

## AP Sustained Investigation - Doerrer

What is a Sustained Investigation?

A Sustained Investigation for AP Studio Art is a group of 12 – 15 works (including process documentation) that carries out a theme or idea which is clear to the viewer. It must show growth over time and often is tied in to one or more of the elements and principles of art and design.

What do you mean by 'theme'?

A 'theme' is a subject or topic or idea that is evident throughout the 12-15 pieces. It ties the work together so that the viewer can look at it and see what the artist is thinking about or saying through the work.

Artists will explore a variety of directions, eventually discovering their "big idea." They do this so that their art making becomes more than just an exercise in random problem solving. Through their creative efforts, artists become more personally connected to a big idea. This takes experimentation and investigation. Besides making art, building a knowledge base, and examining the work of other artists will help you to understand this idea. Research is ESSENTIAL to this process to allow for higher-level thinking and in-depth involvement.

YOUR SUSTAINED INVESTIGATION SHOULD:

- be based on a subject that interests you
  - show an evolution in your work (evolution of ideas, use of media, representation of subject matter...)
  - consist of 12 – 15 works
  - consist of examples of process documentation
  - Must show synthesis of MATERIALS, IDEAS, AND PROCESSES
  - show an idea explored in depth
  - show evidence of research
  - The investigation should show an evolving sense of discovery and build a record of exploration into a compelling visual and communicative artistic concept
  - Your concentration should show VISUAL CONTINUITY – each piece should relate to the next and have cohesion.
  - You will want to explore the subject matter and style, and LEARN/EVOLVE as you go.
  - It must include a written statement (we'll work on this later)
  - Avoid being derivative of other artists
  - Show your personal "artistic voice"
- The sustained investigation should NOT be: an exploration of different materials, doing portraits in a variety of mediums, rainbows, unicorns, pokemon, etc.

What are some examples of a Sustained Investigation?

- Self Portraiture in action (at play) from early childhood to later childhood with a focus on color and texture
- Kitchen objects set up to represent cellular structures (in biology) with dramatic lighting and usage of color
- Focus on Vermeer, setting up friends and relatives in the positions of famous paintings and drawings by the artist and then emulating the set ups in the students' own work (dramatic natural light, models involved in daily routines)
- Fauvist style landscapes of places that have meaning for you
- Favorite book or poem illustrated in a specific style (exaggerated perspective)

- Trip overseas for 2D design, creating posters, flyers, magazine covers to advertise the country (using photos that you have taken yourself), typeface and photoshop
- Human influences on the environment, using photos the student took of aesthetically UNpleasing human made structures (oil rigs, factories, etc.) Student then developed the photos and used them to do hand coloring, collage and experimental mixed media techniques, finding the beauty within the ugliness
- Close Ups of machines – engine parts, factory machines, etc. combined with exaggerated 3D effects and specific usage of color (i.e. warm/cool, analogous, etc.
- design and execution of a children's book
- - develop a series of identity products for imaginary business (logo, letterhead, signs, boxes)
- - series of works starting with representational interpretations and evolving into abstraction
- - exploration of pattern and designs found in nature and/or culture
- - abstractions developed from cells and other microscopic images
- - series of landscapes that use color and composition to intensify artistic expression
- - environmental concerns - painting and drawing of what is happening to the environment around us

#### Things to keep in mind:

- Choose something you are passionate about (12 pieces of work will get very old if you don't feel strongly about the subject matter!)
- COMPOSITION is important, no matter what you choose (see the 'Rules for AP Art' by Nicole Briscoe)
- CHALLENGE yourself to do something above and beyond what you might have done before!
- Personalize your concentration, make it yours
- This takes TIME, so choose EARLY to be sure that your quality will be up to par!
- Stick with it! If you've chosen thoughtfully, you should be able to sustain the idea through 12 pieces
- Don't worry that the idea 'morphs' a bit....it is SUPPOSED to show growth
- DO worry if the pieces no longer look like they belong together! (Then get help from me and your colleagues in AP!)
- Choose proportions for the finished pieces keeping in mind that they fill the frame when we photograph them (i.e. no long and skinny pieces which will leave a lot of negative space)
- Make the pieces large enough and complex enough to show that you put in a great deal of effort (nothing smaller than 11" X 14")
- Stay in contact with me and with your peers in AP to frequently check in and get opinions from all of us. We should all be able to help each other in this class!
- ENJOY the fact that you get to participate in this challenging but very rewarding part of the AP portfolio! I promise you that if you put in your best effort, you will be proud of what you can accomplish, and how much you will grow throughout the year!