



What will Year 7 students learn and how many lessons will they have each week?

In one hour a week, Year 7 will learn a wide range of skills utilising different media, styles, and techniques. They will look at the work of many different artists both young and old, historical and modern, male and female. The skills are vital and it is through the three projects based on tone and texture, pattern and colour theory, that they learn the importance of drawing, painting, working creatively with different materials like paper and card, and looking at how these can affect their understanding of what art is. They have the opportunity to test and experiment, developing their own work as they go, leading to a high level of success.

What will Year 7 students need to bring with them to lessons?

In all lessons, it is expected that students have a pencil and a rubber. They will be given some resources like an A5 sketchbook and this too should be brought to each lesson. At home, you are encouraged to have different media like pencils, colouring pencils, maybe oil pastels too but throughout the course, and into Year 8 and beyond, they will learn to use a wide range of media. Specialist materials will be offered in the lessons.

Will Year 7 students have homework in this subject? How much?

All Year 7 students studying Art are expected to complete homework. This is often used as an extension of the work in class and sometimes as preparation for what will be completed in school. This gives students the ability to come into school knowing beforehand about the artist, the skills, or techniques they will be working with. It can give them an advantage and students often enjoy being creative at home. Homework is set a minimum of 1 and a half hours per half term and it has been planned carefully to ensure that all students, no matter what level of ability, are able to be successful when at home too.

How can I support my child at home with their learning in this subject?

The problem with art is that it is very subjective and what one person likes, another may not. Encourage your child to look at what they are drawing (if this is the task set) and really observe what is in front of them. Keep prompting them to keep looking. If they look at something once, they think they know it and draw what they *think* they see. Get them to test first and try something out before they work on the final piece. Even A-Level students test and experiment and it benefits them greatly. Don't bin the tests as these can be added into their sketchbooks afterwards and shows progress and development.

What opportunities are there for further study and careers in this subject?

Art is a very creative subject. It is hands on, messy at times and allows individuals to see things slightly differently. There are a great many career opportunities using Art; an Architect (we do a project on the built environment), an Illustrator (we look at the work of book illustrators like Quentin Blake and street artists like Banksy), an Artist (as an Art Teacher, we have seen a number of students go on to work in their specialist field and sell their work, sometimes working on commission), a Designer (a previous student loved gaming and is now designing characters for games at University).

I can't draw, so what can I do?

Every single student who comes to school can draw. That is a fact. However, each student's work is very different to another student in terms of techniques used, skill level etc. There is the issue of confidence too; some students enter school not that confident to draw. But drawing can be with a pencil, a pen or your finger dipped in paint. The GCSE exam specification does not say drawings have to be perfect, or finished, or photo realistic. Many artists do not work in this way. It is all about experimenting, so drawing is about testing, making marks on paper and having a go. Anyone can do it!

Can I get away with just copying the work of others?

No. It does show some skill but as Picasso himself said "good artists copy, great artists steal". The reason for this is that copying a picture by an artist shows that you can do just that, copy. It does not show that you can think for yourself, adapt their work into your own, make your own decisions about colours, line, shape, tone etc. So, look at the work of an artist, look at what makes it successful and then steal it. But change it, adapt the idea, the technique. Do not just copy a piece by Picasso, look at his work, style, use of colour and then use this on a portrait of your own, a photo, make your own picture using his as influence.

Art is an easy subject isn't it?

People walk into the department and see students drawing, painting and enjoying being creative. They do not see the mind maps, the use of subject specific language when talking about a painting, the artist research where you dig deeper into why they worked in the way they did, the testing, the media use, the mistakes that lead to adaptation and making something better, the annotation and the development of ideas. It is a wonderful subject, and a great many get a lot from it but an easy option? No.