

Design Thinking and Proficiency with Student Sketchbooks

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The purpose of a sketchbook in the art classroom should serve as documentation or a “body of evidence” of the student’s artistic growth. It should reflect the creative processes and provide the student and teacher with a more holistic perspective to the student’s knowledge and understanding of art.

Objectives of Sketchbooks:

- Should contain evidence (sketches, research, citations, & annotations) of how ideas and issues are investigated and developed by the student to become impetus for producing work that has validity within an arts context.
- Should record, reference, and acknowledge sources of information, inspiration, and specialized language and art techniques studied.
- Should serve as a stimulus for dialogue between the student and others that both fosters and records feedback.
- Should include records and evidence of the process of making artwork.
- Should include experiments that test appropriateness of approach regarding techniques and materials.
- Should include work, reflections and evaluations that allow students to observe their own development of skills across time, showing strengths and weaknesses of both the process of making and of completed artwork.

Tips for good sketchbooks in the art classroom:

- **GRADE** them!
- Help the student with a consistent, organized **structure**. (Table of Contents, date every entry, work front to back without skipping pages)
- Create assignments where they **MUST** document the entire creative process (observe/investigate, plan, create, reflect, evaluate)
- You need to give each student individual feedback. (Sticky notes are good)
- Encourage students to never tear pages or destroy anything they have put in there. The sketchbook should serve as a vehicle for artistic growth and mistakes are a part of that growth and sure way to see progress.

***Sketchbooks should not be just a diary or just sketches. It should serve as a vehicle for evolving reflection on the artistic process, accomplishments and journey of the student artist.*

Possible Assignments and activities for the Sketchbooks

- Drawings from observation
- Contour drawings
- Media Practices (e.g. gray scales, color wheels, simulated textures)
- **Sketches** (I make them do four minimum) for major projects (summative assessments)
- **Notetaking** (They may need help organizing this, e.g. Cornell Notes)
- **Research** – artistic, contextual, and visual (require citations)
- **Art criticism** (e.g. Pick one work of art that interests you from art history and write a critical analysis of the work without doing any research of the work (formative assessment), Compare and Contrast three works of art done by one artist)
- **Reflections & Annotations** - Have students annotate their artistic processes. Annotations should be brief, but should include art vocabulary and reflect critical thinking. I also have my students write a reflection on their own artistic process from a unit of study (i.e. Where did the inspiration come from? Was there research involved? How did you come up with the design? Did you change your work mid-way through the process? Why or why not? What do you think of your finished design? What did you learn through the process?)
- **Critiques** – have them write critiques down in their sketchbook. Have them take notes on what they hear from others in their sketchbook. Have them reflect on what they learn and see
- **Reflections from field trips to art museums and/or galleries**

Why Sketchbooks?

1. They document/ demonstrate standards -based instruction.
2. They help and assist a teacher to implement proficiency based grading.
3. They can also be used to demonstrate a student's "college and career readiness."
4. They serve as a body of evidence to help teachers and students set and follow through with SMART goals:
 - **S** - specific, significant, stretching
 - **M** - measurable, meaningful, motivational
 - **A** - agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented
 - **R** - realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented
 - **T** - time-based, time-bound, timely, tangible, trackable

Sketchbooks an the New National Standards

Creating: Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.

❖ **Anchor Standard: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.**

- *Enduring Understanding – Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed.*
 - 3rd Grade – Elaborate on an imaginative idea
 - 4th Grade – Brainstorm multiple approaches to a creative art or design problem.
 - 5th Grade – Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making.
 - 7th Grade – Apply methods to overcome creative blocks.
 - 8th Grade – Document early stages of the creative process visually and/or verbally in traditional or new media.
- *Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions, in pursuit of creative art-making goals.*
 - 1st Grade – Use observation and investigation to make a work of art.
 - 2nd Grade – Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.
 - 3rd Grade – Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies, to investigate own ideas through the art-making process.
 - 5th Grade - Identify and demonstrate diverse methods of artistic investigation to choose an approach for beginning a work of art.
 - 6th Grade – Formulate an artistic investigation of personally relevant content for creating art.

❖ **Anchor Standard: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.**

- *Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches.*
 - 5th Grade- Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice.
 - 6th Grade – Demonstrate openness in trying new ideas, materials, methods, and approaches in making works of art and design.
 - 7th Grade – Demonstrate persistence in developing skills with various materials, methods, and approaches in creating works of art or design.
 - 8th Grade – Demonstrate willingness to experiment, innovate, and take risks to pursue ideas, forms, and meanings that emerge in the process of art-making or designing.
 - HS Accomplished – Through experimentation, practice and persistence demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.
- *Enduring Understanding: People create and interact with objects, places, and design that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.*
 - 4th Grade – Document, describe, and represent regional constructed environments.
 - 5th Grade – Identify, describe, and visually document objects of personal significance.
 - 6th Grade – Design or redesign objects, places, or systems that meet the identified needs of diverse users.
 - 7th Grade – Apply visual organization strategies to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that clearly communicates information or ideas.

❖ **Anchor Standard: Refine and complete artistic work.**

- Enduring Understanding: Artist and designers develop excellence through practice and constructive critique, reflecting on, revising, and refining work over time.
 - 3rd Grade – Elaborate visual information by adding details in an artwork to enhance emerging meaning.
 - 4th Grade – Revise artwork in progress on the basis of insights gained through peer discussion.
 - 5th Grade – Create artist statements using art vocabulary to describe personal choices made in art-making.
 - 6th Grade - Reflect on whether one’s artwork conveys the intended meaning and revise accordingly.
 - 7th Grade – Reflect on and explain important information about personal artwork in an artist statement or another format.
 - 8th Grade – Apply relevant criteria to examine, reflect on, and plan revisions for a work of art or design in progress.
 - HS Proficient – Apply relevant criteria from traditional and contemporary cultural contexts to examine, reflect on, and plan revisions for works of art and design in progress.
 - HS Advanced – Reflect on, re-engage, revise and refine works of art and design in response to traditional and contemporary criteria aligned with personal artistic vision.

Connecting: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context

❖ **Anchor Standard: Synthesize and related knowledge and personal experiences to make art.**

- Enduring Understanding: Through art-making, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.
 - 3rd Grade – Develop a work of art based on observations of surroundings.
 - 4th Grade – Create works of art that reflect community cultural traditions.
 - 5th Grade – Apply formal and conceptual vocabularies of art and design to see surroundings in new ways through art-making.
 - 6th Grade- Generate a collection of ideas reflecting current interests and concerns that could be investigated in art-making.
 - HS Proficient – Document process of developing ideas from early stages to fully elaborated ideas.
 - HS Accomplished – Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art-making.
 - HS Advanced – Synthesize knowledge of social, cultural, historical, and personal life with art-making approaches to create meaningful works of art or design.