communication – debating, expressing opinions
- Higher order thinking
- Interpersonal learning
- Intercultural understanding
- Listening
- Speaking
- Visual literacy
- Literacy
- Descriptive language and writing

HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHICH WORKS OF ART STUDENTS WILL RESPOND TO?

- Select works you think are **important** for students to know about.
- Select works of art that students are **developmentally ready** for
- Choose works of art based upon the **interests** and **cultural diversity** of students in the class.
- Different **styles**
- Different **periods** of art
- Artworks must be **historical** and **contemporary** (compare/contrast)
- Introduce students to diverse **materials**, **techniques** and **processes**
- **Figurative** and **non figurative**
- **Representational** and **non-representational**
- **Australian** including **Indigenous** art
- **Asian art** (Asia literacy)
- 2D, 3D, installations, sculpture, public art, street art, **high** art, **low** art.
- Be *informed* by requirements of **VCE Study Designs** and **(Aus)VELS**

Link your artwork selections to curriculum

AusVELS

- General capabilities: Physical, personal, social and interdisciplinary learning strands
- Cross-curriculum priorities:
 1. Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
 2. Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
 3. Sustainability

VCE

Art Unit 3: Interpreting Art

Students must undertake the study of at least one artist who has produced work before 1970 and at least one other artist who has produced work since 1970.

HOW CAN YOU ENGAGE LEARNERS IN ART INTERPRETATION?

“No matter the age or the art, I show the images to groups of students, ask them questions, listen to their responses, and ask further questions...It is essential that everyone can comfortably see what I am showing.”

Barrett, T. (1997). Interpreting Art. Building Communal and Individual Understandings, p. 293. http://www.terrybarrettosu.com/pdfs/B_intArt_02.pdf

- Use large poster reproductions
- Photographic images or slides from the Internet (high technical quality)
- Original works in museums - do not be too dependent on reproductions
- “Google art project” – high resolution images of collections from museums around the world

PRODUCTIVE INQUIRY-BASED MODELS OF ART “CRITICISM”

- **Student-centred**, focusing lesson on transmission of knowledge.
- Encourages students to **observe independently** and to back up their comments with **evidence**.
- Encourages **problem-solving, critical thinking** and **analytical skills**
- Students are not given a right answer; learning and discussion is the “answer”
- Focus on **experiencing** and **appreciating** art, rather than making art.
- Productive inquiry-based models you can use:

Artful Thinking Routines

Visual Thinking Strategies

The Feldman Model

Broudie’s Aesthetic Scanning

VCE Analytical Frameworks

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Year: all levels

1. Project artwork.
2. Ask students to look closely and silently at it for a minute or two.
3. Three questions guide the discussion:
 - **“What’s going on here”?**
Summarize student responses using conditional language (“John thinks this could be...”). This keeps the conversation open to other interpretations by other students.
 - **“What do you see that makes you say that?”**
This encourages students to reflect on their statements with things they see in the work of art.
 - **“What more can we find?”**
This continues the conversation.

VIDEO of VTS in action: <http://vimeo.com/9678839>

How does VTS benefit students?

- Stimulates conversation
- Students who are shy or struggle, are more outspoken, confident and keen to participate
- Focuses students on the work of art
- Process is **learner-driven** and places power in students' control
- **Process-focused** as opposed to product-focused
- Fosters critical thinking individually and in a group setting.

Tips for facilitation

- Paraphrase student comments neutrally. Do not say “good”, “correct”, “wrong” etc.
- Point at the area of the image being discussed students by students.
- Link contrasting and complimentary comments made by students.
- Allow conversation to go where it will, even if it gets off topic.
- Avoid inserting information – let students look closely and reason their responses.

