2026

AP Summer Assignments

*READ THIS OVER

YOU MUST GET A SKETCHBOOK~ YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND

The work this summer will give you a head start on our work during the school year. As an AP art student, you are asked to emphasize research, experimentation, exploration, discovery, inventive thinking, and problem solving.

Your work this summer will be due at the beginning of the school year. We will discuss these projects, sketches, written work, and ideas as a class. **You will be graded on this just as you would if you were at school. These are required.** DO NOT TRY TO DO THIS ALL AT THE LAST MINUTE. Work a little everyday like it's your job.

The portfolio will focus on working and developing ONE question that you want to explore deeply and thoroughly. This summer you will brainstorm topics for this but you won't get started on making this art until this fall.

This summer you will spend time working on skills and also gathering ideas. Try to experiment with new materials and mediums.

ALL OF YOUR WORK MUST BE COMPLETELY ORIGINAL AND NOT COPIED FROM OTHER ARTISTS OR PHOTOGRAPHS. Don't even try. YOU MAY WORK FROM YOUR OWN PHOTOGRAPHS.

* If I haven't seen the piece before, one of the judges might have. **THEY WON'T SCORE AT ALL IF THEY THINK YOU PLAGIARIZED!!!! and NO AI!**

#1~In your sketchbook, list 10 or more theme ideas. (from the list below or your own)

**** Ideas you can use or you can come up with your own. (you only need 10)

- look up words you don't know and illustrate them
- Pile of pillows
- Fabric with pattern
- Insects
- Draw on top of an old drawing
- Extreme light source
- Glass bottles
- Laundry day
- What was for dinner
- Liquid
- Bottles, containers, and boxes
- Plants- potted, real, fake, in the garden
- Farmers Market

- Veggies or fruit
- Faith and religion
- Small objects in repetition
- Habits
- My chair
- Yesterday
- Use the wrong color
- OOPS! Make it work.
- A weird material to draw on
- Refuge
- So close it looks abstract
- At the end
- Comfort food
- Get organized
- What a mess!
- First thing in the morning
- A good start
- A guest is coming
- Outside in the summer
- Barbeque
- Lonely
- Draw with thick and thin lines
- Home is where…
- An unusual perspective
- Favorite food in a wrapper
- In your drawer/closet/car
- Draw with one continuous line
- In a dream…
- Jewelry
- Fences and gates
- Breakfast
- At the park
- Lots of layers
- Doing chores
- Your yard
- Airplanes
- A family member
- A friend
- Still life of 3 reflective objects
- Family member shoes
- An unusual interior
- Bicycles or tricycles
- Architecture
- Building that describes your neighborhood, town
- Restaurant
- Pottery pieces
- Statues

- Cars
- Insects
- Interesting lighting and shadows
- Plants
- Cemetery art
- Observation Type Pieces:
- Buildings- pick an unusual angle- looking up a staircase, through a window, up at a skylight, down through a window at a courtyard
- A building or site specific to your neighborhood or city
- A detailed, up close drawing of a mechanical tool or object. Work on shading, highlights. Crop it in an interesting way. Bicycles, lawnmowers, tool boxes, saws, motors, are great.
- Draw some shoes from an interesting angle or perspective. Pose them. Include hands for interest maybe!
- Create a still life that describes you. Focus on using repetition to show rhythm.
- http://www.studentartguide.com/articles/still-life-drawing-ideas ~just work from this list. It's awesome.
- Create an interesting composition that uses a doorway as your subject. What does the door handle and door look like? What is an interesting angle? Consider the interior and exterior space. DON'T BE BORING! Find an interesting door or imagine one.
- Create an artwork that focuses on an accessory that someone is wearing or carrying. Think about the color scheme conveying mood. Think about an interesting angle.
- Create a self-portrait, portrait, still-life, or landscape using a very specific color scheme.
- Draw reflective objects in a still life. Think about what would be reflected.
- Create a drawing of your worldly treasures coming to life…or in a regular still life.
- Create a drawing of your hands in interesting poses. Think about composition and media.
- Set up a fairly simple still life- eggs, blankets, crumpled paper, tin cans, glass jars are all great. Use a dramatic light source- a window or desk lamp. Fill the PAGE!! Try a monochromatic still life.
- Do a landscape drawing on location.
- Draw an object submerged in water. This could be fantasy too but think about it realistically. Consider the distortion.
- A figure drawing of a person in motion- dancing, running, walking, jumping, etc
- Draw the inside of something.
- Draw on location- a café (starbucks), restaurant, mall, bookstore
- Imagination and Fantasy
- Select a song that has interesting lyrics. Look through magazines for LOTS of images and create a collage. You could even paint or draw on that collage to add more interest.
- A memory from your childhood.
- Illustrate a song. Don't use words or lyrics in the piece.
- Focus on a social issue. Without words, and don't work from others photographs, show us something about that issue that would make us change our minds or get involved.

#2 Pick 3 of the themes from the list you made and create 3 sketches for EACH of them. (9 sketches total)

#3 Explore the work of 2 or more contemporary artists or fashion designers that you like.

*Write information about each artist.

a. Describe the artist's work. Sketch it.
b. React to their work. Write about what you love or hate or want to see more of or how you could use it in your own work.

(IF you can- visit a REAL gallery or museum)* IF not- find one online. It can be a big famous one in a big city or a smaller local museum or gallery.)

#4 ~ DEVELOPING SKILLS

You should know all 7 elements (line, shape, space, value, color, texture and form) and 7 principles of art (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity/variety). If you need practice. This is the time!

Develop:

Perspective : 1 point, 2 point and 3 point.

Practice foreshortening, drawing portraits, using different supplies, collage, try to practice what you know you like and develop it. Practice showing textures, value, and space. Read the elements and make sure you keep using them in your work.

Practice blending, shading techniques.

*****I want to see all of these sketches in your sketchbook.**

#5 ~ Go to apcentral.collegeboard.com

At the top choose AP Courses and Exams

Choose COURSE HOME PAGES.

Under ARTS find the 2D, 3D and Drawing headings.

Click on THE PORTFOLIO

Scroll down till you see Sustained Investigation Samples and Scoring Commentary, Selected Works Samples and Scoring Commentary. Those are both from the current portfolio format.

Also look at Past Sample Portfolios and Scoring Information. These are from the old style of portfolio so they look a little different.

This page is a GOLD mine of great ideas. You can't COPY any of these works but you should use them as a starting point. Think about things like- "Oh, that person drew a bunch of peppers…what if I did a box of donuts!" "Oh, that person drew a silverware drawer…what if I drew my art supplies!" BE INSPIRED, DON'T COPY!

YOUR ASSIGNMENT- after looking at LOTS of example portfolios- write a one-page reflection on your understanding of what is required of you as an AP Studio art student. Include 3-5 personal goals that you are setting for yourself as an artist. This can be handwritten or typed. Be clear and thorough. What will be difficult for you? What will you need to practice? How will you work on your portfolio outside of school?

Write it in your sketchbook or create a google doc.

Yes~ this is graded the day we come back in September!

YOU ARE AMAZING :)

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