2024 VCE Art Creative Practice external assessment report

General comments

The 2024 Art Creative Practice examination offered students the chance to showcase their knowledge and skills, that reflected various aspects of the [VCE Art Creative Practice Study Design From 2023](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/ArtCreativePractice/Pages/index.aspx). In Section A, students were required to describe the use of art elements and principles, use the Structural Interpretive Lens to interpret artworks, use visual language to communicate ideas in artworks, discuss how artists’ use of material, techniques and processes contribute to the visual language in an artwork, describe ideas related to artists’ practices, and use the Personal and Cultural Interpretive Lenses to compare the meanings and messages of artworks to unseen and unstudied artworks. In Section B, students needed to analyse ideas and related issues explored by an artist studied in Unit 3, and to use the Structural Interpretive Lens to compare the meanings and messages of one contemporary artwork and one historical artwork studied. They were also required to consider stylistic qualities and symbolism and the contexts in which the artworks were presented or viewed.

Students typically addressed all sections of the paper, with stronger responses incorporating descriptive art terminology and consistently referencing specific features of the artworks. It is highly recommended that students remove the colour insert from the Question and Answer Book during reading time, as this reduces the likelihood of accidentally overlooking a question or selecting artworks for the wrong questions. Another issue noted was that many students did not maintain consistent comparisons throughout their responses. This was evident in Questions 7a., 7b. and 9. Teachers and students are strongly encouraged to consult the VCAA’s [glossary of command terms](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/Pages/GlossaryofCommandTerms.aspx).

Where possible, students should use the white space below the lines in the exam booklet to continue their answers, and then continue in the extra space at the back of the booklet if required. This helps minimise the risk of assessors overlooking important parts of the student’s response if it is continued in the additional space with clear indication from the student.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers, or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding, resulting in a total of more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A

Question 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Average |
| % | 1 | .5 | 4 | 28 | 39 | 27 | 3.9 |

Question 1 required students to describe how colour was used as an art element in an artwork. Students used descriptive and accurate terminology relating to colour, linked this to meanings, messages or mood, and were specific about where the colours were seen in the artwork. Some students also related the use of colour to a principle such as balance. High-scoring responses included descriptive art terminology with clear and regular references to the artwork, discussing how the element was used.

Some students were able to identify colour, but higher-scoring responses effectively embedded art terminology to describe colour, providing explicit examples describing the use of colour to justify their answers. Students should focus on the element that the question refers to and avoid deviating to describe other elements. Students are encouraged to read the didactic information carefully and try to make connections between the element and its potential symbolism or stylistic qualities.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Wilson’s textile work uses blocky, saturated colours to create a richly detailed and vibrant artwork. The deep greens and purples, which are layered on top of each other, emphasise the lush green environment of the trees and foliage, contrasted by the complementary orange sun and windows which add warmth to the work. The simplicity of the flat cottons and appliques used connote a joyful and cosy scene, the red roofs of the houses providing another element of warmth and playfulness half hidden against the soft green shapes. The whimsical colours and motifs, as well as the vibrant green sky imply a futuristic or fantastical city filled with nature, playfulness and joy.

Question 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Average |
| % | 1 | .5 | 3 | 25 | 41 | 29 | 3.9 |

Question 2 required students to describe how movement was used as an art principle in an artwork. For the most part, students were able to correctly identify movement and used examples throughout the response to support their description. Responses that scored highly included descriptive art terminology with clear and regular references to the artwork.

Some students needed to examine the artwork more deeply to describe all the aspects of the artwork and what the artist was trying to communicate. Higher-scoring responses used multiple and specific examples of movement, including describing where it was located within the work and the impact it had on the ideas being communicated; for example, the paper fluttering in the wind and ripples of movement in the water. A few students were also able to apply their knowledge of photographic techniques and discussed how the artist was able to capture a moment in time.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

In Jeff Wall’s work, the fluttering paper and contorted positions of each figure imply movement and battle against an invisible force, the ‘Sudden Gust of Wind’. While the sky appears monotone and still, the erratic spindly branches of the trees, which bend to the right of the artwork imply the force behind their lean. The singular direction of the trees, the fluttering sheets of paper and leaves emphasise this sense of movement, leading the eye across the work as the papers fly out of their folder. The figures, too, all present a unique battle against the wind; two hunched over and in motion, one a flurry of action on the left against the escaping paper, and the middle figure, clothes twirling in mid-air, as he watches his hat funnel away with the paper and leaves by the inescapable force of the wind.