ARTFUL THINKING ROUTINES

Year: all levels

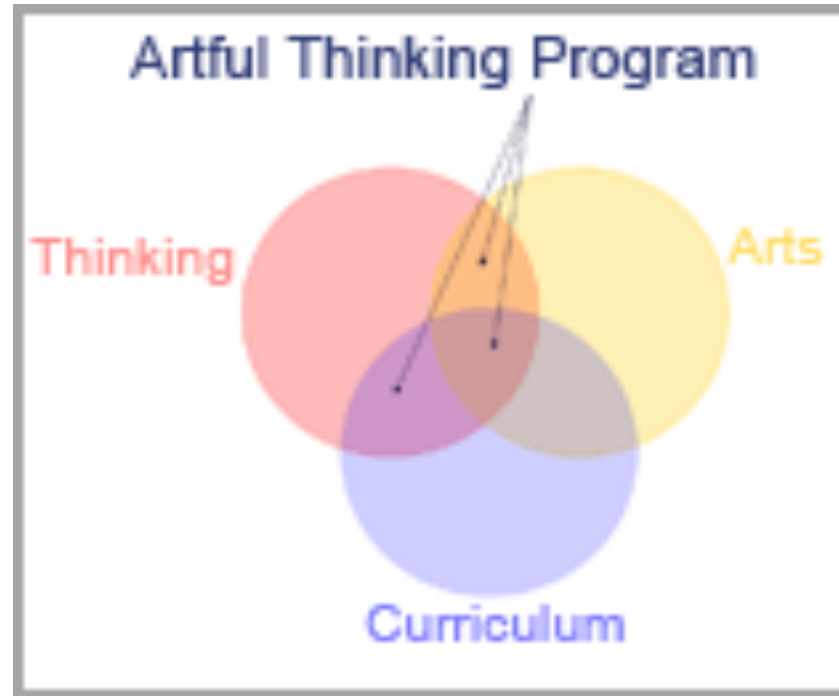
Goal: To help students **develop thinking dispositions** that support thoughtful learning – in the arts and across school subjects.

[Http://www.pz.harvard.edu/at/cc_intro_new.cfm](http://www.pz.harvard.edu/at/cc_intro_new.cfm)

- Artful thinking: member of a growing international network of K-12 programs, linked by the theme “Visible Thinking”
- A research-based approach that comprises questioning strategies to support students’ thinking dispositions
- Based on decades of research at Harvard Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Helps students create rich connection between works of art and curricular topics

For a complete list of Artful Thinking Routines and on when each routine could be used, visit:

www.pz.harvard.edu/at/routines.cfm



<http://www.old-pz.gse.harvard.edu/tc/overview.cfm>

- Short, easy-to-learn **mini-strategies** that **extend and deepen students' thinking**.
- Used **flexibly and repeatedly** -- with art, and with a wide variety of topics in the curriculum

Artful Thinking Palette

What happens in the classroom when teachers guide students to think deeply about art?



How are Artful Thinking Routines used in the Visual Arts?

Perspective-taking centred routines

Perceive, know, care about - a routine for getting inside viewpoints

Three questions guide students to explore a viewpoint.

1. What can the person or thing perceive?
2. What might the person or thing believe?
3. What might the person or thing care about?



LAUREN BRINCAT
10 Metre Platform, 2012
Documentation of an action
Single-channel High Definition digital video

Helps students explore diverse perspectives and viewpoints as they try to imagine things, events, problems or issues differently.

Reasoning-centred routines

Claim/Support/Question

Use this routine to help students develop **thoughtful interpretations of an artwork** or topic by encouraging them to **reason with evidence**.

Make a CLAIM about the artwork or topic	An explanation or interpretation of some aspect of the artwork
Identify a SUPPORT for your claim	Things you see, feel, and know that support your claim
Ask a QUESTION related to your claim	What's left hanging? What isn't explained? What new reasons does your claim raise?

What makes you say that? – Interpretation with justification routine

1. What's going on? (Interpretation)
2. What do you see that makes you say that? (justification).

Helps students describe what they see or know and build explanations. Promotes evidential reasoning and invites sharing of interpretations and understanding of multiple perspectives.

Questioning and investigating centred routines

I see/ I think / I wonder – a routine for exploring works of art.

