



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



**CAMBRIDGE**  
International Education

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Level Higher 1 (2026)**

**Art  
(Syllabus 8879)**

**(First year of examination in 2026)**

# CONTENTS

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	<i>Page</i>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SYLLABUS FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AIMS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION OF PAPERS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>SYLLABUS CONTENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>NOTES FOR GUIDANCE</b>	<b>23</b>

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## INTRODUCTION

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Art has been a valuable mode of human expression throughout history. Art plays many important roles in our lives. It captures memories, communicates ideas, shapes values and evokes emotions. It exists all around us in different forms, from the colours, shapes and patterns in nature to everyday images and designs on magazines, products and media. As an academic subject in the school curriculum, art is integral to the holistic development of every student.

The value of Art in the curriculum is threefold:

- Art expands imagination, enhances creativity and develops adaptability*  
 Art develops creative dispositions such as curiosity, openness and reflectiveness. By cultivating tolerance for ambiguity, developing ability to see from multiple perspectives<sup>1</sup> and to adapt flexibly across different contexts<sup>2</sup>, art develops critical, adaptive and inventive thinking competencies that drive innovation. Through the study of art, students develop capacity to observe closely, explore, engage, persist, evaluate, reflect and take risks to stretch themselves beyond what they currently know and can do, nurturing a sense of agency. They learn to imagine<sup>3</sup> and to envision<sup>4</sup>.
- Art builds students' capacity to critically discern and process visual information, and communicate effectively*  
 Art develops students' communication and information skills. It develops students' confidence and skills to express themselves. The study of art hones sensorial perception and provides understanding of visual elements, aesthetics and art history. Art develops skills in handling various media and tools and builds key foundational capacities such as the ability to make meaning, create and communicate through visual media.
- Art fosters students' sense of identity, culture, and place in society*  
 Art encompasses important ways of knowing and learning about self, others and the world around us. It is a form of language through which meaning is generated and cultural identities are formed. It provides an avenue for students to develop self and social awareness, appreciate our unique Singaporean forms of expression that are anchored on national values, as well as understand and appreciate cultures and traditions beyond a local context. This enables them to develop respect for self and others, to appreciate diversity and to cultivate global and cross-cultural literacy.

The aims of art education in our schools are to enable every child to:

- enjoy art,
- communicate visually, and
- make meaning through connecting with society and culture.

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<sup>1</sup> Eisner, E. W. (2002). *The Arts and the Creation of the Mind*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Doyle, D.; Robinson, A. *Artist Interview: Annabeth Robinson*, 20 March 2010. *Metaverse Creativity*, 6 (1–2), 87–99: Retrieved March 10, 2023, from [https://doi.org/10.1386/mvcr.6.1-2.87\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1386/mvcr.6.1-2.87_7)

<sup>3</sup> Hetland, L., Winner, E., Veenema, S. & Sheridan, K. (2013). *Studio Thinking 2: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press

