

Reflective Artist Projects in Visual Arts

from Perpich Center for Arts Education

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Through the Reflective Artist Projects, students continue to refine their artistic knowledge and skills and engage in ongoing reflection to make their thinking visible.

Students: In RAPs, students are deepening skills that transfer to college and career, and a way to make their thinking visible. These skills could include goal setting, persistence, envisioning, reflecting, communicating, analyzing, evaluating, problem solving, considering various points of view, initiative, and/or working independently. If students are in the process of writing essays for college applications, this can help!

Teachers: Here is a pathway to deepening skills that your students are developing through their work in the arts—21st century skills that transfer to college and career—and make that thinking visible. These skills could include goal setting, persistence, envisioning, reflecting, communicating, analyzing, evaluating, problem solving, considering various points of view, initiative, and/or working independently. RAPs also provide support for framing teaching and learning in your classes for *all* students through the 2018 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in the Arts.

- Assign (or students choose) a project in one of three artistic processes—**Create**, **Respond**, and **Present**—plus **Connect**. Connect is part of every project. Project examples are provided on pages 6-7, and these reflect current MN K-12 Visual Arts Standards.
- Students keep a journal through their work on the project. Sample prompts are provided on page 2. One alternative to the more familiar prompts is reflecting on Competencies of Practice. Students at Perpich Arts High School engage with these in their work. See the pages specific to each artistic process: **Create** – page 3, **Respond** – page 4, **Present** – page 5.
- Suggested rubrics for projects/journals are on page 2 and rubrics for Competencies of Practice are on pages 3-5.

Your project will be based on one of these three artistic processes—**Create**, **Respond**, and **Present**—plus **Connect**. Connect is part of every project. Keep a journal throughout your project work to document your inspiration, challenges, questions, and progress.

Sample Prompts for Your Journal Entries

- What are you thinking about and working on today?
- How did your work move forward today?
- What challenges are you facing?
- What ideas do you have for addressing the challenge(s)? Are there options?
- What's next? Who might you ask for help? What research can you do on your own?
- What do you plan to work on next/tomorrow?

Sample Scoring Rubric for Projects and Journals

One or more statement(s) under each element will apply to your RAP, depending on the artistic process(es) you've chosen.

	Work EXCEEDS the TARGET	This is your TARGET to MEET the level of achievement expected in the Reflective Artist Project	Work DOES NOT YET MEET the TARGET
Artistic work	10	8 6 Rigor/Technique • Technique demonstrates an advanced level of perseverance with technical skill and proficiency in the chosen medium(s). • Skilled analysis shows a deep understanding and thoughtful analysis of artistic choices and techniques used in the project. • Use of vocabulary demonstrates precise and descriptive language to articulate artistic intentions and outcomes.	4 2
	10	8 6 Expression/Artistry • Incorporation of materials/elements/concepts demonstrates adeptness in the use of materials, elements, and concepts to express artistic ideas effectively. • Sharp attention to detail shows meticulous care in the execution of the artwork, ensuring precision and clarity.	4 2
	10	8 6 Spark/Impact • A unique, creative, or surprising element shows an original and innovative aspect that stands out and adds depth or intrigue to the product. • A strong connection with audience/viewers engages them emotionally, intellectually, or aesthetically, leaving a lasting impression or prompting meaningful interaction.	4 2
Journal	5	4 3 • Regular writing, drawing, sketching, and/or audio recordings consistently engage with the prompts, demonstrating a disciplined approach to reflection. • Each question is addressed at least once, ensuring thoughtful consideration of progress and the development process. • Reflections cite evidence from the work + more details illustrating deeper understanding and critical thinking.	2 1

* The use of language conventions is expected such as complete sentences or bullets, accurate punctuation, and appropriate grammar.



Another Type of Journal Prompts – Competencies of Practice for Visual Arts **Create + Connect** Projects

Another approach in the journal is to reflect on your work through one or more of the Competencies of Practice (Creative, Individual, Thinking, Relational). Students at Perpich Arts High School engage with these in their work.

Visual Arts Create + Connect Project		
Creative Practice	• I am a maker of art • I am an innovator • I am resource savvy • I am a risk taker • I am a keen observer	• Where do people get ideas for creating artistic work? • What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support creativity and innovative thinking? • What factors prevent or encourage people to take creative risks? • Why do artists follow or break from established traditions? • What influences choice-making in creating art?
Individual Practice	• I am knowledgeable • I am productive • I am accountable • I am self-directed • I am devoted to improving	• Why do artists follow or break from established traditions? • What role does persistence play in revising, refining, and developing work? • How do artists grow and become accomplished in their art forms? • How do artists use self-reflection, feedback from others, and documentation to improve the quality of their work?
Thinking Practice	• I am a critical thinker • I am a creative thinker • I am a connection maker • I am a problem solver • I am a questioner • I am a decision maker	• What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support innovative thinking? • How does knowing the contexts, histories, and traditions of art forms help us create works of art and design? • How do artists and designers learn from trial and error? • How do creators determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective? • How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems?
Relational Practice	• I am a collaborator • I am a communicator across disciplines • I am an engaged citizen • I am culturally aware	• How does creating artistic work deepen understanding of ourselves, other knowledge, and events around us? • How does collaboratively reflecting on a work help us experience it more completely? • How do artists determine what resources and criteria are needed to formulate artistic investigations? • How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities? • How do artists and designers create works of art or design that effectively communicate?

