

Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2018 AP[®] Studio Art Free-Response Questions

The following comments on the 2018 free-response questions for AP[®] Studio Art were written by the Chief Reader, Paul Jeanes, from the Maryland Institute College of Art. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

Please note: Each section of the AP Studio Art Portfolio Exams is considered a free-response question. Students respond to requirements of the Selected Works (Quality) section, Sustained Investigation (Concentration) section, and Range of Approaches (Breadth) section. Artwork and written statements submitted for the Portfolio Exams are student responses.

2-D Design

| 2-D Design | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------|------|
| • Number of Students Scored | 36,249 | | |
| • Number of Readers | 175 | | |
| • Score Distribution | Exam Score | N | %At |
| | 5 | 6,492 | 17.9 |
| | 4 | 11,214 | 30.9 |
| | 3 | 12,965 | 35.8 |
| | 2 | 4,429 | 12.2 |
| | 1 | 1,149 | 3.2 |
| • Global Mean | 3.48 | | |

Section #1 Task: Selected Works (Quality)

Max. Points: 18

Mean Score: 11.09

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to present five physical (actual) works of art showing understanding of and engagement with 2-D Design
- The group of works should demonstrate confident decision making, experimentation, invention, and technical competence through application of 2-D Design elements and principles

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, 2-D Design Selected Works sections most effectively demonstrated competence in technical skills, such as the use of design elements and principles to create compositions.
- Less common were demonstrations of the application of technical skills to experiment and/or take risks within the realm of 2-D Design.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk-taking with ideas, materials, and processes was limited. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful works demonstrated attempts at innovation and risk-taking with effective application of 2-D Design skills. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superficial application of the use of elements and principles of 2-D Design was noticeable in many of the photography portfolios. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful works used photography as a tool to explore elements and principles of 2-D Design in a sophisticated way. |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Promote experimentation with ideas, materials, and processes.
- Discuss a multitude of diverse, contemporary approaches to 2-D Design.
- Help students avoid using superficial and clichéd subjects in their works.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Leading Critiques in AP Studio Art Classes <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2017-18-ap-studio-art-exhibit>
- AP Studio Art Portfolio Requirements Brochure <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-studio-art-brochure-2018-19.pdf?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Scoring Guidelines <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/pdf/ap18-studio-art-sg.pdf>

Section #2 Task: Sustained Investigation (Concentration)

Max. Points: 12

Mean Score: 6.66

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to show 12 digital images (some of which may document process or details) of works they have created that show a sustained investigation of an idea in 2-D Design.
- Digital images and written commentary are submitted to demonstrate integration of the idea that is investigated and the work that is created.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, student responses demonstrated moderate to good proficiency in the investigation of an idea through 2-D Design.
- In a clear majority of student works, demonstration of technical competence was more sophisticated than demonstration of conceptual competence as it related to the investigation.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical skills are more important than conceptual skills. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong responses integrated and synthesized the technical material skills with the conceptual skills used to investigate a subject. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All works must be “finished” works of art and design. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most successful sustained investigations demonstrated growth over time by showing |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are not enough works that demonstrate growth in the investigation over time. | <p>the processes used in the investigation alongside the more finished works.</p> |
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Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Focus on ideation and concept development while students are learning technical skills with materials and media.
- Help students deepen their idea and topic rather than keeping it too broad.
- Discuss how elements and principles of design can be used in service of a student’s investigation topic.
- Help students develop writing skills and build a vocabulary that correlates with their art and design investigations.
- Help students avoid using trite and clichéd subject matter.

Section #3 Task: Range of Approaches (Breadth)

Max. Points: 12

Mean Score: 6.64

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to submit 12 digital images of works they have created that demonstrate application of 2-D Design principles to a broad range of design problems. The range of approaches to 2-D Design can be conceptual and/or material/process -based.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Overall, responses demonstrated moderate to good competence in exploring a broad range of approaches to 2-D Design. Skills required for this section include creation, selection, and presentation of 2-D works to show a variety of conceptual and/or technical approaches.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works display only a range of approaches to technique and materials, rather than a range of conceptual approaches. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses demonstrated a range of conceptual approaches, along with a range of approaches to the use of the elements and principles of 2-D Design. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application of 2-D Design skills is superficial. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses demonstrated a thorough exploration of 2-D Design principles through a variety of approaches. |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Help students experiment with their ideas and with materials, processes, and approaches to 2-D Design.
- Give class assignments that encourage multiple solutions to solving problems visually and conceptually.
- Show students how contemporary artists use a variety of methods in their approaches to art making and design.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Leading Critiques in AP Studio Art Classes <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2017-18-ap-studio-art-exhibit>
- AP Studio Art Portfolio Requirements Brochure <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-studio-art-brochure-2018-19.pdf?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Scoring Guidelines <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/pdf/ap18-studio-art-sg.pdf>