<sup>4</sup> Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

## SYLLABUS FRAMEWORK

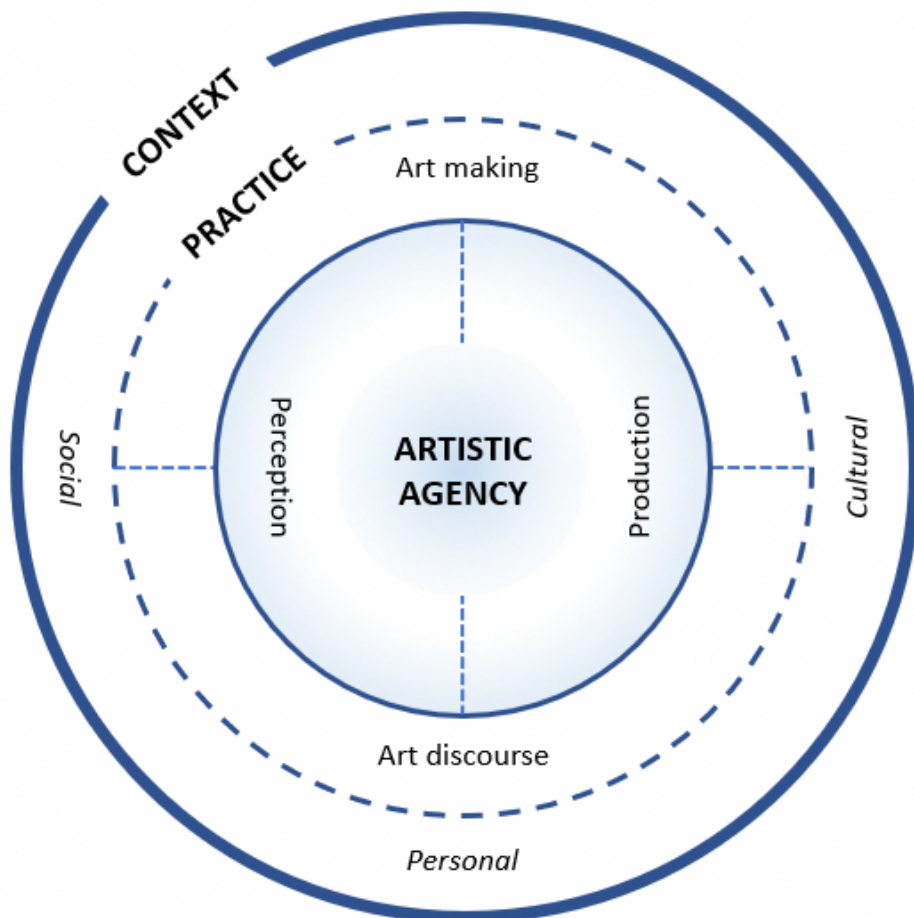


Figure 1: A-Level Art Syllabus Framework

The A-Level Art syllabuses, illustrated by the A-Level Art Syllabus Framework (Figure 1), seeks to develop deep disciplinary understanding towards a sense of **artistic agency**<sup>5</sup> at its core. To achieve this, the learner must develop the interconnected domains of '**perception**' and '**production**' that occur by situating each learner within an artistic **practice** which considers and responds to **multiple contexts**. Consequently, learning not only occurs within and for the artistic self, but also extends beyond to involve and reflect other individuals, societies, and cultures.

<sup>5</sup> Agency is commonly defined as the will and capacity to act autonomously with discernment and responsibility, which in turn endows one with a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy. In art learning within the pre-university context, learners with artistic agency act upon their interests, ideas, and beliefs, and display a desire to participate in and contribute to community, nation, and the world at large. In this regard, the art curriculum strongly identifies with the intent of CCE 2021 to seek growth in pre-university students' personal leadership in contributing to self, community and society based on their values, skills, interests and talents.

## Art Education for the Development of 21st Century Competencies and Character and Citizenship Education Learning Outcomes

Art education contributes to the development of 21st century knowledge, skills and dispositions. Specifically, the competencies that are developed include:

- **Critical, Adaptive and Inventive Thinking:** Critical, adaptive and inventive thinking are developed through art making and art discussion. In art making, students explore and experiment different ways to harness materials and techniques to express ideas. By imagining solutions and exploring alternative forms, students learn to take risks when making artistic decisions to solve problems. Beyond curiosity and creativity, students learn to reason effectively, consider different perspectives, reflect and apply critical evaluation when they engage in art discussions.
- **Communication, Collaboration, and Information Skills:** Art utilises a language and symbol system through which students interpret and communicate their ideas. The activities which students engage in while learning Art enable them to practise communication and collaboration skills, be it working individually or in groups. As a discipline that thrives on the building and exchange of ideas, students enlarge their understanding when they share their ideas and creations with others. Through their engagement in artistic processes, students learn to be open and responsive to diverse perspectives, work respectfully with their peers, make necessary compromises, and share and accept responsibility.
- **Civic, Global and Cross-Cultural Literacy:** Art invites and leads students to inquire and reflect on issues of identities, cultures, and traditions. Students' awareness and understanding of their cultural heritage are fostered through their exposure to artworks across different cultures and histories. By making and weighing connections between art and contemporary lives, students activate their personal voice and imagination to explore expression and to create. In the process, students deepen their appreciation of local and global communities, cultures and contexts to build a sense of agency and belonging.

## AIMS

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The syllabus aims to develop in each student:

- an inquiring mind and the confidence to express artistic intent through visual language;
- visual literacy and critical thinking skills;
- an active imagination and a spirit of experimentation and adaptation to discover creative possibilities;
- artistic agency and capacity for reflective and collaborative practice; and
- an understanding of and readiness to embrace diverse perspectives in art from a range of local and global contexts.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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At the end of the H1 Art course, students will achieve the following 4 Learning Outcomes (LOs):

<b>LO1</b>	Identify contexts, ideas, visual language, media and techniques employed which influence the way art can be created and presented.
<b>LO2</b>	Infer and draw relationships between issues, ideas, and visuals to interpret and appraise artworks.
<b>LO3</b>	Make informed and constructive personal response when engaged in critical discussion of others' works of art.
<b>LO4</b>	Understand and value art's role across societies and cultures.

## ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

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The assessment objectives will assess the Knowledge and Skills that correspond with the Learning Outcomes. Candidates should be able to:

<b>AO1</b>	<b>Knowledge Application</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand, recognise and describe contexts, ideas, use visual language, media and techniques in relation to visual outcomes and artistic intentions.</li> <li>Critically analyse, interpret and evaluate visual outcomes in relation to contexts, artistic intentions, and the use of media and techniques.</li> </ul>
<b>AO2</b>	<b>Expression and Creation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect and synergise issues, ideas, and visuals to derive new or relevant insights.</li> </ul>
<b>AO3</b>	<b>Reflection and Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formulate personal expressions and intentions to demonstrate critical reflection.</li> <li>Critically analyse, present and discuss artworks created by others using appropriate visual arts language.</li> <li>Develop a culturally sensitive understanding of artworks in their respective social, cultural and historical contexts.</li> </ul>

## SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

Paper	Description	Examination Duration	Weighting	Requirement
1	Art Discourse	3 hours	100%	Compulsory

Paper	Description	Marks	Weighting (%)	Duration
1 Art Discourse	Candidates must answer <b>one</b> question in each section.		100	3 hours
	<b>Section A: Visual Stimulus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An unseen visual stimulus is accompanied by <b>one</b> compulsory question with two sub-parts for visual analysis.</li> </ul>	20		
	<b>Section B: Comparative Study</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pair of unseen visual stimuli will be accompanied by a question with three sub-parts for a comparative study.</li> <li><b>Two</b> questions will be set for this section.</li> </ul>	30		
	<b>Section C: Discursive Essay</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Two</b> essay questions will be set from the six topics stated in the Syllabus Content.</li> <li>Candidates are to reference artists and artworks of their choice.</li> </ul>	30		
	<b>Total for Paper 1</b>	80		

## DESCRIPTION OF PAPERS

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### **Paper 1: Art Discourse [3 hours, 80 marks, 100%]**

Art Discourse evaluates the candidate's ability to engage in the appraisal of art's meanings and its ability to reflect and shape society and culture. Candidates are expected to be able to engage with the visual characteristics of artworks and to conduct formal analysis. They should be able to form interpretations regarding artists' intent, evaluate and comment on artworks in an informed and critical manner. Candidates are required to be sensitive to the ways art is made, encountered, and discussed in response to personal, social, and cultural issues and real-world needs. They should demonstrate an informed understanding of the six topics and their key concepts<sup>6</sup> in the syllabus content:

- 1 Representation in Art
- 2 Abstraction in Art
- 3 Materials in Art
- 4 Technology in Art
- 5 People in Art
- 6 Art in Society

Through responses to visual stimuli and essay questions, candidates demonstrate their abilities to use appropriate visual language, critically analyse artworks, issues, themes, or problems significant to Art practices. Candidates should note that all visual stimuli referred to in the question paper will be *unseen* and candidates must be prepared to apply their skills of visual literacy in their analysis and response. Candidates can draw links with their direct experience or environment to form personal opinions about the artworks or selected artists.

The Art Discourse paper consists of three sections.

#### **Section A: Visual Analysis [20 marks]**

A visual stimulus is accompanied by one structured question.

#### **Section B: Comparative Study [30 marks]**

A pair of visual stimuli are accompanied by a set of structured comparison questions.

#### **Section C: Discursive Essay [30 marks]**

Two essay questions will be set in this section, where candidates are to reference artists and artworks of their choice.

Candidates must answer:

- the question in Section A
- **one** question in Section B
- **one** question in Section C

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<sup>6</sup> Refer to page 14 to 17.



## Assessment Domain

The three assessment domains applied to the Art Discourse paper are:

- 1 Artistic Perception and Interpretation
- 2 Cultural and Aesthetic Appreciation
- 3 Personal Response

The following three domains define a range of assessable qualities which can be demonstrated by candidates at this level:

Assessment Domain	Section		
	A	B	C
<b>1 Artistic Perception and Interpretation</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss and analyse visual aspects in works of art, based on an understanding of visual language (elements of art, principles of design, design concepts and visual strategies) and art forms and media.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss, analyse, interpret how artists express their intentions in their artworks based on visual elements seen in works of art..</li> </ul>		✓	✓
<b>2 Cultural and Aesthetic Appreciation</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forge links between different artists and artworks.</li> </ul>		✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe and discuss how artists respond to personal, social, cultural contexts.</li> </ul>			✓
<b>3 Personal Response</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form and express personal opinions regarding artists and artworks.</li> </ul>		✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate critical thinking and reflection in response.</li> </ul>			✓

## Academic Verbs / Nouns Glossary

- **Analyse:** Candidates should look at an image or images or issue/statement closely and distinguish and write about the artwork's visual qualities or specific pertinent topics regarding the issue or statement. They should break down the perceived whole of artwork/issue/statement into smaller parts and examine each part to see how it contributes to the whole, or how these parts work together to create meaning or an effect.
- **Commentary:** Candidates should highlight points of interest in the artwork(s) or concepts and provide elaboration about the specific areas highlighted to demonstrate knowledge and understanding on the subject. This elaboration will draw on their thoughts and opinions through interpretation and evaluation of the premises with close reference to the points of interest raised from the question.
- **Comparative Commentary:** Candidates should identify premises of comparison between two different artworks or propositions and provide their thoughts and opinions through interpretation and evaluation of these premises with close reference to the points of interest between both works or concepts raised in the question.
- **Critically evaluate:** Candidates should carefully examine and assess the artwork(s), an argument, a theory, or a piece of evidence, in order to determine its strengths and weaknesses. Candidates should use their analytical skills to assess the quality and validity of the information presented, and to provide a well-reasoned and evidence-based evaluation of it.

