Your task:

Pick your first artist. Remember this term you must select one contemporary artist (after 1970) and one traditional artist (pre 1970). Pick whichever one you would like to look at first.

Read through these notes and all questions carefully, and pick **5 questions** that relate to your theme to answer on your artist's artwork.

Don’t forget – you are in Year 11! If you choose a questions like this:

**Is the artist using political symbolism in the work?**

It is expected that you answer more than “YES”. You should identify what the symbol/s are, where they are in the artwork. The meaning of that symbol/s, and the meaning in the artwork, particularly the impact that symbol has on the artwork as a whole. Why might the artist have chosen those symbols? Think a little deeper!

Questions must be given (preferably hand written) to Miss Smith at the **beginning** of the lesson. (Tuesday 29th July).

FORMAL FRAMEWORK

This framework is used when the viewer analyses the formal elements of an artwork and how they contribute to the meanings and messages of the work. This is the most important Framework and it provides links between the other Frameworks. The Formal Framework can be broken into different aspects of interpretation, such as:

- **Visual Analysis** – how have the elements and principles of art been applied by the artist? What effect has this created? How do these qualities contribute to the meanings and messages of the artwork?
- **Technique** – what materials and techniques has the artist used and how do these assist in our interpretation of the artwork?
- **Style** – does the artist work in a distinctive style? How do the stylistic qualities of the artwork contribute to the meaning of the artwork?
- **Symbolism and metaphor** – what physical aspects or presentation of the artwork suggest symbolic meaning?
Visual Analysis

A visual analysis involves analyzing the design elements and principles of art and how they contribute to the meanings and messages of the artwork. Using the art elements and principles is a bit like baking a cake: the elements are the ingredients and the principles are how these ingredients can be put together in an artwork. The combination of the design elements and design principles in an artwork is also called the composition. An artist may choose certain art elements and combine them with the principles to express their ideas.

Art Elements:
- Line
- Shape
- Colour
- Tone
- Texture
- Form

Art Principles:
- Balance
- Focal Point
- Unity (including Harmony)
- Variety
- Rhythm
- Space

Contemporary artworks can also have:
- Sound
- Light
- Time
- Space

Look at pages 8-9 in your textbook for questions on the Art Elements and Principles. Otherwise, you can pick one element to analyse in detail and one principle to analyse in detail, and that will count for 2 questions out of the 5.

Technique

Techniques are the ways in which the artist uses materials to create an artwork. An in-depth study of a technique can include the artist’s studio, the location of their work and the roles of people who assist in the creation of an artwork. You also must consider the type or artwork the artist is creating. Artists will use different techniques in painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, three-dimensional works, performance works, and installations.

Questions to ask when analysing techniques in an artwork:
- What material/s has the artist used?
- How has the artist applied the material/s?
- What effects have been created by using these techniques?
- What processes has the artist used to create the work?
• What type of emotion or symbolism was the artist trying to portray with their techniques?

**Style**

The style of the artwork is the end result, or objective, behind everything that the artist does with materials and techniques; the formal and expressive qualities of a completed artwork. The qualities, processes or concept of the artwork may relate to other images or artworks made during the same period of time. Style can communicate the political, religious and social values of an artwork. The reason for the artist choosing certain materials and techniques relates to the purpose of the artwork.

Questions to ask:

• What processes has the artist used to create the work?
• What has influenced the production of the artwork? Is there an idea behind the work?
• Was it made as a narrative, i.e. was it designed to tell a story?
• What art movement does the image come from? Are there clues in the work that lead you to deduce this?
• What has the artist done with the techniques to achieve a certain style? For example, it may be realistic, abstract or expressionistic and the artist has used specific techniques to create that style.
• How does the style of the artwork represent the period of time in which the artist was living?
• In what ways do the stylistic qualities affect your understanding of the work’s meaning? Does it place the work within a historical or cultural context or does it reflect the artist’s personal style?

**Symbolism and metaphor**

Many artworks have physical symbols in them that represent abstract thought or metaphors. For example, the colour red can symbolise love or power. Artists and artworks throughout different times and cultures have displayed symbols in different ways. The artist may use the design elements and principles in a certain manner or the subject matter of the work may represent an idea. Some artists deliberately include visual symbols in their work to give the viewer a clue to what the meaning of the artwork may be. The artist may choose a particular artform to convey their ideas or use techniques in a particular way. The style of the artwork may also convey ideas.
Questions you can ask when analysing symbolism in an artwork:

- What art elements and principles has the artist used as symbols? Describe what these are and the idea they represent.
- How has the composition of the artwork been arranged to give symbolic meaning?
- What images or objects in the artwork are symbolic?
- Is the artist’s choice of medium symbolic? Why has the artist selected a particular artform to create their work?
- Are the techniques the artist has used symbolic? Describe how the artist has used the techniques to suggest a particular idea.
- Is the style of the artwork symbolic? If the artwork comes from a particular period of art or is created in a particular idea of time, context and culture in which it was produced.