

ENGAGING YEAR 9 BOYS IN VISUAL ARTS THEORY THROUGH  
DIGITAL MEDIA STORYTELLING

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**Abstract**

The goal of this action research project was to engage Year 9 boys in discussing artworks and overcome their general disinterest and lack of confidence in writing about Art. My action research intervention was to have participants create a narrative-based, creative filmmaking response to an artwork. The boys were encouraged to utilise green screens in their films, enabling them to immerse themselves in the worlds of their selected artworks. I specifically designed this task to cater for boys' interest in collaboration, storytelling, and technology and to demonstrate that art theory can actually be fun, rather than a dreaded chore.

Data for this project were collected through lesson observation, a survey, semi-structured interviews, and the participant's film submissions. Throughout the project, the boys demonstrated a high level of engagement in the task and all spoke positively of their experiences. For most of the participants, the filmmaking aspect of the task promoted a deeper engagement with their artworks, although for a few, it was potentially more of a distraction. Based on the overall success of the project, I will continue to implement similar film-based tasks in the Year 9 Art course. More importantly, however, the project has reiterated the value of providing boys with more creative and participatory literacy tasks that promote their engagement and help enable more intrinsically motivated learning to occur.

**Introduction**

Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.

–Albert Einstein

The foundation of my research topic is built upon my experience as a Visual Arts teacher and my observations of most boys' disengagement with traditional writing-based forms of Art theory assessment tasks. This lack of interest and confidence in critically engaging in written analysis of artworks is all too often evident in the subsequent subpar work that boys often submit. For many, this general shortcoming is seen as another symptom of the Millennial Generation's move away from traditional forms of literacy in favour of the instant gratification

provided by technology-based stimuli, such as computer games and social media (Ritchel, 2012). Through my 6 years' experience teaching Visual Arts in a diverse range of schools and year levels I have found that, aside from students now writing on computers instead of paper, Art theory is primarily still being taught with a traditional textbook style approach. It is my belief that the creative focus of the Visual Arts subject can provide an ideal platform to develop theory tasks that are more reflective of the increasingly dynamic and technology-based learning preferences of boys today.

My prior experience of introducing digital media narrative Art theory to Years 5 and 6 boys highlighted how much more responsive boys are when engaging with artworks in a more hands-on active capacity, such as through film, song, or creative writing, rather than a more traditional, academic style analysis of an artwork. Previous students were so excited about their new projects that they actually became unaware that they were engaging in Art theory and they subsequently made dramatic improvements in the creativity and depth of their analysis and visual literacy.

Some key differences between my prior Year 5 and 6 boys and the Year 9 participants in this project were that the younger students tended to be far more enthusiastic about Art, and less self-conscious about involvement in projects that required them to act or sing. Another key differentiating factor is that I had not required my primary students to submit a script or accompanying written work with their film submissions. In consultation with my Head of Department at TSS, Stephen Eardley, it was determined that in order to prepare them for the academic rigour of senior years' Art theory tasks, my Year 9 boys would be required to submit scripts alongside their short films. This did negate some of the appeal of the filmmaking task, as it meant additional Art theory work for the boys, rather than allowing for the spontaneity that the medium of film can provide. Given the broad range in my participants' abilities, requiring the boys to write a script prior to filming proved effective in promoting additional research and improving the quality of their analyses.

In developing this project, the action research methodology provided an ideal platform and stimulus to research further into Art teaching pedagogies. The comprehensive data collection and evaluation process required assisted me in being more organised in my planning and enabled me to achieve improvements for future implementations of this task.

### **Literature Review**

In researching for this project, I was able to draw upon a rich library of literature on issues concerning boys' literacy, with a particular focus on storytelling, collaboration, and

technology. Alloway, Freebody, Gilbert and Muspratt (2002) discuss the need for educators to incorporate new forms of literacy, including oral, written, electronic, and visual, into classrooms, along with a broader repertoire of dynamic and participatory teaching strategies in order to engage boys and improve their literacy skills. Researchers have found that utilising social interaction and collaboration through the use of storytelling activities can be one of the most effective means of literacy instruction. “We are by nature storytellers; therefore, it only makes sense to allow students a chance to first do something at which they are already good. (Miller and Pennycuff, 2008, p. 39). These findings support my prior teaching experience of the transformative power that introducing narrative elements to Art theory tasks can have on engaging boys in literacy.