Question 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Average |
| % | 2 | .5 | 3 | 7 | 13 | 24 | 25 | 17 | 9 | 5.4 |

Question 3 asked students to use the Structural Lens to interpret Bad Lemon (Lichen) by Kathleen Ryan. Some students were able to apply the Structural Lens with a focus on the use of art elements, art principles, the application of materials and techniques, but did not link it to the interpretation of ideas and meaning.

Students generally answered this question well, addressing the use of elements and principles of art, as well as materials and techniques, style and symbolism used to communicate meaning. High-scoring responses focused on discussing ideas and issues, rather than merely describing how the subject matter was portrayed. These responses referenced specific, relevant examples from the artwork and connected them to their interpretation of the artwork, as well as discussing in detail the artist’s use of materials, techniques and processes. Their responses also included detailed examples to discuss style and symbolism within the artwork, using accurate and descriptive art terminology. They also referred to the context of the artwork and how the location from where it is viewed can provide insight into the interpretation of the artwork.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Kathleen Ryan’s ‘Bad Lemon (Lichen)’ is a richly detailed sculptural work using a variety of gemstones to depict a moulding lemon. The vibrant colours of the gemstones and their miniscule size imply meticulous and careful placement of each colour of aqua, green and white on the mouldy side of the lemon varying to create a gradient of texture and shade. Ryan’s juxtaposition of the imagery of a ‘bad lemon’ half consumed by mould, with the delicate use of precious stones to create the work, places emphasis on the beauty and uniqueness of the natural process rather than the notion of mould being purely negative. Her comparison of her mould to lichen also supports this - the glittering mould of the lemon is reminiscent of the pale green fungus considered beautiful or natural on trees. The bejewelled lemon, studded with diverse shapes, sizes, and colours of natural creation is a celebration of natural beauty and the preciousness of all natural processes and organisms, despite human conception of the decomposition as an unfavourable occurrence.

Question 4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Average |
| % | 4 | 1 | 5 | 23 | 34 | 20 | 13 | 4.0 |

For Question 4, students were required to use visual language to communicate ideas in the artwork Captain James Crook by Jason Wing. Most students responded very well to this question, with many making strong connections to the ideas presented in the work. Higher-scoring responses specifically referenced the visual language component, discussing the materials, techniques, processes, and the elements and principles of art. These students identified and used specific evidence from the artwork to support their answers. High-scoring responses clearly and confidently linked the ideas to both the process of appropriation and the materials used, such as the balaclava and the bronze bust. The strongest responses analysed the symbolism of these materials, objects and processes, and how the artist used them to create meaning.

Many students expanded on the ideas in the artwork and offered passionate discussions on the issues the artist was addressing, particularly regarding Australian history and its impact on Indigenous Australians. However, in some cases, this passion for the subject matter and the issues that were expressed was not supported by specific examples of visual language from the artwork.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The shimmering, polished bronze bust form of Captain Cook provides expensive unity inherent to the bronze symbolic of historical excellence, communicating ideas of pride and glory. Wing juxtaposes this shining, luminous bronze with the flat, dark tones of the knitted-textured bronze balaclava obscuring the figurative form’s face, creating jarring contrast and thereby powerful emphasis, drawing attention to the symbolism of a balaclava as that of a threatening, masked thief, powerfully critiquing a colonized, contemporary Australian glorification of the figures, such as Captain James Cook as heroes, ignoring the significant and horrific impact the ‘crook’ had on First Nations Australians, stealing their land and their lives.

Question 5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Average |
| % | 5 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 18 | 23 | 20 | 16 | 9 | 5.2 |

Question 5 asked students to discuss how Jackson Pollock’s use of material, techniques and processes contributed to the visual language in the artwork. This question focused on an aspect of visual language by asking students to discuss how the techniques, processes and materials were used in the artwork to communicate meaning and/or ideas. It enabled students to focus on these aspects beyond the use of art elements and principles, which are also an aspect of visual language. High-scoring responses discussed the process of layering the drawing materials with detailed descriptions that were linked to specific examples in the artwork. These observations were used to then examine how the artist intended to communicate meaning and/or ideas. These students understood that visual language meant the artist was communicating meaning and personal, cultural and contemporary ideas to an audience. For example, many discussed how the childlike use of materials and drawing style was intentional and communicated ideas about childhood, imagination, and/or a nightmarish image.

