



**Visual Arts Years 7–10 Syllabus
Analysis of Concepts and Content**

How practice, the conceptual framework and the frames can be understood as Visual Arts content

Visual Arts content is organized into **practice, the conceptual framework and frames** and their connection with artmaking and critical and historical interpretations and explanations of art.

Practice: relates to artmaking, critical and historical studies of art.

Practice is described as:

- artistic activity, work or agency of artists
- what artists know and do, how they know it, where they do it, with whom and for whom they do it and why they do it.
- the shared domain of visual arts and design involving rules or agreements, social structures and institutions, forms of communication, membership, status, behaviour, artworks, artifacts and texts of the artworld.
- the knowledge of what is happening-.intentional, informed and appropriate human action involving autonomous and strategic decisions.
- artistic outcomes that are fluid, unexpected, involving an element of risk not a fixed ,inert or a predetermined role or model
- being transformed by new and innovative outcomes, new knowledge, agents and practices –

Contemporary practice encompasses many different rules, strategies and activities, habits, capacities, dispositions and inclinations that vary between the frames.

The traditions and conventions of practice are respected by individual practitioners as knowledge of the field

The conceptual framework: identifies the functional and intentional relations of the artist, artwork, world and audience as the agencies of the artworld.

The agencies of the artworld are described as :

- robust and elastic concepts, the intentional nets of relations they generate set the boundaries for a working or functional concept of art.
- sets of relationships that are shaped and generated by the frames and provide ways of understanding practice.
- agencies that connect students with their own artmaking and contribute to how they can interpret and explain art

An **Artist** is described as:

- traditionally the maker of images or objects as artworks.
- the name or signature of the individual who conceives a work although artists, architects and designers may have enlisted others to produce the work,
- the producer of artworks and objects using sign systems as a language that can be read (structural frame).
- the romantic hero/heroine, the genius who originates the new, the prophet and the bearer of deep universal truths (subjective frame)
- the skilled artisan or tradesperson working for powerful social institutions or the propagandist or apologist for an ideology or an individual, or a respected elder, the custodian of specialised knowledge (cultural frame).
- the celebrity, entrepreneur, and the market and media savvy personality (postmodern)
- agency or function as an intentional human act of an artistic practice.

- valuing collaboration in a formalized group or as shared experiences
- working in a studio- ‘a room [or space] of their own’ which provides authority within practice. Light, size and view, objects, books, magazines and artworks are some of the elements that comprise the ‘studio’.
- considering the experience of physical place as vital to practice or of no consequence, preferring an inner psychological world.
- secretive and may prefer others (critics, dealers, theorists) to speak for them.
- as an individual or group exhibitor who considers exhibitions as central to their practice.

An **Artwork** is described as:

- intentionally made by artists.
- having a material and physical form
- a form traditionally described by its materials and techniques
- being impermanent or fragile.
- a documented reproduction which could survive the original artwork
- a performance which utilises the body as form.
- film, video and digital artworks which use the material of celluloid, tape and chip, although the viewer is likely to experience the form of the artwork as a screen image
- new technologies and contemporary practices, including reproduction which challenge conventional notions of the unique, singular and precious object as art..
- functioning in different ways in each of the frames - e.g. as a text to be read like language in the structural frame. Postmodern artworks also function as text through intertextuality and is understood by reference to other texts.

*The sum of an artist’s practice, of artworks produced, is a body of work. A Body of work displays independence and a reflective, autonomous practice informed by the field of visual arts and design.

*Artworks are often studied in reproductions as slides, print and digital copies. The unique and original artwork has a presence, ‘aura’ or depth that is lost or changed in ‘mechanical reproduction’. Artworks produced for viewing on the net, screen or through digital processes and exist only in a virtual form, alter how audiences may view and interact with artworks.

The **Audience** is described as

- ongoing yet changeable as artworks inhabit different viewing contexts, are bought and sold, exhibited, privately viewed, destroyed, damaged, lost or consigned to storage.
- typically engaging with artworks through museum and gallery exhibitions.
- increasingly found or produced through the public display of artworks and includes accessing artworks by electronic and print media. Sculpture is often located outdoors. Designed images and objects may be shown in museum collections or displays. As many designed objects are manufactured as multiples they can be purchased and appear in everyday use. Architecture is also experienced by being used.
- changing with time and place, contemporary audiences will differ from historical audiences as different worlds, along with diverse subjectivities of gender, race and class, produce the audience function.
- having different contexts including other artists, dealers, gallery directors, curators, collectors and auction houses, along with writers, theorists, students and educators and members of the public.

*The artist provides the first audience for an artwork. In some cases, often in the postmodern, the audience function is intrinsic and necessary to the resolution of the full meaning of the work.



*Art criticism and art history arise from the agency of the audience. Art criticism is closely aligned with the audience function as critics explain, persuade, compare, evaluate and judge artworks and bodies of work.

The **World** is described as:

- artists, artworks and audiences functioning in relation to each other and the world.
- all the vast and possible things artists and audiences get interested in, and artworks can be about.
- the systematic ideas of the time, existing theoretical commitments, what is considered plausible and credible, implausible and incredible in the field of visual arts.
- mediated by the frames, and not to be confused with the cultural frame which refers to issues of power and identity arising from the economic, the social and the political.
- aligned with art history and art criticism, classifying and identifying artworks in time and place. Art historians also trace audiences when investigating the origin of an artwork. Art critics interpret and make judgments about artworks. The art critic's audience is the public.