The impetus for this project came out of concern for the overall disengagement and low ability of boys when engaging in Art theory written tasks at the all-boys school in which I teach. This issue is characteristic of an internationally observed decline in boys’ literacy achievements throughout all levels of their schooling, with female students consistently scoring higher than boys in reading and writing tests. Watson, Kehler & Martino (2010) argue that this achievement gap has been sensationalised and that there are more nuanced determining factors than simply gender differences. They highlight research from PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) that finds that socio-economic status makes a bigger difference than gender. Given the high socioeconomic status of the majority of my boys at TSS, this is unlikely to be a determining negative factor for them.

Watson, Kehler & Martino (2010) strike a more resonating chord in their findings that traditional constructions of masculinity is a key factor in boys struggling with literacy. They argue that male students often feel discouraged from engaging with literacy due to peer pressure and bullying from classmates who regard traditional book literacy as being nerdy and uncool. It is certainly easy to observe most adolescent boy’s preference for digital media such as gaming, social media or online content over traditional forms of literacy. As educators, we are facing a doomed battle if we seek to ignore, rather than incorporate, student interest in technology-based forms of literacy that provide an interactive social element and immediate feedback: “Visuals, especially those that are a part of everyday life, such as digital media, popular culture, and cultural artefacts, have the potential to transform literacy instruction, particularly in relation to writing” (Roswell & Kendrick, 2013, p. 597). Boys’ engagement in classroom literacy is keenly motivated by a sense of audience, choice and purpose (Fisher & Frey, 2012), which they find limited in traditional writing assignments where often the sole audience is their teacher (Roswell & Kendrick, 2013).

Integration of new technologies into the classroom can be an effective tool for engaging and relating more to student interest, however this needs to be done in meaningful ways, as, “in many cases, new technologies are simply reinforcing old ways of teaching and learning” (Susnea, Pechenau & Tudorie, 2015, p. 1521). Successfully negotiating the turbulent, ever-changing technological landscape remains an ongoing challenge within education, one that requires teachers to re-evaluate and expand our notions of what constitutes literacy in the digital age (Toomey & Kitson, 2017).

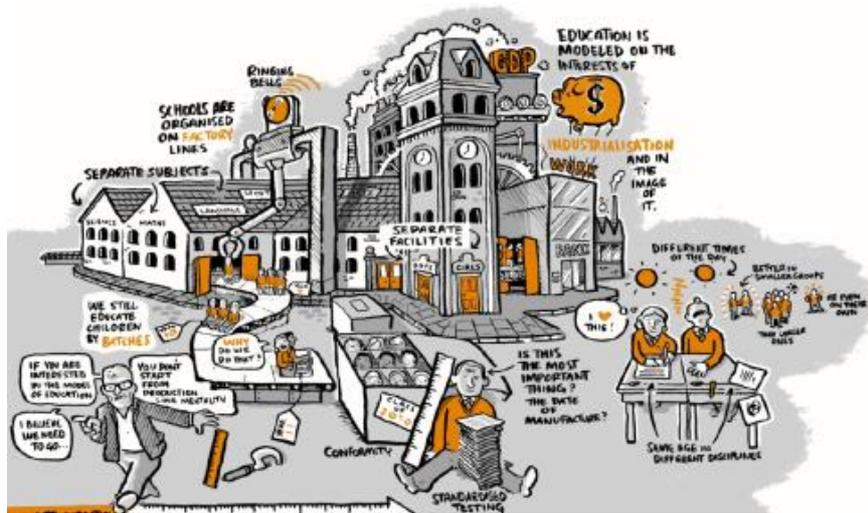


Figure 1: Changing Education Paradigms (Park, A., 2010)

Sir Ken Robinson’s seminal 2008 TED talk, and the RSA Animate video, *Changing Education Paradigms* (Figure 1), perfectly illustrate the widening chasm between traditional, didactic models of education and the current wealth of stimulating content and information readily available to adolescents. Robinson (2018) asserts that “they’re being besieged with information and calls for their attention from every platform - computers, from iPhones...and we’re penalising them now for getting distracted. From what? Boring stuff at school, for the most part.” Robinson is highly critical of what he sees as the increasing conformity and standardisation of our education system and proposes that we need to go in the opposite direction and use creativity and divergent thinking to seek multiple answers, rather than just one.