Lower-scoring responses may have included a description of the use of materials, processes and techniques well; however, they didn’t clearly link these descriptions to examples in the artwork or how they contributed to the communication of meaning and/or ideas. To improve in this question, it is important to revise visual language and make a stronger effort to interpret how all aspects of visual language communicates the ideas and/or meaning behind the artwork.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Typically associated as a childlike medium, Pollock depicts an almost nightmarish beast in bright, vibrant turquoise, orange, yellow, dark blue and brown. The warm colour palette is utilised violently, in thick outlines of the beast’s strange and impossible form, twisting lines curving around to show it almost consuming itself. Simplistic techniques of scratching/scribbling lines allow the sporadic crayon texture to fill spaces with intense colour. A manic repetition of lines is seen throughout the work, as the organic shape of the creature’s body occupies most of the canvas. Pollock uses paper on a small-scale to again evoke childlike nostalgia in the chaotic. A depiction utilising the vivid imaginations and creativity with more precise execution to create an almost organised chaos, each element of the repeated block shaped legs or wild eyes and beast head distinct, but unified by their context and thematic visual chaos.

Question 6

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | Average |
| % | 5 | .5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 13 | 11 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 8.1 |

Question 6 asked students to discuss the ways in which Movana Chen has used her artistic practice to communicate ideas in her artwork. It is important that students have a clear understanding of art practice as defined in the Study Specifications on page 11 of the Art Creative Practice Study Design and focus on specific examples of practice included in the source materials for the question. Students needed to identify and discuss the ideas communicated in the artists sculptural work, related to the artist’s practice, using specific examples from the artwork. Students were also required to support their discussion referencing at least two sources of information provided. Excellent responses extended on the images and sources, and gave a structured, coherent, reasoned and informed discussion of how the artist’s practice and the artwork communicated ideas. Students who discussed the visual language and presentation of the artworks in the images and source material were also more able to describe and discuss the artist’s practice and link this to ideas communicated in the artwork. This meant they could discuss how the artist has adapted her work over her continuous practice, exploring, experimenting and refining her skills, techniques and presentation methods. Students were able to clearly link the artist’s practice to ideas and at least two sources.

Students should avoid simply restating the source materials in their response. They should integrate the source material throughout their answer and make their own inferences to extend on ideas in the source materials. Students should also identify the sources clearly with quotation marks or brackets.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Chen’s creative practice employs her physical proximity to the piece and her intangible proximity to its representations of connection and community. In Body Container, the tightly woven figure wraps around the amorphous figure sitting on a moving display. Chen highlights the necessity of constant evolution of her works and self with the use of the moving plinth but also as seen in her development as exemplified by the closeness of both medium to her body and technique. Knitting as a process involves entwining separate physical aspects much like how Chen desires to “construct[s] and deconstruct[s] our identity:” using her creative practice in the creation of her art piece, Chen refines the symbology in her finished piece made from “shredded” objects that all relate to change, growth and human impermanence like the “dictionaries, maps and books.” She chooses to explore and present her work within social contexts that demonstrate community like a public seating space as seen in support image 2. Parallels between the chaotic and colourful elements that combine after knitting to overwhelm the senses and exhibit as a whole complete piece and the societal “hope and togetherness” that Chen offers suggests to audiences how despite differences, connection can be found. This thematic significance of connection is exemplified best through the displays of her work in public as an extension of her physical body just like the consciousness is a mental extension of one’s identity. Chen ties together idea about how identity can be formed from these connections to present and explore her creative practice of repurposement and reconstruction following disassemblement by media or otherwise.

Question 7

Question 7 required students to use the Personal and Cultural Lenses to compare the meanings and messages in the artworks on page 8 of the examination paper. They were also expected to incorporate specific evidence from both artworks, along with the personal and cultural information provided, and any of the following ideas: success and/or impermanence. Higher-scoring responses consistently used comparison drawing on examples from the artworks and were rich in comparative terms. These responses included highly descriptive language when discussing and comparing the artworks, making explicit references to features in the artworks to support ideas about the meanings and messages. They effectively utilised the personal and cultural information in the sources to strengthen their interpretation.

Mid-range responses, however, did not devote equal attention to both lenses and often neglected to reference success and/or impermanence in their answers. These responses lacked multiple comparisons and did not connect their ideas to specific evidence from the artworks. Students should also be cautious about repeating the same information throughout their responses.

