



How to Analyse and Discuss Artwork Like an Expert

KS3 ART & DESIGN

Ages 11-14 ⌚ 4 min read

What Does It Mean to Analyse Art?

When you **analyse** a piece of artwork, you're basically becoming an art detective. Instead of just looking at a painting or sculpture and saying "that's nice," you ask yourself questions about it. You think about why the artist made certain choices, what they wanted you to feel, and what the artwork means.

Analysing art is a skill that gets better with practice. The more you look at different artworks and think deeply about them, the better you become at spotting what makes them special.

The Four Steps to Analysing Art

Step 1: Describe What You See — Start simple. What colours are in the artwork? What shapes can you spot? Is it realistic or abstract? Just tell someone else what you're looking at, as if they can't see it.

Step 2: Analyse the Techniques — Now think about the **how**. How did the artist use light and shadow? Are the brushstrokes rough or smooth? Did they use bright colours or muted ones? These choices affect how we feel when we look at the work.

Think of it like cooking: describing the dish is listing the ingredients, but analysing is understanding why the chef chose those ingredients and how they mixed them together to create a flavour.

Step 3: Interpret the Meaning — What do you think the artist was trying to say? Is there a message or emotion they're expressing? There's no single "right" answer here — different people might interpret the same artwork in different ways.

Step 4: Evaluate and Discuss — Finally, share your thoughts with others. Did you like it? Why or why not? What would you change? Good art discussions don't have winners — they just have people sharing different viewpoints.

Smart Questions to Ask

When you're analysing art, ask yourself: **Who** made this and when? **What** materials did they use? **Where** would this artwork be displayed? **Why** might the artist have created it? **How** does it make you feel?

Think of it like being a detective at a crime scene — you gather clues (colours, shapes, style), form theories about what happened (the artist's message), and then present your case to others.

Why Does This Matter?

Analysing art isn't just for art class. It teaches you to look carefully at the world, think critically about what you see, and respect that other people might have different opinions. These are skills you'll use your whole life, from understanding advertisements to appreciating music to having meaningful conversations with friends.