Use this routine when you want students to think carefully about why something looks the way it does or the way it is.

1. What do you see?
2. What do you think about that?
3. What does it make you wonder?

- How does it make you feel inside when you first look at it? What can you tell about how Picasso was feeling at the time?
- What message is the artist conveying in this work and why do you think this?
- Analyse how the artist has used each of the art elements to convey this message?
- Why has the artist brutally deconstructed and disfigured the face of his model, Dora Maar? How does it contribute to his message?
- Why was Picasso's style of painting human suffering so radical compared with the way it had been portrayed by artists in the past?

Pablo Picasso

Spanish 1881–1973, worked in France 1904–73

Weeping woman 1937

oil on canvas

Purnima Ruanglertbutr, Learning Area Visual Art 1 2013,
MSGE



Think / Puzzle / Explore – a routine that sets the stage for deeper enquiry

Use this routine when you are beginning a topic and want to have students develop their own questions of investigation.

1. What do you think you know about this artwork or topic?
2. What questions or puzzles do you have?
3. What does the artwork or topic make you want to explore?



Purnima Ruanglertbutr, Learning Area Visual Art 1 2013,
MSGE

Richard Bell
with Emory Douglas
A white hero for black Australia 2011
synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Creative questions – a routine for creating thought provoking questions

Use this routine when you want students to develop good questions and think deeply about artworks.

- **Brainstorm** 12 questions about the artwork or topic. Use these question-starters to help you think of interesting questions.

1. Why?
2. What are the reasons?
3. What if?
4. What is the purpose of?
5. How would it be different if?
6. Suppose that?
7. What if we knew?
8. What would change if?



Mark Rothko
Untitled (Red)
1956
glue, oil, synthetic polymer paint and resin
on canvas

- **Review** list and star the questions that seem most interesting. Select few of these questions and discuss it.
- **Reflect:** What new ideas have you learnt about the artwork or topic that you didn't know before?

Observing and describing-centred routines

The elaboration game – a routine for careful observation and description

As a group, **observe** and **describe** different sections of an artwork.

- One student identifies a specific section of an artwork and describes what they see. Another person elaborates on the first person's observations by adding more detail about the section. A third person elaborates further adding more detail, etc.
- Someone else identifies a new section of the artwork and the process begins again. Repeat until all students have had a turn or all sections of the artwork have been described.
- Discuss some of your ideas about the work after it has been fully described. For example, what do you think is going on? What did you observe that makes you say that?

Facilitation

Teacher can decide how to divide the artwork into different spatial sections and tell students which to describe

Students can identify different sections themselves.

Decide beforehand whether you want each student to speak in turn, or whether you want students to raise their hand and offer observations at will.



Avalokiteshvara
(17th century-18th century)
Tibeto-Chinese
gilt-bronze, semi-precious stone, pigment

Purnima Ruanglertbutr, Learning Area Visual Art 1 2013,
MSGE

Beginning, middle or end – a routine for observing and imagining

Choose one of these questions:

- If this artwork is the beginning of a story, what might happen next?
- If this artwork is in the middle of a story, what might have happened before? What might be about to happen?
- If this artwork is the end of a story, what might the story be?



Katsushika HOKUSAI 葛飾北斎 Japanese 1760–1849 The great wave off Kanagawa (Kanagawa oki namiura 神奈川沖波裏) from the Thirty-six views of Mt Fuji series (Fugoku sanjyūrokkei 富嶽三十六景) Edo period 江戸時代 c. 1830 Japan colour woodcut

Use this routine when you want students to develop their writing or storytelling skills. If you are connecting the artwork to a topic, you can link questions to the topic.

Looking: Ten Times Two – a routine for observing and describing

Introduce a new artwork using this routine. Engage students in careful looking before having a discussion about the artwork, or use the routine after discussion to push and summarize ideas and observations made during conversation.