	Work EXCEEDS the TARGET	This is your TARGET to MEET the level of achievement expected in the Reflective Artist Project	Work DOES NOT YET MEET the TARGET
Reflecting on Competencies of Practice	5	4 3 • Reflection on one or more of the Competencies of Practice responds to one of the Essential Questions, or examines and discusses specific skills and competencies relevant to the project or artistic process. • Reflections cite evidence from the work + more details with specific examples or evidence from their own artistic work, demonstrating application in the identified competencies.	2 1

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Another Type of Journal Prompts – Competencies of Practice

Visual Arts **Respond** + **Connect** Project

Another approach in the journal is to reflect on your work through one or more of the Competencies of Practice (Creative, Individual, Thinking, Relational). Students at Perpich Arts High School engage with these in their work.

Visual Arts Respond + Connect Project		
Creative Practice	• I am maker of art • I am an innovator • I am resource savvy • I am a risk taker • I am a keen observer	• How can the same work of art communicate different messages to different people?
Individual Practice	• I am knowledgeable • I am productive • I am accountable • I am self-directed • I am devoted to improving	• How is a personal preference different from an evaluation?
Thinking Practice	• I am a critical thinker • I am a creative thinker • I am a connection maker • I am a problem solver • I am a questioner • I am a decision maker	• How does artistic work preserve aspects of life? • How and why might criteria vary? • How can one determine criteria to evaluate artistic work? • How does knowing the contexts, histories, and traditions of art forms help us create works of art and design?
Relational Practice	• I am a collaborator • I am a communicator across disciplines • I am an engaged citizen • I am culturally aware	• How does artistic work deepen our understanding of ourselves, other knowledge, and events around us? • How can the same work of art communicate different messages to different people? • How is artistic work used to impact the views of a society? • How does artistic work help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures?

	Work EXCEEDS the TARGET	This is your TARGET to MEET the level of achievement expected in the Reflective Artist Project	Work DOES NOT YET MEET the TARGET
Reflecting on Competencies of Practice	5	4 3 • Reflection on one or more of the Competencies of Practice responds to one of the Essential Questions, or examines and discusses specific skills and competencies relevant to the project or artistic process. • Reflections cite evidence from the work + more details with specific examples or evidence from their own artistic work, demonstrating application in the identified competencies.	2 1

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Another Type of Journal Prompts – Competencies of Practice

Visual Arts **Present** + **Connect** Project

Another approach in the journal is to reflect on your work through one or more of the Competencies of Practice (Creative, Individual, Thinking, Relational). Students at Perpich Arts High School engage with these in their work.

Visual Arts Present + Connect Project		
Creative Practice	• I am an innovator • I am resource savvy • I am a risk taker • I am a keen observer	• How is artistic work used to impact the views of a society?
Individual Practice	• I am knowledgeable • I am productive • I am accountable • I am self-directed • I am devoted to improving	• What can I do to fully prepare a presentation? • What criteria are considered when selecting work for presentation, a portfolio, or a collection?
Thinking Practice	• I am a critical thinker • I am a creative thinker • I am a connection maker • I am a problem solver • I am a questioner • I am a decision maker	• How do artworks presented cultivate appreciation and understanding? • How does artistic work preserve aspects of life? • How does knowing the contexts, histories, and traditions of art forms help us create works of art and design?
Relational Practice	• I am a collaborator • I am a communicator across disciplines • I am an engaged citizen • I am culturally aware	• How does context and the manner in which works are presented influence audience response? • How does artistic work help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? • How does creating artistic work deepen understanding of ourselves, other knowledge, and events around us?

	Work EXCEEDS the TARGET	This is your TARGET to MEET the level of achievement expected in the Reflective Artist Project	Work DOES NOT YET MEET the TARGET
Reflecting on Competencies of Practice	5	4 3 • Reflection on one or more of the Competencies of Practice responds to one of the Essential Questions, or examines and discusses specific skills and competencies relevant to the project or artistic process. • Reflections cite evidence from the work + more details with specific examples or evidence from their own artistic work, demonstrating application in the identified competencies.	2 1

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Reflective Artist Project Examples in Visual Arts

Here are some examples and more specific information about Reflective Artist Projects in visual arts. Please note that these examples are provided to give ideas for your students' work. Feel free to adapt these ideas or create new ones!

Create (+ Connect) an original artwork in a medium of your choice. You'll generate ideas, develop and expand your ideas, revise or refine your work perhaps with feedback from others, and then complete it. Along the way, think about how your personal knowledge and experience is evident in the choices you make.