- **Discuss:** Candidates should share their ideas and thoughts related to the visual stimulus or proposition stated in the question. They should state personal opinions, interpretations and evaluations of artists, artworks, or concepts. Present different viewpoints or arguments related to the topic. Analyse and evaluate these viewpoints or arguments and provide evidence or examples to support their analysis and evaluation. Candidates should draw conclusions or make recommendations based on their analysis and evaluation.

**Achievement Levels for Paper 1 Art Discourse [80 marks]**

<b>Section A: Visual Analysis [20 marks]</b>				
<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 1</b>
20–16 marks	15–11 marks	10–6 marks	5–1 marks	0
<p>Analysis of the visual language of the artwork is critical and comprehensive.</p> <p>Response demonstrates excellent understanding of formal elements employed by the artist and the characteristics of the artwork.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media is effective with accurate use of visual language.</p>	<p>Analysis of the visual language of the artwork is generally comprehensive.</p> <p>Response demonstrates good understanding of most of the formal elements employed by the artist and the characteristics of the artwork.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media is generally effective with use of some visual language.</p>	<p>Analysis of the visual language of the artwork is adequate.</p> <p>Response demonstrates some understanding of a few of the formal elements employed by the artist and the characteristics of the artwork.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media is somewhat appropriate. Use of visual language is adequate.</p>	<p>Analysis of the visual language of the artwork is limited.</p> <p>Response demonstrates limited understanding of the formal elements employed by the artist and the characteristics of the artwork.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language is limited or confused. Use of visual language is limited or not demonstrated.</p>	No creditable points given.

Section B: Comparative Study [30 marks]					
Level 6	Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
30–25 marks	24–19 marks	18–13 marks	12–7 marks	6–1 marks	0
<p>Analysis of the visual language of both artworks is critical and comprehensive.</p> <p>Response demonstrates excellent understanding of formal elements employed by the artists and the characteristics of the artworks.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media from the two artworks is effective.</p> <p>Response draws relevant connections between the different artworks and demonstrates sensitive cultural and aesthetic awareness between artists and artworks.</p>	<p>Analysis of the visual language of both artworks is generally comprehensive.</p> <p>Response demonstrates good understanding of formal elements employed by the artists and the characteristics of the artworks.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media from the two artworks is generally effective.</p> <p>Response makes some relevant connections between the different artworks and demonstrates some cultural and aesthetic awareness between artists and artworks.</p>	<p>Analysis of the visual language of both artworks is adequate.</p> <p>Response demonstrates some understanding of formal elements employed by the artists and the characteristics of the artworks.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media from the two artworks is somewhat relevant.</p> <p>Response makes a few relevant connections between the different artworks and demonstrates emerging cultural and aesthetic awareness between artists and artworks.</p>	<p>Analysis of the visual language of both artworks is limited or unbalanced.</p> <p>Response demonstrates limited understanding of formal elements employed by the artists and the characteristics of the artworks.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media from the two artworks is limited or slightly confused.</p> <p>Response struggles to make relevant connections between the different artworks or demonstrates limited cultural and aesthetic awareness between artists and artworks.</p>	<p>Analysis of the visual language of both artworks is weak or superficial.</p> <p>Response demonstrates weak or little understanding of formal elements employed by the artists and the characteristics of the artworks.</p> <p>Communication of ideas when analysing, interpreting or evaluating the visual language, artform/s or media from the two artworks is weak and confused.</p> <p>Response makes little or no relevant connections between the different artworks or does not demonstrate cultural and aesthetic awareness between artists and artworks.</p>	<p>No creditable points given.</p>

<b>Section B: Comparative Study [30 marks]</b>					
<b>Level 6</b>	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 1</b>
30–25 marks	24–19 marks	18–13 marks	12–7 marks	6–1 marks	0
<p>A sound and detailed essay, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the artists or concepts and where appropriate, has included relevant and insightful context.</p> <p>The essay is illustrated by a wide range of accurate and perceptive references to artists and works that show critical understanding and familiarity with the relevant art form(s), artist(s) and traditions drawn from the six topics and the key concepts from the syllabus.</p>	<p>A good, fairly detailed essay, demonstrating a good understanding of the artists or concepts and where appropriate, has included relevant context.</p> <p>The essay is illustrated by a good range of generally accurate references to artists and works that show some understanding and familiarity with the relevant art form(s), artist(s) and traditions drawn from the six topics and the key concepts from the syllabus.</p>	<p>A moderately detailed essay, demonstrating adequate understanding of the artists or concepts and where appropriate, has included mostly relevant context.</p> <p>The essay is illustrated by a small range of generally accurate references to artists and works that show some familiarity with the relevant art form(s), artist(s) and traditions drawn from the six topics and the key concepts from the syllabus.</p>	<p>A general essay, demonstrating limited or some inaccurate understanding of the artists or concepts and where appropriate, has attempted to situate the relevant context.</p> <p>The essay is illustrated by a very narrow range of partially accurate references to artists and works that show little familiarity with the art form(s), artist(s) and traditions drawn from the six topics and the key concepts from the syllabus.</p>	<p>A superficial essay, demonstrating weak or little understanding of the artists or concepts and where appropriate, has attempted to situate the relevant context.</p> <p>The essay is illustrated by inaccurate references to artists and works that show almost no familiarity with the art form(s), artist(s) and traditions drawn from the six topics and the key concepts from the syllabus.</p>	<p>No creditable points given.</p>

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

While engaging with the syllabus content in H1 Art, students will:

- Appreciate that a diverse range of media and methods are involved in art making and develop knowledge of related visual language, conventions and strategies.
- Understand how others have approached art making and how a body of work communicates meaning and purpose for different audiences.