- Look at the image quietly for at least 30 seconds. Let your eyes wander.
- List 10 words or phrases about any aspect of this picture.
- Repeat steps 1 and 2: look at the image again and try to list 10 more words or phrases to your list.



FREDERICK McCUBBIN. Australia 1855
- 1917. THE PIONEER, 1904 oil on
canvas triptych

Colours, Shapes, Lines: What are they? What do they do? – a routine for exploring formal qualities of art

1. Take a minute to look at the artwork. Let your eyes wander over it freely. What do you see? Take few observations from students then move to next step.
2. Observe and describe the colours, shapes and lines in detail. Make 3 columns.
3. Choose a kind of colour, shape or line that you listed.

COLOURS	SHAPES	LINES
What colours do you see? Describe them	What shapes do you see? Describe them.	What lines do you see? Describe them?

- How does it contribute to the artwork overall?
 - How does it contribute to how the artwork feels?
 - How does it contribute to the mood of the artwork?
 - How does it contribute to how the artwork looks?
 - How does it contribute to the story the artwork tells?
 - How does it contribute to the ideas in the artwork?
4. What new ideas do you have about the work? What do you see now that you didn't see before?



Peter BOOTH Painting (1977) oil on canvas

Comparing and Connecting-Centred Routines

Headlines – a routine for capturing essence

This routine draws on the idea of newspaper-type headlines as a vehicle for summing up and capturing the essence of an event, idea, concept, topic etc. The routine asks one core question:

1. If you were to write a headline for this topic or issue right now that captures the most important aspect that should be remembered, what would that headline be?

A second question involves probing how students' ideas of what is most important and central to the topic being explored have changed over time.

2. How has your headline changed based on today's discussion? How does it differ from what you would have said yesterday?

This routine helps students capture the matter discussed and to come up with tentative conclusions.

Connect/Extend/Challenge – a routine for connecting new ideas to prior knowledge

CONNECT	How are the ideas and information presented CONNECTED to what you already knew?
EXTEND	What new ideas did you get that extended or pushed your thinking into new directions?
CHALLENGE	What is still challenging or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or puzzles do you now have?

The natural place to use this routine is after students have learnt something new.

THE FELDMAN MODEL

Year: levels 7-12

Four stages of art criticism

STAGE	TASK	QUESTIONS
DESCRIPTION	Make a list of the visual qualities of the work that are obvious and immediately perceived.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you see in the artwork?• What else?
ANALYSIS	Focus on the formal aspects of elements of art and principles of design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How is the artwork made?• How are the elements and principles arranged?
INTERPRETATION	Propose ideas for possible meanings based on evidence. Project your feelings/emotions/intentions onto the work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you think the artist is trying to communicate?• What do you think it means?• What clues do you see to support your ideas?
JUDGEMENT	Discuss the overall strengths/success/merit of the work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you think of the work?• What makes you think that?

Description

- Description” trains students in “epistemic” viewing (Eisner, 1988).
- Teaching strategy?

“I am blind. Describe the artwork so I see it in my mind exactly how you see it...”



Australian Countryside
Max Darby
Acrylic paint on canvas
2 panels each 150 cm x 85 cm

“I can see two paintings that go together to make up one bigger picture. The main things in the painting are all what you would find in the countryside. These include a strong blue sky, rolling cream and dry hills that are probably covered in long grass, a waterway or river, rocks and cliffs and trees with shadows. There are some reflections of the hills and cliffs in the water. The colours are mainly variations of blues, reds and pinks, greens and some really dark areas that look like they are black. I can see that the river is winding through the hills and the cliff areas but it also looks like the river divided up and continues out of the painting at the top to the right.”

<http://artseducationguru.com/art-analysis-worksheet/>

Analysis

- How is it made?
- Gets students to think about the principles and elements present in the image.



The artwork appears to have been painted since the title mentions acrylic paints and canvas. It is probable that a variety of brushes would have been used for different areas of the two panels. There can be seen some careful blending of colours in the hills and the water, especially with the shadows. The cliffs would have been roughly textured using a tool like a palette knife or pieces of flat plastic or wood. Smooth and rough textures are used and there is a clear contrast between warm and cool colours.