Examples of Create projects in visual arts:

- **Identity Exploration.** Create a series of artworks that explore your personal identity. This could involve self-portraits, but also challenge yourself to go beyond the surface and delve into aspects of cultural heritage, personal and social experiences, family history, and aspirations.
- **Cultural Commentary Series.** Create a series of artworks that provide a commentary or explore concepts related to a contemporary cultural issue(s). This could involve addressing social, political, or environmental topics through a visually compelling and thought-provoking lens.
- **Layered Narrative.** Create artwork with layered narratives, where multiple stories or perspectives unfold within a single work of art. This could involve transparent layers, symbolic elements, and/or visual storytelling techniques.
- **Conceptual Sculptural Explorations: Pushing the Boundaries in 3-D Art.** This advanced 3-D project is all about challenging traditional boundaries in sculpture; experimenting with unconventional materials, intricate forms, and advanced techniques. At the same time, focus on pushing the limits of sculptural expression, fostering creative thinking, and exploring the intersection of art and innovation.

Respond (+ Connect) to artwork. You'll describe and analyze the work, and then evaluate it using selected criteria and supporting evidence. Along the way, you'll learn about the background or context in which it was created, and think about how the context and your own experience have influenced your response.

Examples of Respond projects in visual arts:

- **Visual Art Analysis and Response.** This project requires a diverse selection of artworks (various styles, time periods, and/or cultural contexts) and a variety of protocols (such as critiques, Critical Response Protocol, or Visual Thinking Strategies) to explore the process of visually "reading" artworks. First, critically analyze the selected artworks, considering components such as composition, color palette, symbolism, and emotional impact. Then, respond by creating artworks that incorporate elements inspired by the pieces you studied. This project helps broaden your artistic vocabulary, provides a rich foundation for conceptual development, and allows you to synthesize diverse influences into your own unique artistic expressions.
- **Personal Experience Reflection.** Think about personal experiences, challenges, and emotions, and use your reflections as a foundation for creating artworks that convey meaningful aspects of your life. Introspective reflection and the power of your emotions can be a cathartic exercise and also a profound source of inspiration.
- **Color and Expressive Theory Studies.** Research color and expressive theories, examining the psychological and emotional impact of different color combinations. Share how this knowledge helps to create artworks that evoke specific moods or atmospheres or explain how expression or artistic intent can be increased by strategically using color to amplify emotional responses.



Reflective Artist Project Examples in Visual Arts *(continued)*

- **Artist Case Study** Engage in focused research on either a contemporary or historical artist whose work resonates with your interests or challenges your artistic perspectives. Thoroughly explore the artist's background, influences, and conceptual foundations, looking for insights into the richness of their artistic practices. Analyze a selection of the artist's noteworthy works and articulate how those pieces have contributed to the artist's overall vision. The culmination of this research could involve integrating gained insights into your own creative endeavors—leveraging new techniques, thematic elements, or conceptual approaches.

Curate and **present (+ connect)** a collection, portfolio, or display of artwork. You'll evaluate and select appropriate artwork(s), analyze relationships between the artists and/or artworks, and justify your choices in an artist statement. Along the way, think about the impact the art or artist(s) may have on beliefs, values, and behaviors of the audience.

Examples of Present projects in visual arts:

- **Artistic Journey and Process Journal.** In this project, merge the reflective aspects of keeping an *Artistic Journey Timeline* with the insightful aspects of a *Process Art Journal/Sketchbook* into a presentation of artistic intent in a selection of your own works of art. Develop a timeline presentation that visually traces the evolution of your artistic journey, incorporating key milestones, breakthroughs, failures/recoveries, and influences. In parallel, compile an art process journal documenting your creative process including sketches, concept notes, and reflections on each artwork. This combined presentation offers a rich exploration of your growth and development and the intricate thought processes behind your artistic creations. It also allows you to present learning that occurs during your artistic journey through keeping a sketchbook, process journal, sketch noting, or any form of journaling.
- **Culminating Art Portfolio.** Compile a culminating art portfolio that showcases a selection of your best works. Include reflections on each piece, addressing artistic intentions, techniques, and personal growth throughout the creative process.
- **Augmented Reality (AR)-Enhanced Multimedia Gallery Experience.** Develop a multimedia presentation by combining the immersive aspects of a multimedia presentation with elements of an interactive gallery exhibition. Your multimedia presentation should incorporate visuals, audio, and video elements to dynamically showcase your artistic journey from ideation to creation. You might use AR or QR code triggers to create interactive displays within the gallery so viewers can delve deeper into your artworks and access information about your artistic process, inspiration, and thematic connections. This innovative fusion engages audiences in a dynamic and visually compelling format, and allows for interactive exploration and interpretation of your artworks.
- **Narrative Art Walk.** Organize a narrative art walk where you guide viewers through a curated display of your artworks. Share personal stories, inspirations, and artistic insights related to each piece, creating a dynamic experience that showcases all that you have learned from your artistic journey.