As a Visual Arts educator, it is easy to become complacent in the view that Art is an inherently creative subject, and therefore wrongfully assume that students will automatically be engaged and intellectually stimulated, regardless of the nature or implementation of the curriculum

content. Beckley (2014) writes of the importance for educators to continually adjust teaching strategies to meet the changing needs of students. She notes that, “some teaching strategies that worked 20, or even 10 years ago may not be the most effective for today’s students” (p. 13). Beckley also highlights the importance of connecting the learning to our students’ lives by providing them with autonomy and choices in their learning along with opportunities to collaborate with their peers. Beckley’s classroom research findings, that students are most engaged when they can utilise a variety of methods and both image and word in the narrative process, provides further validation for the pedagogical direction of my research project.

Bastos and Zimmerman (2017) further advocate the importance of enabling student autonomy through “transforming students from learners to active investigators who hunt for information, make connections, and then construct their own knowledge; using unfamiliar materials that lead to new ideas; focusing on process as well as products” (p. 389). Saliceti (2015) calls for a move away from the inadequacy of traditional, teacher-centred lessons, in order to focus on developing students’ creative and critical thinking abilities (p. 1176). A reoccurring theme expressed by educational writers throughout my research has been the benefits of collaborative learning on boys’ engagement, and the development of lifelong learning skills that can occur from students teaching and learning from each other (Keppell, Au, Ma & Chan, 2006).

### **Research Context**

The Southport School is a private, all boys Anglican School on the Gold Coast, in Queensland, Australia. The school was established in 1901 and currently has approximately 1600 boys from pre-school to Year 12, including around 300 boarders from years 7-12. Given the school’s high tuition fees, the boys generally come from high socioeconomic backgrounds. The action research participants for this project were an Art class of fourteen, 14-15 year-old boys in Year 9. The boys in this Art class were enrolled in Year 9 Art Course B, meaning they should have already previously completed Year 9 Art Course A, or were concurrently completing both courses. Course B has been developed as an extension of the skills boys have already acquired in Year 7 and 8 Art at TSS, along with Year 9 Course A. Generally, boys enrolled in Course B have a strong interest in Art. This class comprised mixed ability students, with the full spectrum of high achieving A+ average students, down to lower C range average students. The class size of 14 boys, was an ideal number for action research. I taught this class for three 50-minute lessons each week. The Art theory task that my action research was based upon spanned 7 lessons, so a two and a half-week time period.

## **The Action**

The change that I implemented in my teaching practice was with regards to my designation of an Art theory assessment task to my Year 9, Course B Art class. In previous years, this course's Art theory component was a more traditional written task, often based upon a gallery excursion, whereby boys were to select an artwork(s) and write about them using the describe, analyse, interpret and describe critical analysis format. For my intervention, I instead designed and implemented a revised Art theory assessment task, based around a more creative, narrative approach, whereby boys were required to create thematically-based short films based on their selected artworks. An example of this could be a student role playing as a politician and delivering a political speech centred around the potentially positive or negative message they believe is represented through their chosen artwork. Students were able to utilise green screen technology to superimpose the artwork or relevant images behind them. The assessment task spanned 7 lessons. Lesson 1 comprised an introduction to the task, with explanations, class discussion and exemplars shown. Dependent upon which green screen or editing program(s) the boys had access to, lesson 2 involved a demonstration of filming and editing techniques. Lessons 3-6 involved boys researching, planning, writing, filming and editing their critiques. The final lesson comprised boys submitting their films and accompanying text. The class subsequently viewed and discussed each film and were then asked to evaluate their experience of the assessment task.

## **Data Collection**

The main forms of data collection I utilised for my project were one semi-structured interview, two survey questionnaires, and lesson observations. Credibility of my research was achieved through utilising Mertler's (2017) polyangulation of multiple sources of data, both qualitative and quantitative. This reduced the impact of any potential misleading anomalies that could occur, such as the potential for boys to provide the responses they think the teacher is looking for, rather than speaking or answering more honestly.

### **Qualitative Data**

#### **Interviews.**

I filmed one semi-structured interview with each focus group of boys during the project. Conducting group interviews was an intentional decision due to time limitations and in recognition that boys can often feel more comfortable speaking within their group (Mertler, 2017). I was also interested in capturing the dynamics of each group through the interview

process. The interviews proved to be my most valuable resource and provided a significant amount of the data that informed this report.

### **Observation.**

Semi-structured observations, using field notes and video footage, were utilised throughout the project as a tool for recording the dynamics of student group interaction and communication. This format allowed me as the practitioner-researcher to maintain focus on my teaching and, where possible, record observations of different classroom events as they occurred (Mertler, 2017).