- “Analysis” trains students in “unwrapping” the techniques used by artists.
- Teaching strategy? “What art tools have been used to put this artwork together?”

Interpretation

- “Interpretation” gets students to interpret messages from visual text - to engage in “visual literacy”.
- Gets students to think about the purpose of the image.
- Teaching strategy”?
“What message is the artist trying to get across to us?”



I think what the artist is trying to tell us is how the countryside looks in the area that is shown. That is, it looks very dry on the land even though there is plenty of water. This is suggested by the dry ochre colours of the grasses. The hills look very hot but the water looks cool because of the deep blue colours used and the deep shadows and reflections along the edge of the water. The artist might be commenting on the need for us to preserve water so that the environment isn't destroyed. It isn't a desert even though the colours suggest Summer months. I would find it difficult to accept that the artist doesn't like this place. On the other hand it doesn't look 'too real' so the paintings could be the artist's interpretation of the countryside rather than be exactly as it would look there. If I had to find any deeper meaning I can see that the artist might be making a comment on people's lives. That is, life can sometimes seem so gentle and safe and then rough, cliffy and deep and dark times can come along all of a sudden. Yet, for some people life continues to go along gently with no real challenges or issues – as seen by the river going along out of the top right hand corner.

Judgement

- “What do you think?”
- Gets students to make reasoned judgements based on evidences they have elicited from studying the artwork from the three previous categories.

- Teaching Strategy?

“Use the descriptive, analytical, and interpretive comments you have made about this painting, to explain why you like or dislike this artwork.”



The things I think are really good are the use of colours to suggest weather, atmosphere, temperature and the season of the year; the contrasts between smooth and rough textures; the development of big spaces and the illusion of distance, and the many possible meanings and intentions that the artist built in to it. I like the contrasts between the two different canvases and think they are also really good. The two paintings are different but have so many similarities that they clearly go together. The colours are obviously mixed and not used just as they can be found in the tubes. Everything seems to have been deliberately chosen as a part of the over-all design and I think this helps in making it a good painting. I also admire the fact that it isn't just a 'pretty scene' but has a lot of expression in it that reflects the artist's interests and tastes. I think it's a good work and I also like it.

Criticisms of the Feldman Model

- Only a model
- Outdated, modernist?
- How would you adapt this model to suit the students, the topic, and the VELS level you are addressing?

BROUDIE'S AESTHETIC SCANNING

Sensory properties

Questions concerning students' perception of affective and emotional experiences.

Formal properties

Questions exploring how the artwork is executed to create 'artistic unity'

Expressive properties

Questions about the importance of 'the message'

