Your notes

GCSE Art and Design: revision notes

Annotating and writing about art

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What annotation is for

- **Annotation** is written notes in your sketchbook that explain your thinking: your **intentions**, what you tried, what worked and what you'd change.
- It supports all four objectives, but it should never replace visual work.

Writing good annotation

- Describe: what you did and which materials and techniques you used.
- **Analyse**: how the formal elements work and why you made your choices.
- Evaluate: what was successful, what wasn't, and what you'll do next.
- Use **specialist vocabulary**, such as tone, composition, complementary and impasto.
- Link to artists: explain how their work influenced a decision.

Things to avoid

- Long biographies copied from the internet.
- Vague comments such as "I like it" without reasons.
- Writing that doesn't match the images next to it.

Key terms

Annotation	Notes that explain your ideas and decisions.
Intentions	What you are trying to achieve in your work.
Evaluation	Judging what worked and what to change.
Specialist vocabulary	Art words used precisely.
Analyse	Explain how and why something works.

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Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What is annotation?
2. Which is a good piece of annotation?
3. What should you avoid in annotation?
4. What does "evaluate" mean in annotation?
5. Why use specialist vocabulary?
6. Can annotation replace visual work?
7. What are your intentions?
8. Which describes analysing?

Answers

1. Notes that explain your thinking and decisions
2. "I used cross-hatching to build darker tones in the shadows, like Albrecht Dürer's engravings"
3. Long biographies copied from the internet
4. Judge what worked and what to change
5. It shows precise understanding of art
6. No, it supports visual work
7. What you are trying to achieve
8. Explaining how and why something works

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 3 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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