### **Quantitative Data**

#### **Questionnaires.**

My participant students completed a survey questionnaire upon commencing the project. Following Mertler's (2017) recommendations, the questionnaires contained both open-ended questions as well as closed-response rating scales. The surveys were effective in providing broad overviews of the participants' overall perceptions; however, their written responses were all quite brief.

### **Data Analysis**

The two questionnaires were created using Survey Monkey, which proved to be a highly effective tool in providing statistical results in both visual and numerical measurements. Analysis of the interviews was achieved by transcribing each interview. This process allowed me to make connections between the different categories of emerging themes and extrapolate from these in order to interpret the results (Lofgren, 2013).

All of my data were analysed using a three-step process of organisation: description and interpretation, looking for any emerging trends or themes. As the data I collected featured qualitative and quantitative sources, I interpreted them using a triangulation mixed-methods approach, allowing for informal comparisons of the data (Mertler, 2017). This process assisted me in being open and unbiased to noting and reporting on any findings that may have differed from my original intended outcomes, which allows for the natural evolution of action research projects. From this process of data analysis I then developed hypotheses and general conclusions that I utilised in order to ascertain the degree of success of my study.

### **Discussion of Results**

At the beginning of the project, the participants completed a survey questionnaire that was effective in providing an overview of the students' attitudes towards Art theory. Of the 14

participants, nine indicated that they were “somewhat confident” in writing about Art. Similarly, the majority of boys revealed that they were only somewhat, to not at all interested, in learning about artists and art history. When asked to list some of the ways that Art theory lessons and tasks could be made more engaging, responses such as “less writing” and “let us use pens and paint and make art more hands on then using computer,” revealed the widely held student opinion that Art should be hands-on, rather than theoretical. The questionnaire highlighted that the aspect of the project that boys were most enthusiastic about was the opportunity to collaborate in groups.

Upon completion of the action research project, analysis of the triangulated data (Mertler, 2017) collected through observation, student work, and semi-structured interviews, highlighted the following emergent themes:

### **Enhanced Engagement Through Creativity and Collaboration**

As indicated in the pre action questionnaire, the opportunity for participants to collaborate in groups was significant in contributing to student interest and engagement in their Art theory task. This correlates with Miller and Pennycuff's (2008) findings on the effectiveness of utilising student interest in social interaction and storytelling activities for literacy instruction. Throughout the course of the project, boys were enthusiastically discussing and developing their films together, which helped foster a dynamic and exciting classroom environment, with participants busily utilising various spaces across all three available Art rooms and storage areas within each lesson. Student engagement in the project was also evident through participants often working outside of school hours on their films, in some cases making props or creating film sets in their homes.

These observations of heightened student engagement were confirmed in my subsequent interviews with the participants, all of whom spoke positively about their experiences, particularly with regards to collaborating with other boys. Boy D summed up the overall class sentiment: “It was a lot funner to do, especially with a group of people, that’s a lot better to do.” Boy C expressed a similar viewpoint and also highlighted the value boys place in being presented with more creative, non-traditional options: “It was much more fun to do a video, cause you do it with all your mates, and then you can just choreograph in your own certain thing to it. With just writing words, it’s kinda just a bit old and boring.”

Not all of the 14 participants elected to work in groups, with three boys each choosing to work individually. Of these three students, Boys F and N achieved the first and second highest overall grades in Year 9 Visual Arts respectively, with Boy S achieving mid-range overall

results in Art. These boys all spoke about their decision to work individually in order to maintain control over their project and avoid the potential downsides of having to rely on other people. This concern was illustrated well by Boy F: “when I work in a group I usually end up doing most of the work anyway, and when I work with other people I tend to just not really take in their ideas that much so I like to work on my own because I know that it will get done, like to a standard that I want, and I’m able to do my own ideas.”

Both Boys F and N found that their engagement with the project came from the challenge of trying something new. Boy F explained:

I found it entertaining to I guess do something different that I haven’t done before, and it was just nice to be able to try something that’s out of my comfort zone I guess, because I’m used to for art just doing paintings and dioramas and that sort of stuff. But doing a video was out of my comfort zone. It was just enjoyable being able to do something like that.