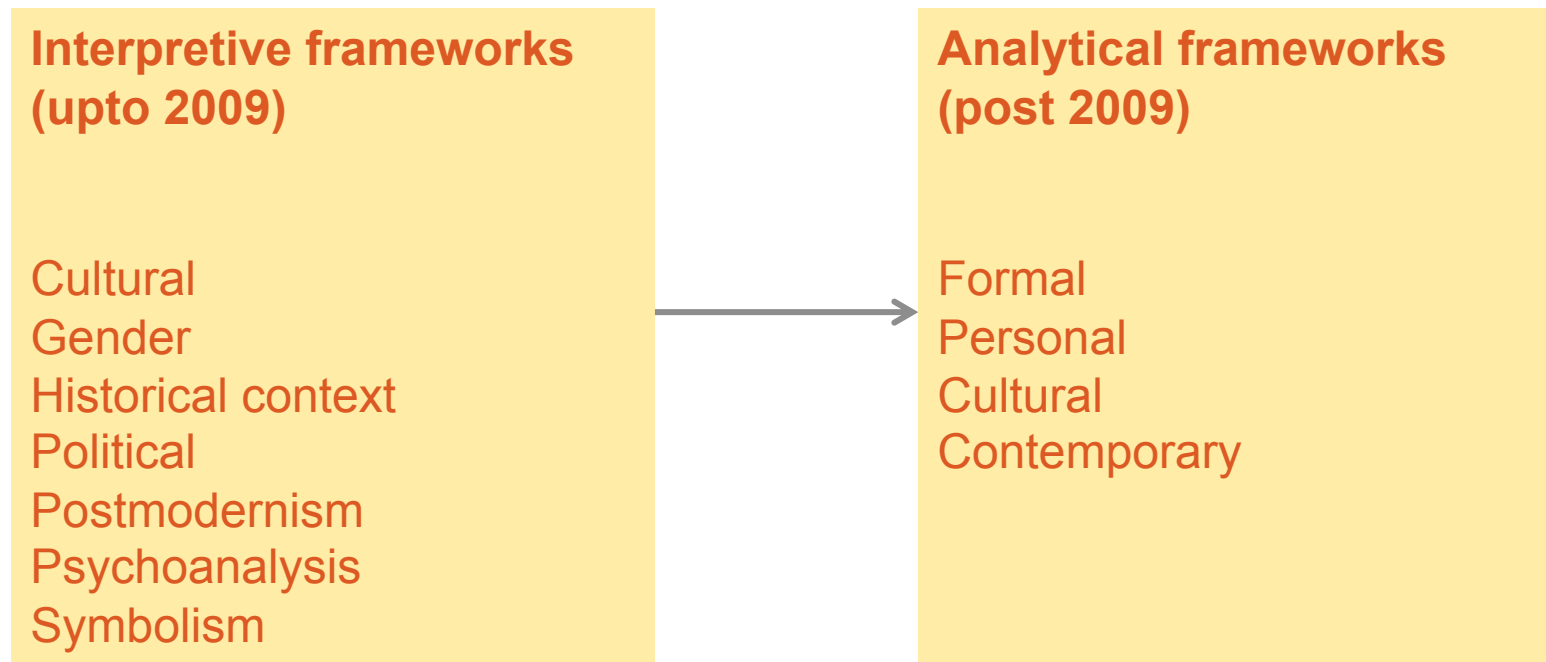
Technical properties

Questions exploring the skill of execution of the artwork

- Complex
- Seeks the 'positive'
- Convergent in approach
- Lacking critical focus

At the time of this writing, several discipline-based art education programs are using a method called “aesthetic scanning.” As Harry S. Broudy and Ronald Silverman describe it, **aesthetic scanning** involves the perception of the vividness and intensity of the affective and emotional qualities conveyed by an object’s colors, gestures, shapes, and textures (sensory properties); the design, composition, or arrangement of elements that provide unity through balance, repetition, rhythm, and context (formal qualities); the skill with which objects have been created (technical merits); and the import or message of objects as aesthetically expressed (expressive significance).¹⁶ This method enables persons to make contact with works of art and is therefore quite suitable for promoting the aims of the second phase of **aesthetic** learning. **Aesthetic scanning** however has its detractors. Some have likened it to

VCE FRAMEWORKS



ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS (VCE)

An Analytical Framework is a structure built around an idea or a set of related beliefs, that provides a particular focus for exploring or giving meaning to work.

Why use Analytical Frameworks?

- If we look at the same object through different “lenses,” or from different perspectives, we see the object in different ways. When we use Analytical Frameworks to explore, analyze and explain an artwork, we see the artwork in different ways.
- Each framework reveals a new layer of meaning in the artwork.
- Useful tools for exploring, analyzing and understanding formal and personal qualities of artworks

FURTHER INFORMATION?