### Visual Language

Students should be sensitised to the visual language, conventions, and strategies employed in each art form to guide and inform their making and viewing of art. With the proliferation of art forms, media and tools<sup>7</sup>, visual literacy is highlighted as one of the most essential skills for 21st-century learners. Being visually literate means being informed of manipulation by visual means<sup>8</sup> and being able to critically view and use visual content, understanding how these can convey meaning and intent. Students should:

- be familiar with art vocabulary in their study of artworks.
- be able to identify visual language (genre, stylistic features, visual qualities and visual strategies) employed in artworks and their corresponding artistic intentions.
- be aware of how artists have purposefully used various tools and technology to convey artistic intentions in different art forms.

A non-exhaustive selection of visual qualities, visual strategies and design concepts is presented below:

Visual Qualities		Visual Strategies	Design Concept
Elements of Art	Principles of Design	Postmodern Principles <sup>9</sup>	
<p><i>Artists use Elements of Art and Principles of Design to make, think and talk about art. These were art instruction tools used in early 20th century to help students understand visual qualities of artworks and to make sense of abstract and non-representational Modernist paintings.</i></p>		<p><i>As contemporary artists continue to break new boundaries, postmodern principles equip students with the vocabulary and contextual lenses to consider art and art making from a conceptual perspective.</i></p>	<p><i>Designers use Elements of Art and Principles of Design to create outcomes that are not only appealing but <b>convey a message or fulfil a function</b>. Students should consider the following when exploring design.</i></p>
<p>Line, Shape, Form, Colour, Texture, Space, Value</p>	<p>Harmony, Balance, Contrast, Scale, Movement, Emphasis, Rhythm</p>	<p>Appropriation, Juxtaposition, Recontextualisation, Layering, Interaction of Text &amp; Image, Hybridity</p>	<p>Stylisation, Typography, Visual Hierarchy, Editorial Layout</p>

<sup>7</sup> Matusiak, K. K. (2020). *Studying visual literacy: Research methods and the use of visual evidence*. IFLA journal, 46(2), 172–181. Retrieved September 20, 2023, from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0340035219886611>

<sup>8</sup> Bamford, A. (2003). *The Visual Literacy White Paper*. Adobe Systems. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from <https://aperture.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/visual-literacy-wp.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Gude, O. (2004). *Postmodern principles: In search of a 21st century art education*. *Art Education: The Journal of the National Art Education Association*, 57(1), 6–14.

Examples of Art Forms		
Fine Art	Design	Time-based
Painting, Printmaking, Photography, Mixed Media, Pyrography, Papercut, Traditional Asian Art, Sculpture, Assemblage, Ceramics, Mural, Installation, Site-specific works.	Illustration, Graphic, Character, Visual Communications, Fashion, Costume, Packaging, Product, Jewellery, Architecture, Textile.	Video, Film, Animation, Motion Graphics, Interactive Installation, Multi-media.

## Context

Students should be aware that an artwork is a meeting of form and content, embodying the relationship between its visual characteristics and the intention of its author. By examining others' artworks, students discover how others respond to personal, social and cultural contexts. Students learn to understand that artists' intentions can range from desire for self-expression to being driven to respond to social, cultural issues and real-world needs<sup>10</sup>. As artists work across different settings and mature through their body of works, their intentions can be layered, criss-crossing or sitting at the intersections of these settings.

By observing, interpreting, and evaluating how others manipulate visual characteristics and respond to different contextual frames, Students learn to clarify their own methods and approaches in art making so that they acquire disciplinary understanding and a sense of agency. This supports and is complemented by students' exposure to a range of art forms and media and their nuances, differences, and overlaps.

The H1 Art syllabus presents six topics to cultivate students' sensitivity and to develop their skills at reading, making formal analysis, forming judgement, and commenting on artworks in an informed and critical manner. For each topic, students should gain an understanding of the key concepts and be guided by the questions.

The six topics are:

- 1 Representation in Art
- 2 Abstraction in Art
- 3 Materials in Art
- 4 Technology in Art
- 5 People in Art
- 6 Art in Society

To illustrate the six topics, the syllabus suggests a range of local, regional and global artists with modern and contemporary practices across a variety of art forms. For clarity, suggested artists are listed once under one topic although some artists could be used to illustrate concepts from multiple topics.

**It is not mandatory for schools to use these suggested artists to explore the six topics.** Schools can curate, remove suggested artists and add their own selection of artists when engaging students in the key concepts in the six topics. When choosing artists, schools can reference the key concepts and considerations for artist selection.