### **Improved Digital Literacy**

A key outcome of the project was that through creation of their Art theory films, participants were able to greatly develop and enhance their skills in using digital media. Given that filmmaking is not currently part of the Visual Arts curriculum in our school, boys were particularly engaged and receptive to the learning opportunities that this new medium provided. Teaching program-specific editing skills was challenging due to our school being a BYOD (bring your own device) school. Whilst boys are provided free access to many programs from the Adobe Creative Suite, no film editing programs have been made available for boys to download. As a result, participants utilised a wide range of editing software, such as Premiere Pro, Final Cut, & iMovie. This meant that boys were required to independently learn the necessary skills in their specific editing programs.

When asked to discuss the most challenging aspects of the project many participants, such as Boy S, cited that the editing process was the most difficult, yet rewarding aspect of the project, commenting that the hardest part was “probably just the editing, but when you get it, it’s like, you get it.”

In the introductory lessons for this task, the boys were taught green screen editing techniques, allowing them to superimpose themselves in front of their selected artworks or creative locations. All except one of the seven films submitted for this task utilised green screens for their films, highlighting the wide appeal and narrative opportunities this technique enables. This outcome corroborates research that boys are most engaged when interacting with both

visuals and words in literacy tasks (Beckley, 2014). Boys X and B both spoke of the level of interest that using the green screens had for most boys. They quipped; “Oh, it was just cool, learning how to do green screen. Now I know I can do that with other things,” and “it was good. We got an understanding of how green screen works and stuff.”

### **Furthering Knowledge of Art History Through a Narrative Approach**

My primary objective in implementing this filmmaking task was to improve student engagement in Art theory. If, as an educator, my only concern for this theory task was for participants to learn and analyse their selected artworks, then certainly a traditional writing task would be a more efficient way to achieve this. In their concluding interviews, many boys stated that they were able to obtain a deeper understanding of their artwork as a result of this non-traditional, narrative approach. This mirrors Alloway, Freebody, Gilbert and Muspratt’s (2002) findings on the importance of educators incorporating new forms of literacy and more dynamic, participatory teaching strategies to develop boys’ literacy skills. Boy F spoke positively about the more interactive aspects of the project:

Oh, I found it much more engaging because like in the traditional writing tasks I sort of just do it, and I don’t really take much in, but in this I took a lot in because I had to learn stuff, like research the artists or like figure out how they acted and all that sort of stuff to get it accurate.

Boy O also expressed similar sentiments when he reflected: “Yeah I reckon I learned so much more, I got to learn more about it through having to think about the acting part, I was more involved in it.” Student X’s comment – “Yeah, cause say then if it was a big long writing task that everyone else would have to read to understand. It just made it a bit quicker for everyone and a bit humorous in a way” – reveals the strong link between boys’ motivation for classroom literacy being tied to their sense of audience, choice and purpose (Fisher and Frey, 2012).

Generally, it was the more diligent boys who stated that they learnt or retained more about their selected artworks as a result of the narrative process. For some boys, such as boy S, the narrative approach did not improve their understanding. He reflected, “Not really, yeah, about the same.” In fact, for some participants, it could be argued that they became too distracted in trying to create entertaining films at the expense of developing a more in-depth analysis of their chosen artwork. One group of three generally low-diligence boys submitted a film that was below task expectations. During their interview, the boys claimed to have learnt more about their selected artwork through creating their film; however, upon further questioning this assertion was discredited with Boy J musing that “the artwork was made in the 1900’s

(laughs, silence), 1800 or 1900... And it was made by...,“ with boy E adding, ” I don’t know how to say that name,” Boy J continued the trend when he guessed, “I know that the last name was like Bangelish... I don’t know.”

### Conclusions

Reviewing the action research data as a whole, the evidence confirms that the boys were generally far more engaged in Art theory as a direct result of their participation in the narrative filmmaking project. When asked if they would like there to be more non-traditional Art theory tasks in the future, the majority of boys were enthusiastic in supporting the idea. They reflected their enthusiasm by saying things like, “Yeah, yeah, I reckon it’s a good idea,” and, “Yes. I found this much more engaging and a lot more fun.”

Perhaps the greatest indication of the success of this project is that I will be re-implementing the program for next year’s class, although with a focus on more contemporary Art. Looking forward, one of my goals based on the success of this project is to implement similar digital media storytelling Art theory tasks across all of the Art courses I teach at TSS. Given that most of my classes have a far larger number of boys, and that the Years 7 & 8 Art courses are trimester based—usually around 30 lessons, as opposed to the 50 lessons of the semester-based Year 9 courses—this will certainly provide more logistical challenges. Independent from incorporating digital media, based on my research into strategies for teaching boys’ literacy, I plan on implementing more creative and participatory approaches to art theory to enhance their understanding and engagement in forms of literacy.