Visual Thinking Strategies

- vtshome.org/

Artful Thinking Routines

- <http://www.old-pz.gse.harvard.edu/tc/index.cfm>

The Feldman Model

- www.gmstigers.com/.../Feldman-%20art%20criticism%20notes.doc
- <http://itismath.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Feldmans-method.pdf>

VCE Interpretive Frameworks

- VCE Study designs
- Classroom textbooks

HOW TO EXTRACT RICH IDEAS OUT OF YOUR STUDENTS

- Pay attention to the words you use to pose questions. Use “might”, avoid “is”. E.g. What **might** the cool colours suggest about the girl’s mood? INSTEAD of, “What **do** the colour colours suggest about the girl’s mood?”
- Establish a **culture of inquiry and communal learning**: Reinforce art interpretation is **personal** (based upon own ideas) *and* **communal** (informed by knowledge of other sources/persons).
- Any work of art can support **many different interpretations**
- **No right or wrong** answers – rather, emphasize answers being *more* or *less* meaningful and insightful.

WHAT SKILLS DO TEACHERS NEED TO EXERCISE DURING ART RESPONDING TASKS?

Teacher as questioner

Convergent questioning skills

- One response: What colour is this?
- Yes or No: Is this the correct glue for this join?
- True or False: All Picasso paintings are of people?
- Multi choice: Is this landscape Cubist, Expressionist or Fauvist
- Listing: Name four Impressionist painters?
- Analysis: What factors influenced the Impressionists?
- Synthesis: Can you summarise the key events in Rembrandt's life?

Teacher as questioner

Divergent questioning skills

- Brainstorming: What changes could we make to the school ground to accommodate students in wheelchairs?
- Imagination: What would happen if the school yard turned into a Dali landscape?

Interpretive questions

What could this mean? What may be the purpose of this approach?

Inferential questions

What might this shape suggest? What can you deduce from this idea?

Comparative questions

Similarities: In what ways are these two sculptures similar/ Differences - how do these two designs differ?

Teacher as questioner

Empathic questions

How would you have felt about this situation?

Predictive questions

What might happen if we change the figures around?

Evaluative questions

Which do you think is the most resolved work?

Teacher as listener

Want to listen

Almost all problems in listening can be overcome by having the right attitudes. Remember, there is no such thing as disinterested people - only disinterested listeners. Consider how much time you allow students to respond to questions.

Act like a good listener

Be alert, sit straight, lean forward if appropriate; let your face demonstrate interest.

Listen to understand

Do not just listen for the sake of listening; listen to gain a real understanding of what is being said. Follow up students' answers with a more probing question.

React

The only time a person likes to be interrupted is when applauded. Be generous with your applause. Make the other person feel important. Applaud with nods, smiles, comments and encouragement.

Stop talking

You can't listen while you are talking.

Empathise with the other person

Try to put yourself in the other's place so that you can see that point of view.

Teacher as listener

Ask questions

When you don't understand, when you need further clarification, when you want the other person to like you or when you want to show you are listening. But don't ask questions that will embarrass or 'put down' the other person.

Concentrate on what the other is saying

Actively focus your attention on the words, the ideas, and the feelings related to the subject.

Look at the other person

Face, mouth, eyes, hands will all help the other person communicate with you. Helps you concentrate too (shows you are listening).

Smile appropriately

But don't overdo it.

Teacher as listener

Leave your built-up frustrations behind (if you can)

Try to push your worries, fears and problems away. They may prevent you from listening well.

Get rid of distractions

Put down any papers, pencils etc.. you have in your hands for they may distract attention.

Focus on the main points

Concentrate on the main ideas and not the illustrative material. Examples, stories are important but get to the main point. Cut to the chase and don't bore students. Involve them in discussion. Make discussions interactive.

RESOURCES

You don't have to start from scratch! You are not alone...

- **Art-iculate: Art for VCE Units 1-4** by Kathryn Hendy-Ekers, Lou Chamberlin, Deryck Greenwood
- **Interpreting Art: a guide for students** by Christopher Marshall
- **About Art** by Lisa Lalcolm and Sally Dewar
- **Art investigator** by Michele Stockley
- **Art Detective** by Michele Stockley
- **Art VCE Study Design**, Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority
- **Studio Art VCE Study Design**, Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority