



Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2025 AP[®] Art and Design Free-Response Questions

2-D Art and Design

• Number of Students Scored	48,798		
• Number of Readers	385		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	5,771	11.8
	4	14,298	29.3
	3	20,463	41.9
	2	6,651	13.6
	1	1,615	3.3
• Global Mean	3.33		

3-D Art and Design

• Number of Students Scored	10,337		
• Number of Readers	385		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	694	6.7
	4	2,577	24.9
	3	4,129	39.9
	2	2,532	24.5
	1	405	3.9
• Global Mean	3.06		

Drawing

• Number of Students Scored	23,392		
• Number of Readers	385		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	3,983	17.0
	4	7,392	31.6
	3	8,348	35.7
	2	2,919	12.5
	1	750	3.2
• Global Mean	3.47		

The Chief Reader, Dale Clifford, Dean of Academic Services, Savannah College of Art and Design, wrote the following comments on the 2025 AP[®] Art and Design Portfolio Exams.

The Chief Reader's comments give an overview of the artwork and written evidence submitted for the two portfolio components, Sustained Investigation and Selected Works, and typical student errors observed in each. In addition, the commentary provides some suggestions for improving student performance. Teachers are encouraged to attend College Board workshops to learn teaching strategies to improve student performance in specific areas.

Section 1

Task: Selected Works

2-D Art and Design

Max Score: 10

Mean Score: 5.99

3-D Art and Design

Max Score: 10

Mean Score: 5.59

Drawing Art and Design

Max Score: 10

Mean Score: 6.51

What were the responses to the Selected Works expected to demonstrate?

- Students were required to present five (5) original works of art and design that reflect their understanding and engagement with either 2-D Design, 3-D Design, or Drawing. Each submission also included written statements explaining the ideas and intentions behind each work.
- For 2-D Design and Drawing, students submitted five (5) individual digital images—one for each work. For 3-D Design, students submitted ten (10) digital images—two views of each of the five works.
- The selected works should demonstrate a skillful synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas, as well as technical proficiency through the application of design elements and principles specific to 2-D Design, 3-D Design, or Drawing.

How well did the responses address the Selected Works course content? How well did the responses integrate the required skills?

- In the 2-D Design Selected Works sections, students generally demonstrated good technical skills, particularly in their use of design elements and principles to create effective compositions.
- In the 3-D Design Selected Works sections, students showed good competence in activating space through the application of design elements and principles.

- In the Drawing Selected Works sections, students effectively demonstrated very good technical proficiency, especially with traditional drawing materials and processes.
- When digital tools were used in the Drawing portfolio, students generally demonstrated good control of skills such as line quality and the rendering of form.
- Across all three portfolios, students exhibited solid technical skills with media and a clear connection between materials, processes, and ideas.
- Compared to 2024, students across all three portfolios showed improvement in effectively communicating the relationship between materials, processes, and ideas.
- The written commentaries provided valuable insight into students’ conceptual intentions and how their choices of materials and processes supported the development of those ideas.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the Selected Works responses?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students did not provide citations when using published reference images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students clearly cited the sources of the published reference images they used.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference images were used with minimal or no transformation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful use of reference images showed clear transformation achieved through practice, experimentation, and revision of materials, processes, and ideas. Transformation is evident when students reimagine preexisting source material in completely new or unexpected ways, offering a fresh and original perspective or interpretation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of discipline, media, or concept, the work should demonstrate the application of 2-D Design, 3-D Design, or Drawing skills to create purposeful visual statements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2-D Design portfolios, successful submissions demonstrated a strong understanding of 2-D design principles, including the purposeful manipulation of design elements to create engaging compositions. • In 3-D Design portfolios, successful submissions showed thoughtful engagement with spatial issues, including the relationship between occupied and unoccupied space and how forms exist within or respond to their environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Drawing portfolios, successful submissions reflected a solid grasp of drawing fundamentals, such as line quality, rendering of form, the illusion of depth, mark making, and surface manipulation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Although overall writing quality improved, some portfolios still lacked clear connections between materials, processes, and ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful works demonstrated synthesis when the choice of materials and processes was intentional and clearly connected to the underlying idea. Rather than focusing solely on technical skill, these works showed thoughtful consideration of why specific materials were used to support the concept.

Section 2

Task: Sustained Investigation

2-D Art and Design

Max Score: 24

Mean Score: 14.08

3-D Art and Design

Max Score: 24

Mean Score: 13.44

Drawing Art and Design

Max Score: 24

Mean Score: 14.76

What were the responses to the Sustained Investigation expected to demonstrate?

- Students were expected to submit fifteen (15) digital images—some of which could include details or process documentation—of works that demonstrate a sustained investigation of an idea in 2-D Design, 3-D Design, or Drawing. Submissions also included written statements identifying the guiding inquiry and describing the practice, experimentation, and revision informed by that inquiry.
- Both the visual evidence and the written commentary should demonstrate a sustained investigation through thoughtful practice, experimentation, and revision; show synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas; and reflect the purposeful application of 2-D Design, 3-D Design, or Drawing skills.

How well did the responses address the Sustained Investigation course content? How well did the responses integrate the required skills?

- Across all three portfolios, students showed improvement in effectively identifying an inquiry in the first writing prompt compared to 2024.
- Because the AP Art and Design exam allows students to develop their own inquiry, many explored personally meaningful ideas, leading to work that conveyed refreshing and insightful perspectives.
- In the 2-D Design Sustained Investigation portfolio component, students generally demonstrated good technical skills, particularly in applying design elements and principles to create engaging compositions.
- In the 3-D Design Sustained Investigation portfolio component, students showed moderate to good competence in using design elements and principles to activate space.
- In the Drawing Sustained Investigation portfolio component, students demonstrated moderate to good ability to explore an idea through the application of drawing skills.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the Sustained Investigation responses?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although overall writing quality improved, some students still struggled to clearly identify an inquiry. Instead, their written responses often took the form of broad questions, general themes, or concentration descriptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A successful statement of inquiry presents an overarching idea that drives the creative process. It expresses what the student hopes to learn or discover through creating. As students respond to their initial inquiry, the investigation may evolve—strong questions often lead to new questions. Rather than focusing on a specific technique or material, the inquiry should emphasize how the idea is explored through the work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written responses were not placed in the designated spaces for each prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statements of inquiry should be entered only in the space designated for Prompt 1. Descriptions of practice, experimentation, and revision should be entered only in the space designated for Prompt 2. Lists of materials, processes, and ideas should be entered only in the space provided for each individual image.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of practice, experimentation, and revision was shown in the images but not described in the response to Writing Prompt 2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful written responses explained how students practiced, experimented, and revised both individual works and their inquiry. These descriptions highlighted how experimentation and revision influenced the development of the artwork and guided the direction of the sustained investigation. Revision was not limited to altering a single piece; it also occurred as the inquiry evolved in new and unexpected ways through continued practice and exploration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some cases, composite images included process work and text to provide more written evidence. However, this reduced the scale and impact of the visual evidence, making it insufficient to support the intended row of the rubric. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful portfolios featured concise, focused writing within the designated space for each prompt, and the images provided clear visual evidence of both finished work and the creative process.

Based on your understanding of student responses evaluated at this year’s AP® Reading, what advice do you offer to teachers to help them improve student performance for this section of the exam?

- Emphasize writing early and consistently throughout the course.
- Integrate writing into brainstorming sessions and creative problem-solving activities.
- Encourage students to write continuously throughout the creation process, rather than waiting until a single work or body of work is completed.
- When developing a statement of inquiry, help students refine broad topics—such as emotions or mental health—into specific, personal areas of interest.
- In responses to Prompt 2, students should clearly and concisely address all three components: practice, experimentation, and revision.
- Use prompts that encourage students to reflect on why they made certain decisions and how those choices relate to materials, processes, and ideas.
- Students working in photography, sequential art, or related areas within 2-D Art and Design should be guided to actively apply the elements and principles of 2-D Design.
- Students working in fashion, ceramics, jewelry, or similar disciplines within 3-D Art and Design should be encouraged to fully engage with the elements and principles of 3-D Design.

Which resources do you recommend to teachers to help them better prepare students for demonstrating content knowledge and skill(s) required for this section?

Teachers are encouraged to take full advantage of the AP Art and Design teaching resources available to them.

- AP Central offers student samples, exhibits, and webinars.
- AP Classroom includes assignable AP Daily videos to support instruction.
- The College Board Online Teacher Community, moderated by experienced AP Art and Design educators, provides a rich repository of insights, strategies, and shared resources.