This project coincided with a transitional time period for literacy at TSS. The Southport School, along with all schools in Queensland, is currently aligning itself with the National curriculum. For Art at TSS, this means a significant increase in the percentage of Art theory required in the course, jumping from approximately 1/8 of each course, to the now mandatory requirement of 1/3 theoretical content. The Southport School has recently engaged an external educational consultant company, *Mighty Minds*, to implement a school wide online literacy program. This will be based on boys progressively demonstrating their knowledge of cognitive verbs, with each verb being specifically chosen for every subject and their respective year levels. In addition, the school has also increased its commitment to the John Collins Writing program, flying the internationally renowned Harvard educator to the school each year to train all TSS staff in his methods to improve student writing.

These writing programs, along with The Southport School's transition to the more academically rigorous National Curriculum, demonstrate the importance being placed on improving boys' writing abilities at TSS. Determining the best course of action for achieving these improvements with my Art boys, whilst navigating the ever-changing curriculum requirements, presents ongoing challenges. My participation in the action research program has highlighted the importance of a strong narrative element in which to engage boys' interest and promote further development of their literacy skills.

### **Reflection**

My pathway into the action research program was unintentional. In just the first few weeks of my new teaching position at TSS, the deputy Principal, Jo Inglis, asked me if I would be interested in assisting an English teacher, Steve Ramsay, in his action research project. I enthusiastically signed up at the first mention of a free trip to Montreal for the 2019 IBSC conference. Steve Ramsay's project concerned his piloting of a Digital Literacies course, with a Year 10 class studying and playing computer games as literary texts. Very soon after TSS hosted the 2018 IBSC conference, my action research partner left TSS to take up a position at a school closer to his family.

This turned out to be fortuitous, as the process of collaborating across faculties and incompatible timetables was proving difficult. Luckily, I happened to be teaching a Year 9 Art class of only 14 boys at the time, and so I was able to transition my action research into looking at whether incorporating a narrative, filmmaking aspect into Visual Arts theory would have a positive impact on boys' engagement. I was very fortunate to have the full support of my school and action research mentor in making this change several months into our projects.

There are several people that to whom I would like to give my warmest thanks. Firstly, I would like to thank Andrew Stark, the TSS Head of Libraries and the face of action research at TSS. Andrew went above and beyond for my project, attending all 7 of my action research lessons and enthusiastically assisting and advising whenever called upon. Thank you to Stephen Eardley, the Head of Art at TSS, and effectively my boss, who gave me the freedom and support to enable me to squeeze this project into the course. Thanks to TSS Deputy Jo Inglis, for her initial invitation to join the action research project and her ongoing support. A massive thanks to my tireless action research Raconteur team leader extraordinaire, Bruce Collins. Whenever I was feeling somewhat overwhelmed by the ongoing action requirements, I would spare a thought for Bruce, who managed to balance his teaching position, family life, and the minutiae of mentoring our entire research team with inspiring positivity and professionalism.

Lastly, this project would not have been possible without the students of 9.4 Art. These boys showed initiative and good humour throughout the project; thank you for enthusiastically bringing these ideas to life.

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## Appendix A: Assessment Task Sheet

# DRAMATIC PAINTINGS

Year 9 Art Appreciation

Duration: 6 class lessons

### Submission Requirements:

- 1) Film must be 2 – 4 minutes duration, with titles, credits and referencing of the artwork. Use of green screen techniques is expected.
- 2) Each student must submit planning work in their Art book, with typed script and evaluation of what each member of their group contributed to the project.

**You can work individually or in group of up to 3 students. Select one of the paintings and choose from the following film options (or develop your own idea):**

### 1. *Emerge from the painting*

Pretend you are one of the people depicted in your selected artwork- You will need to consider appropriate costume and props.

How does the environment and situation you are in make you feel? Are you happy/sad/angry to be immortalised within the painting?

### 2. *Create a commercial for your painting*

This could be in the style of a sophisticated, high budget advertising campaign, or alternatively, a low budget infomercial-perhaps presented by a celebrity or sporting star.

### 3. *Review/Critique your painting*

This could be in the style of a film review, with one or two critics in armchairs discussing the positives and negatives of your chosen painting. Other options could be a union representative criticising the lack of Occupational Health and Safety within your chosen image.