Question 7a.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Average |
| % | 7 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 31 | 24 | 12 | 6 | 4.1 |

Personal Lens

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

While both artists portray symbols of abundance in their artworks, their personal expressions differ. As Clara Peeters “started her training as a painter at the age of 13”, this skill and ability manifests itself in the life-like oil painting, the chiaroscuro techniques displayed in the stark contrast of the negative black space and the gently illuminated fruits and flowers highlighting her Renaissance training. In contrast, Rebecca Rütten relies on her training as a photographer to capture the impermeant scene via modern technologies. This medium difference also illustrates the distinction in the images of wealth and success, for Clara would have had to spend a long period of time intricately painting her work, just as all of her subject matter is intricately crafted, such as the detailed vase, while Rebecca is able to capture a perfect image of reality in a single moment, demonstrating how the influence of modern technology has changed the means of expression. Hence, while Clara shows the beauty and attraction of success, Rebecca focuses on the distortion of abundance to now afford a lack of success due to consumer culture. From these 2 forms of expression, Rebecca is more relatable and familiar to me as a contemporary viewer, who in Australia, is also exposed to the flood of fast food whereas Clara’s cascade of fruit remain an unfamiliar depiction to me.

Question 7b.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Average |
| % | 6 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 31 | 26 | 14 | 8 | 4.4 |

Cultural Lens

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Isolating elements inspired by Dutch still life, both artists convey through the dramatised presentation of objects and food items identifiers of class as a morbid parallel of human impermanence. Lustrous fruit and metal sit in overabundance amidst the rich emotional visual might of Peeter’s still life, subverting cultural values about each element as status indicators. Though there is plentiful fruit, the gluttonous presentation of tumbling apricots and cherries besides wilting flowers and a pile of dull, dented coins show the refinement of Dutch still life to become negatively construed. In contrast, Rütten uses the sterilised white lighting and heavy shadows as well as “fast food” to symbolise a façade of opulence found in America as a display of their “class divide”. Despite the appearance of plenty, Rütten comments on its lacking substantiality with fake, plastic vines and the stacked burgers, highlighting the pretence of wealth that hides the true impoverishment suffered by “poor and middle class people”. Though Peeters instills a similar opulence, her work reflects the cultural avarice that corrupted 17th century society leading also to class divide. Rütten’s variation of class divide with reference to Renaissance work humorously comments on the fact that despite the appearance of wealth shifting, and the impermanence of symbols defining wealth, impoverishment persists.

Section B

Question 8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Average |
| % | 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 17 | 22 | 22 | 16 | 5.6 |

Question 8 asked students to analyse the ideas and related issues explored by one artist they had studied in Unit 3, referring to evidence from at least one artwork and one Interpretive Lens. Most students responded with confidence to this question. Higher-scoring responses provided a well-researched idea and related issues explored by an artist that showed their understanding of the artist’s approach. They used specific examples from at least one artwork to support the idea and related issues, including some information about materials, techniques and processes as appropriate to respond confidently. Excellent responses demonstrated that students were well prepared and knowledgeable about their selected artist and artwork. They used a clear description of the artwork, and clear examples from the artwork to analyse the ideas and issues communicated by the artist. A wide range of aspects of all three lenses was used, with the strongest responses drawing on specific aspects of the lens confidently and accurately.

Mid to low-range responses did not clearly identify the Interpretive Lens being used and lacked consistency in applying that lens throughout the analysis. As the question specified one artwork, responses should have focused solely on the chosen artwork, incorporating specific and relevant examples to support a well-researched and informed analysis of the ideas and related issues explored by the artist.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Artist: Joseph Mallord William Turner

Artwork: The Burning of the Houses of Parliament (c.1834-1835)

Interpretive Lens: Cultural

Exploring human ephemerality, Turner depicts an intense orange blaze consuming British Parliament house infusing light in dynamic exultation through the audience looking on in awe against a background of a bruised blue-violet smoke-filled sky. Highlight Romantic principles to contest classical ideas about human power, Turner uses chaos as a stylistic device to reflect the sentiment of great political and social unrest; the fire upheaving what he perceives to be an artificial hierarchy by destroying a literal monument of human power. Painting en plein air, Turner presents an aura of veneration throughout the crowd who reflect the rippling orange light that intensely radiates from the inferno to imply heat and strength. He captures, in real time, the scene’s emotional magnitude in order to exhibit Romantic notions about nature’s ethereality, choosing to portray the fire, not as a destroying force alone but a purgatory phenomena. Highlighting anarchical concepts, Turner challenges preconceived ideas about humans and God above all other beings by elevating nature as its own deity, resolving this through its display of destruction, transformation and renewal in the face of human impermanence.