In both courses the choice of particular artists and artworks are at the discretion of teachers.

Frames: The subjective, cultural, structural and postmodern frames account for different points of view, values and belief in and about the visual arts. They give meaning and are the instrument for generating different understandings of the function of and relationships between the artist, artwork, audience and world.

The frames focus and organize content. It is advised that no more than two frames be used in any one unit to build a deeper understanding of their meaning and value in the visual arts

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The **Subjective** frame is described as:

- a **world** concerned with individual feeling, emotion, imagination and experience.
- **artists** as emotionally compelled individuals whose intentions are shaped by their imagination.
- **artworks** as emotional outpourings and highly evocative reminders of personal memories and experiences, the subconscious and fantasy.
- **audiences** as viewers who interpret the meaning and value of art in relation to personal associations
- exploring the unconscious, intuition and imagination as a source of ideas a to see how human experiences are re-created and shared between artists and audiences.
- viewing the visual arts aesthetically as an immediate expression of sensory, imaginative, expressive, felt and perceived experience.

*In art making students learn to explore their own experiences and responses to the world egg their identity and relations with family and friends, or their responses to their physical or social environment.

*In the critical and historical studies of art students learn about the deep and varied meanings artists' interpretations and works have for them and how artworks may be regarded as expressive and unique objects. They can develop notions about the unique styles of artists.

The **Cultural frame** is described as:

- **world** structures and formations of societies and communities governed by economic and political agencies. The understanding of self and identity through various social constructs.
- **artists** as social agents who are influenced by and contribute to social, economic and political conditions.
- **artworks** as reflections of social, community and cultural interests.
- **audiences** as art consumers, patrons, sponsors, collectors, historians and the public.
- valuing art by its social meaning.
- viewing the visual arts aesthetically as a way of building and defining social identity.
- understanding the meaning of art in relation to the social perspective of the community out of which it grows. Ideological views and notions of cultural identity can be explored e.g. class, race, ethnicity, gender, technology, politics, religion, science, globalisation, the environment and economics.

*In artmaking, students learn to investigate different issues and ideas that are of social and cultural significance to them e.g. issues related to gender, politics or the environment or in using digital technologies and multimedia. Students could work individually or as a collaborative group.

*In the critical and historical studies of art, students learn how cultural identity informs artistic practice and the production of artworks. Students may study differing cultural attitudes towards the visual arts and the effects of scientific and technological innovation, politics and economics in particular places and time.

The **Structural frame** is described as:

- a **world** of sign systems and symbols sharing the universal structure of language.
- **artists** who know about and make use of a formalist language and who represent ideas as a system of signs that communicate meaning.
- **artworks** which use symbolic objects within the conventions of a visual language, material forms and motifs, representing ideas and communicating meaning
- **audiences** as symbols and signs, meaning is coded within a formal structure of visual language.
- viewing visual arts as a system of symbolic communication through which particular aesthetic forms of information are transmitted.
- providing a visual language where meaning is accessible to those who are visually literate.
- exploring conventions of codes, symbols and signs used in the making of artworks and how meaning may be embedded in the material as well as the conceptual organization of artworks.

*In art making, students learn to construct artworks which communicate their ideas and interests about the world through the organisation of visual qualities as signs and symbols e.g. colour and compositional devices in painting, spatial relationships in sculpture, and the development of a personal language of representation.

*In the critical and historical studies of art, students learn about the formal organisation and visual qualities of artworks. They learn how the symbolic language of artworks can be read and understood at a certain time and over time.

The **Postmodern frame** is described as:

- a **world** that brings challenge/doubt/suspicion/skepticism to the assumptions of each of the other frames.
- **artworks** as texts that achieve their power and meaning through intertextuality. Intertextuality refers to other texts rather than the individual, society or structure for meaning. Artworks may be thought of as configurations of previous texts that mimic, appropriate and reinterpret other ideas in art to reveal paradoxical and hidden assumptions about what art is.
- **artists** as challengers of the prevailing views about what is of value in art, and who use parody, irony and satire to expose power assumptions.
- **audiences** who are aware of power relations within the artworld that sustain dominant views about art.

In the postmodern frame contemporary art requires new philosophical, theoretical and interpretive frameworks. The meaning of art is understood in relation to the fragmented, shifting and transitory nature of contemporary life. Artworks may be explored as visual 'texts' which, through references to and traces of other 'texts', can challenge patterns of authority and widely held beliefs.

*In artmaking students learn to modify, reinterpret and/or appropriate images from a variety of sources including popular culture. They may investigate the potential of photographic and digital technologies as well as time-based art forms which challenge the view of artworks as unique, precious and singular.

*In the critical and historical studies of art, students learn about the ways in which traditional conventions, canons and histories of art can be challenged in order to reveal power relations, contradictions and hidden assumptions. They can investigate how artworks use parody, irony, appropriation, and ideas that challenge the mainstream and conventions of art.