### **CONTENT REQUIREMENTS:** *The following should be included in creative and humorous ways*

**1: Introduction** – Introduce your artwork (name, date etc.), artist and who the presenter is and the purpose of your film, eg; advertisement, history lesson, review etc.

**2: Describe** - Tell the audience key information about the work. What do you see? What is the subject matter? Expand of the style used, and where is the location of the subject in the art work? (Not all questions may be needed).

**3: Analyse** - Talk about the use of the *Elements and Principles of Design* used in the artwork, such as colour, line, shape, pattern, texture, depth, perspective – what visual elements were really important to the artist in making this work? Why were these elements and principles used? How was the artwork made? Research.

**4: Interpret** - Discuss their meaning, message, style, their inspiration, use of symbols, purpose and arrangement of elements (composition). Check the titles and the artist statement for this information. What is the meaning in the work?

**5: Conclusion** - After analysing the artwork, what do you think about it? Do you like it? Why or why not? Was the artist successful in conveying an idea or story, include key research findings to support your statement.

# REFERENCE PAINTINGS



**Emile Jean Horace Vernet:** *The Battle Of Pont D'arcole*, 1826, Oil on Canvas, 260 x 194 cm



**John Singleton Copley:** *Watson and the Shark*, 1778, Oil on Canvas, 230 x 182 cm



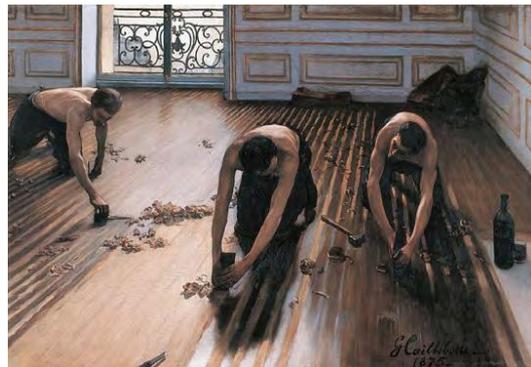
**Théodore Géricault:** *The Raft of the Medusa*, 1818–1819, 716 x 491 cm, Oil on Canvas,



**Richard Ansdell:** *Lost in the Storm*, 1815, Oil on Canvas, 130 x 81 cm



**Jean-François Millet:** *Gleaners*, 1857, Oil on Canvas, 111 x 83 cm



**Gustave Caillebotte:** *Les raboteurs de parquet (The Floor Scrapers)*, 1875, Oil on Canvas, 146 x 102 cm



**Edgar Degas:** *L'absinthe (The Absinthe Drinker)*, 1875-1876, Oil on Canvas, 92 x 68 cm



**Jean-Leon Gerome:** *Pollice Verso (With a Turned Thumb)*, 1872, Oil on Canvas, 149 x 96 cm



**Jean Geoffroy:** *Le Jour de la visite à l'hôpital (Visit day at the Hospital)*, 1878, Oil on Canvas, 120 x 95 cm



**Vasily Perov:** *The Hunters at Rest*, 1871, Oil on Canvas, 183 x 119 cm



**Marie Bashkirtseff:** *A Meeting*, 1884, Oil on Canvas, 195 x 177 cm.



**Fernand Cormon:** *Cain*, 1880, 400 x 700 cm, Oil on Canvas

**SUPPORTIVE PROCESS – ART VOCABULARY**  
**DESCRIPTIVE WORDS TO USE IN A FORMAL ARTWORK ANALYSIS**

**ELEMENTS OF ART**

<b>Line</b>	<b>Texture</b>	<b>Value</b>	primary	massive
blurred	actual	dark	saccharine	nebulous
broken	bumpy	light	secondary	open
controlled	corrugated	medium	subdued	organic
curved	flat		sweet	
diagonal	furry	<b>Colours</b>	warm	<b>Space</b>
freehand	goeey	brash		ambiguous
horizontal	leathery	bright	<b>Shape/Form</b>	deep
interrupted	prickly	calm	amorphous	flat
geometric	rough	clear	biomorphic	negative/positive
meandering	sandy	cool	closed	open
ruled	shiny	dull	distorted	shallow
short	simulated	exciting	flat	
straight	smooth	garish	free-form	
thick	soft	grayed	full of spaces	
thin	sticky	multi-colored	geometric	
vertical	tacky	muted	heavy	
wide	velvet	pale	light	
	wet	poly-chromed	linear	