Question 9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | Average |
| % | 6 | .5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 10 | 14 | 21 | 12 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 7.5 |

Question 9 required students to use the Structural Interpretive Lens to compare the meanings and messages of one contemporary and one historical artwork that students studied this year. The question was intended to test the student’s knowledge of the artists and artworks they had studied in Unit 4 Area of Study 3. Students needed to make specific references to both artworks, focusing on specific aspects of the Structural Lens: stylistic qualities, symbolism, and the contexts in which the artworks were presented or viewed. Additionally, students were required to choose different artists from the one used in Question 8.

Higher-scoring responses provided explicit references to the artworks, aligning with the Structural Lens. Common thematic and conceptual links used to analyse and interpret the artworks and their relationship with the artist, viewer or audience, through the investigation of the use of art elements and art principles, and the application of materials, techniques and processes between both artists made comparisons easier for students to navigate within the lens. Very high responses examined both works simultaneously, discussing a similar idea, style or symbolism, and then explored the differences between the works in relation to their historical and contemporary contexts; for example, gender roles, environmental issues, Indigenous issues, race and religion. They were also able to consider the context in which artworks were presented or viewed.

Mid-range responses lacked consistency in comparison and did not always reference stylistic qualities, symbolism or the contexts in which the artworks were presented or viewed. Some students simply listed details about each artist, with little discussion of the artworks themselves. A few students relied on pre-prepared comparisons, failing to address the specifics of the question. It is essential that students use specific examples from both artworks for each part of the question and ensure they select one historical and one contemporary artwork, rather than two artworks from the same period. A definition of contemporary artworks and artists is defined in the Terms used in the study on page 17 of the VCE Art Creative Practice Study Design.

While many students structured their responses well in terms of stylistic qualities and symbolism, their analysis of the contexts in which the artworks are presented and viewed was often insufficient. Students should ensure they understand the Study Design’s definition of ‘context’ in the Terms used in the study on page 17 of the Study Design, and be prepared to discuss both the presentation and the audience experience as well as the practices of the artist, their intentions, and their communication of ideas, values and beliefs in the artwork. A strong understanding of the command term ‘compare’ is essential. To achieve a top score, responses should include multiple, consistent comparisons and provide a balanced analysis of each artwork. An explanation of Compare is listed in the [VCAA Glossary of Command terms](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/Pages/GlossaryofCommandTerms.aspx) published on the VCAA website.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Contemporary artwork: Fake, 2023

Artist 1: Michael Cook

Historical artwork: Whaam!, 1963

Artist 2: Roy Lichtenstein

Both Lichtenstein and Cook explore and dismantle the concepts of high art in the exhibition and styles of their works.

However, Lichtenstein, by utilising a comic book style for the pop-art, flattened forms of his battling fighter jets, critiques the idea of an acceptable style of high, gallery worth art, furthering this concept by increasing the scale of a typical comic panel to a monumental scale worthy of a gallery, making art accessible to the everyday viewer who engages in supposed ‘low art’ of comics. Conversely, Cook, by using the technique of photography to render the sartorial, figurative forms in Fake in their vast environment, effectively conveys a message of making art accessible to an everyday viewer by removing the pseudo-intellectual guise of abstracting a work to the point of incomprehensibility. Further, by making his work available online, Cook dismantles a requirement of high art to be exclusive to galleries and allows any viewer with a screen to engage with his work.

Both Lichtenstein and Cook critique the appropriation of complex matters into artworks.

However, Lichtenstein, by appropriating the composition of his delineated, flattened forms of fighter jets in ‘Whaam!’ from DC Comics “All-American Men of War”, critiques the use of war and destruction as a symbol of glory, furthering this by creating a dull, hopeless aesthetic with the desaturated hues of the work.

Conversely, Cook, by having the glamourous women in ‘Fake’ hold a bootleg, counterfeit Louis Vuitton handbag, successfully mimics and critiques the use of First Nations symbols in contemporary society as tourist souvenirs.