**Additionally, students are not required to memorise artist biographies or historical events in detail.**

Instead, students should be encouraged to read widely and view more art to find relatable artists/artworks to understand the six topics and their corresponding key concepts.

Legend to list of topics and suggested artists:

\* Artist from Singapore

^ Artist from Asia

<sup>10</sup> This includes more applied forms of art such as design, fashion and architecture where there might be specific briefs and industry practices to follow.

### Topic 1: Representation in Art

Art represents reality through describing, depicting, or portraying a subject matter. It provides information and interpretations, makes the invisible, fleeting aspect of our world become tactile and palpable, and conveys our emotions, ideas, and experiences. It informs and challenges our understanding of the world and allows us to communicate with one another. Artists have explored the organisation and manipulation of visual elements, employing varying degrees of realism to create compelling and evocative interpretations. Artists' forays in representation have led to the evolution of compositional techniques, use of symbolism and metaphor and more recently, narrative devices such as plot, characterization, text, panels, frames, and border lines.

While some artists have gone beyond establishing art's ability to mimic and reproduce reality to challenge our understanding of what appears real, others have advanced visual language to demonstrate that art can have transformative roles, of helping us understand our circumstances, encouraging us to value our world, and inspiring imagination. Understanding representation in art will support students in recognising the nuances of representation and to appreciate how art is used for communication in past and contemporary cultures.

Key Concepts	Guiding Questions	Suggested Artists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists have long been fascinated by forms of representation. Developments in visual language and formats, and techniques to achieve varying degrees of realism in representation provided artists with fresh means to communicate their ideas and concepts.</li> <li>• Artists recognise that their artworks are invitations for exchange of viewpoints with their audience. Beyond allowing a peek into worlds, artworks raise questions about artists' narration and audience's interpretation.</li> <li>• Artworks challenge our perspective and understanding of our lived circumstances and the world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What ideas and concepts of our world do artists hope to tell or inspire in us?</li> <li>• How have artists used the characteristics and pushed the techniques of representation in their respective art forms?</li> <li>• How does the artist's selection of what to represent and how to represent impact our interpretation of subjects, concepts, and experiences?</li> <li>• How has art moved beyond the need to reproduce reality to assume more transformative roles?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andreas Gursky</li> <li>• Chua Mia Tee*</li> <li>• Ron Mueck</li> <li>• Shaun Tan</li> <li>• Suzy Lee^</li> </ul>



### Topic 2: Abstraction in Art

Breaking away from established traditions of representational art, some artists in the early 20th century moved away from realistic representation and began to experiment with abstraction through methods such as simplification, distortion, and schematisation. Artists also explored the properties of materials and used art elements like lines, colours, shapes, and forms to create patterns or abstract images.

Instead of focusing on narratives told through recognisable subject matter, artists connected with their audience through an expressive use of materials and formal qualities. Understanding abstraction in art will support students in interpreting, evaluating, and appreciating modern and contemporary artworks.

Key Concepts	Guiding Questions	Suggested Artists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists approached abstraction with varied starting points, from desire to express the intangible to conceptual investigations into visual form.</li> <li>• Artists used a variety of ways to explore abstraction, balancing intended effect with accidental findings.</li> <li>• While abstraction can be viewed as a continuum of visible characteristics with different degrees of recognisability, artists have created works that draw little or no reference from external visual reality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why have artists chosen to use abstraction?</li> <li>• How have artists explored abstraction and pushed its boundaries?</li> <li>• In what ways do the materials used reflect artist's intent and impact the audience?</li> <li>• Could art be appreciated purely for its aesthetical qualities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anthony Poon*</li> <li>• Chua Ek Kay*</li> <li>• Enid Marx</li> <li>• Fiona Rae</li> <li>• Jackson Pollock</li> </ul>

### Topic 3: Materials in Art

In the early 1900s, Marcel Duchamp introduced artworks made of mass-produced, commercial, utilitarian objects with minimal artistic intervention as *Readymades*, challenging then prevailing notions of art. Throughout histories and across cultures, artists in their choice and use of materials have drawn upon the histories, symbolism, and expressive potential of various media to create while exercising self-reflexivity, bringing fresh interpretations to the materials and shaping the visual and conceptual aspects of art.

Artists use a wide range of materials, ranging from the unconventional such as industrial, salvaged materials, the ephemeral such as organic matter and sound, and the elemental such as light, space, and land. Artists also use their bodies and, at times, challenge if ideas could be materials. Consequently, art forms such as installation, performance, sound, and site-specific art have proliferated. Understanding artists' choice and use of materials and their artistic processes helps students critically evaluate the form and content of artworks.