**ART PRINCIPLES**

balance  
 contrast  
 emphasis  
 harmony  
 pattern  
 repetition  
 rhythm  
 unity  
 variety

**THEMES IN ART**

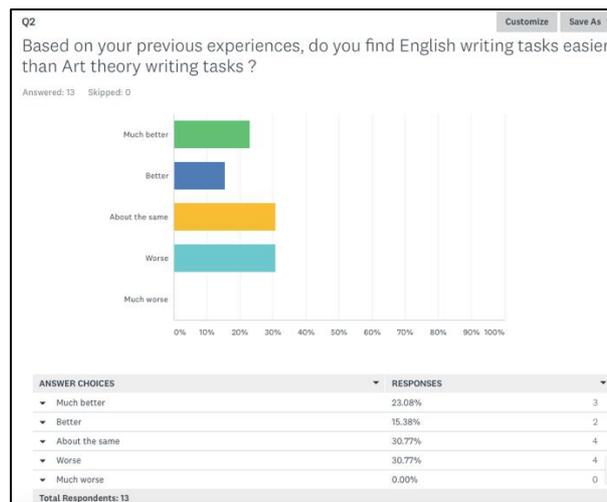
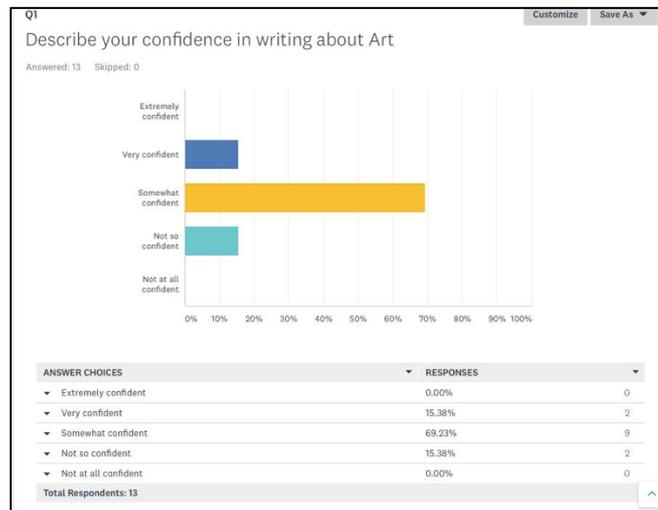
adoration	Grief	Religion
celebration	History	Seascape
children	Hunting	Storytelling
circus	Landscape	Theatre
cityscape	Love	War
earth, air, fire,	Music	Worship
water	Mythology	
festivals	Portraiture	
gardens	Processions	

**LANGUAGE**

Use art terminology.

- *literal* : true or factual
- *narrative* : telling a story
- *abstract* : to take away or remove, though subject could still be recognizable
- *non-representational* : does not represent any particular subject – creatively formed composition, form or shape not relating to the real.
- *metaphor* : one thing that represents another
- *compare* : to examine in order to note the similarities or differences of
- *contrast* : to show differences when compared
- *evidencing* : to support with evidence, prove ( obvious in the art work )
- *similarities* ; things that are similar, same
- *differences* ; things that are different, dissimilar
- *interpretation* : a particular view of an artistic work, explained with evidence

## Appendix B: Survey Monkey Questionnaire



4. List some of the ways you think Art theory lessons and tasks could be modified to be more engaging? 

5. What do you think could be some of the potential positive aspects of this group filmmaking artwork analysis task? 

6. What do you think could be some of the potential negative aspects of this group filmmaking artwork analysis task? 

## Appendix C: Peer Evaluation Form

### DRAMATIC PAINTINGS

#### Peer Evaluation Form for Group Work

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Write the name of each of your group members in a separate column. For each person, indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement, using a scale of 1-4. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree.

Evaluation Criteria	Group Member	Group Member
Contributes meaningfully to group discussions		
Prepares work in a quality manner		
Contributes significantly to the success of the project		
List the main contributions of your group members		

What were your main contributions to your group?

How effectively did your group work?

How do you feel about your completed film?

Are there any aspects of the film that you wish you could change?



## Appendix D: Individual Evaluation Form

### DRAMATIC PAINTINGS Evaluation Form for Individual Work

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Having now completed your film, are you happy with your decision to work independently?

Were there any other students in particular who assisted you with your film?

How do you feel about your completed film?

Are there any aspects of the film that you wish you could change?