3-D Design

| 3-D Design | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------|------|
| • Number of Students Scored | 5,777 | | |
| • Number of Readers | 175 | | |
| • Score Distribution | Exam Score | N | %At |
| | 5 | 660 | 11.4 |
| | 4 | 1,358 | 23.5 |
| | 3 | 1,967 | 34.0 |
| | 2 | 1,535 | 26.6 |
| | 1 | 257 | 4.4 |
| • Global Mean | 3.11 | | |

Section #1 Task: Selected Works (Quality)

Max. Points: 18

Mean Score: 9.56

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to present 10 digital images (two views of five works they have created) showing understanding of and engagement with 3-D Design.
- The group of works should demonstrate confident decision-making, experimentation, invention, and technical competence through application of 3-D Design elements and principles.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, 3-D Design Selected Works sections demonstrated moderate to good competence in using design elements and principles of design.
- Overall, demonstration of technical skills with media and processes that are needed to design and create successful 3-D forms was somewhat limited.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often, the focus is on the embellishment of the surface of the 3-D form rather than focusing on its spatiality and context. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses demonstrated an engagement with 3-D Design issues including the use of occupied and unoccupied space and on how the form exists in space. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photographic views of the 3-D form do not help depict how the form occupies space. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses utilized the 2 views of the 3-D form to show how the form exists in space from 2 different vantage points so that the reader could discern how it appeared from multiple sides. |
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Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Discuss how 2-D Design and 3-D Design relate to one another and how they differ.
- Help students use drawing to further the development of their 3-D Design skills.
- Emphasize the importance of selecting materials and processes that correlate with the form they are making.
- Discuss different aspects of spatiality.
- View and discuss diverse contemporary approaches to 3-D Design.

Section #2 Task: Sustained Investigation (Concentration)

Max. Points: 12

Mean Score: 5.85

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to show 12 digital images (some of which may document process, different views or details) of works they have created that show a sustained investigation of an idea in 3-D Design.
- Digital images and written commentary are submitted to demonstrate integration of the idea that is investigated and the work that is created.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, student responses demonstrated moderate to good competence in the investigation of a topic/idea through 3-D Design.
- Demonstration of technical competence was generally more sophisticated than demonstration of conceptual competence related to the chosen investigation.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is more emphasis on technical skill with materials and processes than on conceptual development of a sustained investigation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In successful responses, the focus of the investigation and the work presented were clearly integrated. The materials, processes, and ideas integrated with the focus of the investigation, and transformation and growth were clearly evident. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus is on showing the final work rather than displaying the processes of ideation and the processes of material transformation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses demonstrated how the students conceived of their 3-D Designs through documentation of their thinking processes and through the documentation of the physical process of material transformation. |
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Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Help students write about their ideas before, during, and after the art making and design process.
- Discuss how 3-D Design principles are used in service of an idea.
- Discuss the relationships of materials, processes, and ideas and how they can integrate seamlessly in the 3-D Design.
- Discuss examples of 3-D Design and art that move beyond issues of craft and technique.

Section #3 Task: Range of Approaches (Breadth)

Max. Points: 12

Mean Score: 5.84

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to submit 16 digital images (two views of eight different works they created) that demonstrate application of 3-D Design principles to a broad range of design problems. The range of approaches to 3-D Design can be conceptual and/or material/process-based.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Overall, students demonstrated moderate to good competence in exploring a broad range of approaches to 3-D Design. Skills required for this section include creation, selection, and presentation of 3-D forms to show a variety of conceptual and/or technical approaches.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often, there is a focus on a single technical process rather than on exploring a wide range of processes in the development of 3-D forms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses explored an array of different techniques, processes, and approaches to 3-D Design. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus is too often on a single medium rather than on exploration of a wide range of media and materials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses explored a wide range of materials, processes, and ideas while effectively using the elements and principles of 3-D Design. |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Your response should:

- Give assignments that help students build 3-D problem-solving skills.
- Discuss a multitude of possible approaches to the building and construction of a 3-D work of art and design.
- Discuss how materials and process have connotations that may relate to the 3-D form itself.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Leading Critiques in AP Studio Art Classes <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2017-18-ap-studio-art-exhibit>
- AP Studio Art Portfolio Requirements Brochure <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-studio-art-brochure-2018-19.pdf?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Scoring Guidelines <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/pdf/ap18-studio-art-sg.pdf>

Drawing

| Drawing | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------|------|
| • Number of Students Scored | 20,853 | | |
| • Number of Readers | 175 | | |
| • Score Distribution | Exam Score | N | %At |
| | 5 | 4,667 | 22.4 |
| | 4 | 6,604 | 31.7 |
| | 3 | 7,398 | 35.5 |
| | 2 | 1,882 | 9.0 |
| | 1 | 302 | 1.4 |
| • Global Mean | 3.65 | | |

Section #1 Task: Selected Works (Quality)

Max. Points: 18

Mean Score: 11.11

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to present five physical (actual) works of art showing understanding of and engagement with Drawing issues.
- The group of works should demonstrate confident decision making, experimentation, invention, and technical competence through application of drawing skills.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, Drawing Selected Works sections effectively demonstrated competence in technical skills, such as use of traditional drawing tools and processes.
- Use of drawing skills to experiment and/or take risks within the realm of drawing was less common.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work focuses on drawing primarily from photographic images, especially photographic images from the public domain, rather than on images that were created by the student. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most successful drawn responses demonstrated the effective use of drawing elements (line, light, shade, rendering of form in space, surface manipulation, illusion of depth, mark making) that moved beyond elements merely associated with the photographic image. When photographs from the public domain were used, they |

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| | were transformed in the service of the student's original vision. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work focuses more on 2-D Design issues than on issues of drawing, especially when digital tools are employed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most successful responses focused primarily on issues of drawing, even when digital media and digital tools are used, and utilize effective design in service of drawing issues. |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Discuss the relationships and differences in drawing, 2-D Design, and 3-D Design.
- Help students understand how drawing can be used as a process of thinking and to visually ideate.
- Observe and discuss the histories of drawing in different cultures and across the world while linking historical approaches to drawing to contemporary ones.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Leading Critiques in AP Studio Art Classes <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2017-18-ap-studio-art-exhibit>
- AP Studio Art Portfolio Requirements Brochure <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-studio-art-brochure-2018-19.pdf?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Scoring Guidelines <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/pdf/ap18-studio-art-sg.pdf>

Section #2 Task: Sustained Investigation (Concentration)

Max. Points: 12

Mean Score: 6.76

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to show 12 digital images (some of which may document process or details) of works they have created that show a sustained investigation of an idea through drawing.
- Digital images and written commentary are submitted to demonstrate integration of the idea that is investigated and the work that is created.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, student responses demonstrated moderate to good competence in the investigation of an idea through drawing.
- In a clear majority of student works, demonstration of technical competence was more sophisticated than demonstration of conceptual competence as it relates to the chosen investigation.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical execution is valued more highly than the investigation of an idea with drawing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses demonstrated a thoroughly explored sustained investigation using drawing as the process of investigating. The technical skills developed over time and were fully integrated into the process of exploration. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses focus on 12 “finished” drawings rather than displaying the processes of development, technically and conceptually. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses used drawn studies, sketches and “finished” drawings to demonstrate the sustained investigation into an idea. |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teach students how designers and artists throughout history have used drawing to investigate an idea and as a process of inquiry.
- Help students write about their ideas and relate their use of verbal language to the visual realm of drawing.
- Promote the activity of sketching to research, to invent, to perceive, and to analyze.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Leading Critiques in AP Studio Art Classes <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2017-18-ap-studio-art-exhibit>
- AP Studio Art Portfolio Requirements Brochure <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-studio-art-brochure-2018-19.pdf?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Scoring Guidelines <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/pdf/ap18-studio-art-sg.pdf>

Section #3 Task: Range of Approaches (Breadth)

Max. Points: 12

Mean Score: 6.63

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Students are expected to submit 12 digital images of works that demonstrate a broad range of drawing skills and ideas. The range of approaches to drawing can be conceptual and/or material/process-based.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Overall, student responses demonstrated moderate to good competence in exploring a broad range of approaches to drawing.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses only explore traditional and established methods and applications of drawing, rather than experimental methods and applications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful responses demonstrated a wide array of explorations into drawing as a practice. These responses experimented with drawing processes, drawing tools, and ideas about drawing in imaginative and innovative ways. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses focus only on technical experiments rather than on conceptual experiments through drawing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful responses demonstrated a range of approaches to drawing conceptually and materially. |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Give drawing assignments that enable students to solve a wide range of problems visually and conceptually.
- Discuss how drawing can be used to visualize ideas in other fields of study such as in math and the sciences.
- Give examples of contemporary artists and designers who use drawing in their practices and relate them to historical notions of drawing.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Leading Critiques in AP Studio Art Classes <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/leading-critiques-ap-studio-art-classes?course=ap-studio-art-drawing>
- AP Studio Art Exhibit with Commentary from Students and Teachers <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/2017-18-ap-studio-art-exhibit>
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