Key Concepts	Guiding Questions	Suggested Artists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists continually explore new materials available in their environment. Materials present visual, tactile qualities and can embody historical, symbolic, religious, and cultural significance.</li> <li>• By experimenting with techniques and processes, artists can elevate, alter, layer on, and ascribe meanings to the materials and their artworks.</li> <li>• The rise of new materials, techniques and processes has witnessed art intersecting with other disciplines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What materials are artists exploring in their artworks?</li> <li>• Why have artists chosen to use specific materials? How are artists using the unique properties of materials?</li> <li>• What interpretations are artists inviting through their choice and way of using specific materials?</li> <li>• What is the place of craftsmanship in art and how have artists provided alternative views to it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cai Guoqiang<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• Damien Hirst</li> <li>• Han Sai Por<sup>*</sup></li> <li>• Montien Boonma<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• Olafur Eliasson</li> </ul>

#### Topic 4: Technology in Art

Advances in areas such as information, communication, entertainment, and biochemical technologies have availed new materials and tools to artists, influencing the ways artists live, work, and create. Artists have experimented with time-based media, digital programmes, computing devices, and biochemical innovations to provide fresh sensorial experiences to their audience. Their artworks reveal the impact of technology, the intersections of technology and artistic expression, and have challenged ideas of what art can offer to its audience.

Understanding how artists have inquired and woven technology into their art making will support students in accessing, interpreting, and evaluating artworks that leverage specific technologies in the past and present. Students will learn to critically engage with the issues and concerns surrounding new technologies and their representational mechanisms.

Key Concepts	Guiding Questions	Suggested Artists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists have blurred the boundaries between traditional art media and technology, creating visual, interactive, and hybrid artworks. Their explorations led to new forms of artistic expression, such as video art, digital art, and interactive and immersive installations.</li> <li>• Artists have provided audiences with heightened sensorial, immersive, participatory experiences and at times, raised awareness of the societal implications of technology.</li> <li>• Technology has expanded possibilities for creative production, collective creation, and artistic exchange. Artists have explored the relationship between artist, the technology used, and its role in the creative process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of technologies are artists experimenting with?</li> <li>• Why have artists chosen to use specific technologies? What aspects of the technology inspired them?</li> <li>• What are the original functions of these technologies and how are artists using them differently to express their ideas and concepts</li> <li>• What fresh experiences and messages do these artworks offer to their audience?</li> <li>• How has the use of technologies changed the way artists work and create?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anicka Yi<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• Mona Hatoum<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• Nam June Paik<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• Rob Sketcherman<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• teamLAB<sup>^</sup></li> </ul>

### Topic 5: People in Art

Artists have long been fascinated by the human figure and the human condition. Artists have portrayed themselves and the people they encounter in a variety of ways, such as through portraiture and figurative works. Artworks have ranged from a literal record of a person's features, gestures, and expressions to representations of the character or identity possessed by an individual or a group. Many artists also seek to represent human relationships and societal norms by conveying through their artworks the emotional nuances that underlie the complexity of these bonds.

By studying different artworks that encapsulate the themes of existence, identity and relationships, students will appreciate artists' perspectives and insights on the human condition. Students will be able to interpret and engage with such artworks and make informed and respectful comments.

Key Concepts	Guiding Questions	Suggested Artists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists have created artworks to depict individuals from diverse backgrounds, to investigate stereotypes, to represent the underrepresented, and to celebrate lived experiences and the human spirit.</li> <li>• Artists portray the personalities, emotions, inner thoughts, and psychological state of themselves, other individuals and groups using a variety of techniques, strategies, and formats.</li> <li>• Artists have evolved the style and purpose of portraying people by exploring new perspectives and interpretations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What aspects of the human condition fascinate artists and compel them to spotlight in their artworks?</li> <li>• How have artists portrayed the different dimensions of being human through the techniques and processes they used?</li> <li>• How does the artist's portrayal of the subject posit fresh interpretations of how the subject can be perceived?</li> <li>• How have artists interrogated the concept of depicting physical likeness and expanded art's repertoire of portraying people?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amanda Heng*</li> <li>• Cindy Sherman</li> <li>• Francis Bacon</li> <li>• Lucian Freud</li> <li>• Ng Eng Teng*</li> </ul>

### Topic 6: Art in Society

Artworks are visual records, commentaries, and critiques of significant events, societies, and times artists live in. Some artists use their art to explore their cultural lineage and others use their art to discuss socio-political, socio-economic, socio-ecological, socio-cultural conditions. As artists consider their personal and professional roles within society, issues such as social unrest, urbanisation, the destruction of nature, technological and cultural shifts have always been of concern to artists. Artworks may be created to raise awareness, celebrate, critique or dialogue on prevailing practices.

By looking at the ways artists represent their response to their lived experiences across different cultures and times, students learn to engage with local, regional, and global issues and to respect and value diverse viewpoints and cultures. Students will develop greater sensitivity and understanding of their world and how artworks reflect and contribute to the cultural development of societies.

Key Concepts	Guiding Questions	Suggested Artists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artworks embody artists' responses to personal histories and their lived experiences within specific historical, social, and cultural contexts.</li> <li>• Regardless of art forms, artists have been innovative in the methods, techniques and processes they employ to discuss specific local, regional, and global issues.</li> <li>• Artists engage with world issues for different purposes, such as to raise awareness, celebrate, critique, dialogue, and at times, challenge, and advocate for change. Their artworks reflect and can contribute to the cultural development of a society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some issues which artists are impacted by or feel compelled to bring to attention?</li> <li>• What are the methods, techniques and processes artists have employed to discuss specific conditions or issues?</li> <li>• Why have the artists chosen to express their views and perspective in a particular manner? Is it effective?</li> <li>• How does artists' involvement in society impact contemporary understanding of art and the role of the artist?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andy Warhol</li> <li>• Banksy</li> <li>• Dede Eri Supria<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• Guo Pei<sup>^</sup></li> <li>• Tang Da Wu<sup>*</sup></li> </ul>

## Artistic Processes

Artists draw inspiration from their lived experiences when deciding on ideas, images and materials. Mirroring processes undertaken by artists, students learn to make artistic decisions and work towards creative resolutions by engaging in four artistic processes: **Research, Exploration, Creation, Reflection**.

**Research** is the ability to seek out, gather, consolidate, analyse, and make sense of relevant visual, textual, and aural information. Students learn to observe, record, and analyse what they see and experience. Students may find information and references related to art or broader world issues.

**Exploration** encourages students to be curious and open to possibilities. In exploration, students investigate by trying out different ideas, art media, and visual strategies as they search for creative solutions. Activities could include experimentation with ideas, visual strategies, materials, tools, and technical processes. Students should record their ideas and observations in digital and non-digital formats such as doodles, preliminary sketches, annotations, and photography. When students explore, they synthesise the resulting visuals and information to seek out creative solutions. Exploration supports students in exercising creative, adaptive and critical thinking skills.

**Creation** is a process that students experience to produce expressive artworks that communicate their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. To create, besides the ability to imagine and generate ideas, students make informed artistic decisions as they work towards their personal artistic vision. Students need to understand the language of their chosen art form and media and possess dexterity to harness the expressive potential of the art materials. Students are encouraged to document their finished artworks for their own reference and as evidence of learning.

**Reflection** that is purposeful and deliberate helps candidates consolidate their learning to arrive at new insights. Students should regularly and intuitively reflect on how other artworks inform their own art making and how their process of making art helps them relate to others and their artworks. Through reflection, students learn to review, evaluate, and modify their artworks to work towards a personal artistic practice. Teachers can facilitate reflection through individual or collaborative activities.

Students learn to appreciate that these processes are interconnected, fluid and not always enacted in sequential order. These processes help to make visible students' development and thinking process, showing progress and growth over time.

## Safety in Art Studios

In the art studio, it is vital for students to practise safety precautionary measures. They should cultivate a sense of care and responsibility towards the tools and materials in the art studio and the environment they work in. Safety practices such as wearing protective gear when using sharp tools or toxic materials, learning proper ways to handle various art materials and equipment, and keeping the workspace organised and clean are important habits that ensure the safe enactment of artistic processes.

### Respect for Creative Expressions & Academic Integrity

Today's students who are avid consumers of art, design, music, film, books, software and all that culture and the internet has to offer are tomorrow's creative producers.<sup>11</sup> Recent technological developments such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies have revolutionised creative production and further raised questions of authenticity and how authors of creative works could be protected in their expression.

An idea can be expressed in many ways and all the arts are creative expressions. Equipping students with a respect for creative expressions and sound understanding of intellectual property is critical to developing a positive intellectual property culture and sustainable arts ecosystem for future generations. It is part of cultivating values, social-emotional competencies and 21CC, growing students to embody the desired outcomes of education. **Students would benefit from guidance in how they draw inspiration from others, discuss their works in relation to those by others, and exercise integrity in their art making.** Teaching and learning that promotes ethical and responsible attribution is foundational to imbuing respect and trust in the learning environment, ensuring that every learner grows to be a civic-minded member of society.

### Academic Citation by Students

While looking for inspiration in the works of others, students should learn to respect the rights of others and to make their own works with integrity. In teaching, learning and assessment, academic integrity ensures that all students have equal opportunities to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquired during their course of study. All work submitted by students, be it for purposes of learning or assessment, is to be authentic, based on the students' individual and original ideas and efforts.

### **Students must acknowledge all sources and make known the use of applications or tools in their work.**

The inclusion of ideas or work by others, should be fully attributed so that it is clear which aspect(s) can be considered as students' own work. These include literature references, parts that are inspired by others, collaborative tasks with peers, consultations with external parties, use of readymade materials, software or AI tools, etc. Where possible, it is recommended that students use a standard and consistent style of referencing such as the American Psychological Association (APA) style.

## NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

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Refer to 2025 Higher 1 Art Teaching and Learning Syllabus.

<sup>11</sup> De Icaza, M. (2007). *Learn from the past, create the future: The arts and copyright*. World Intellectual Property Organization. Retrieved March 10, 2023, from [https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/copyright/935/wipo\\_pub\\_935.pdf](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/copyright/935/wipo_pub_935.pdf)