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Creative Research Stages, Student Guide: Scaffolding Creative Research for Students and Teachers, by Students and Teachers

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Creative Research Stages Student Guide

Developed at Berkeley High School, in collaboration with
students in Advanced Studio Arts, graduating classes of
2010-2020, as an ongoing Youth Participatory Action
Research project led by Kimberley D'Adamo

Scaffolding creative research for students and teachers, by
students and teachers.

All elements of the

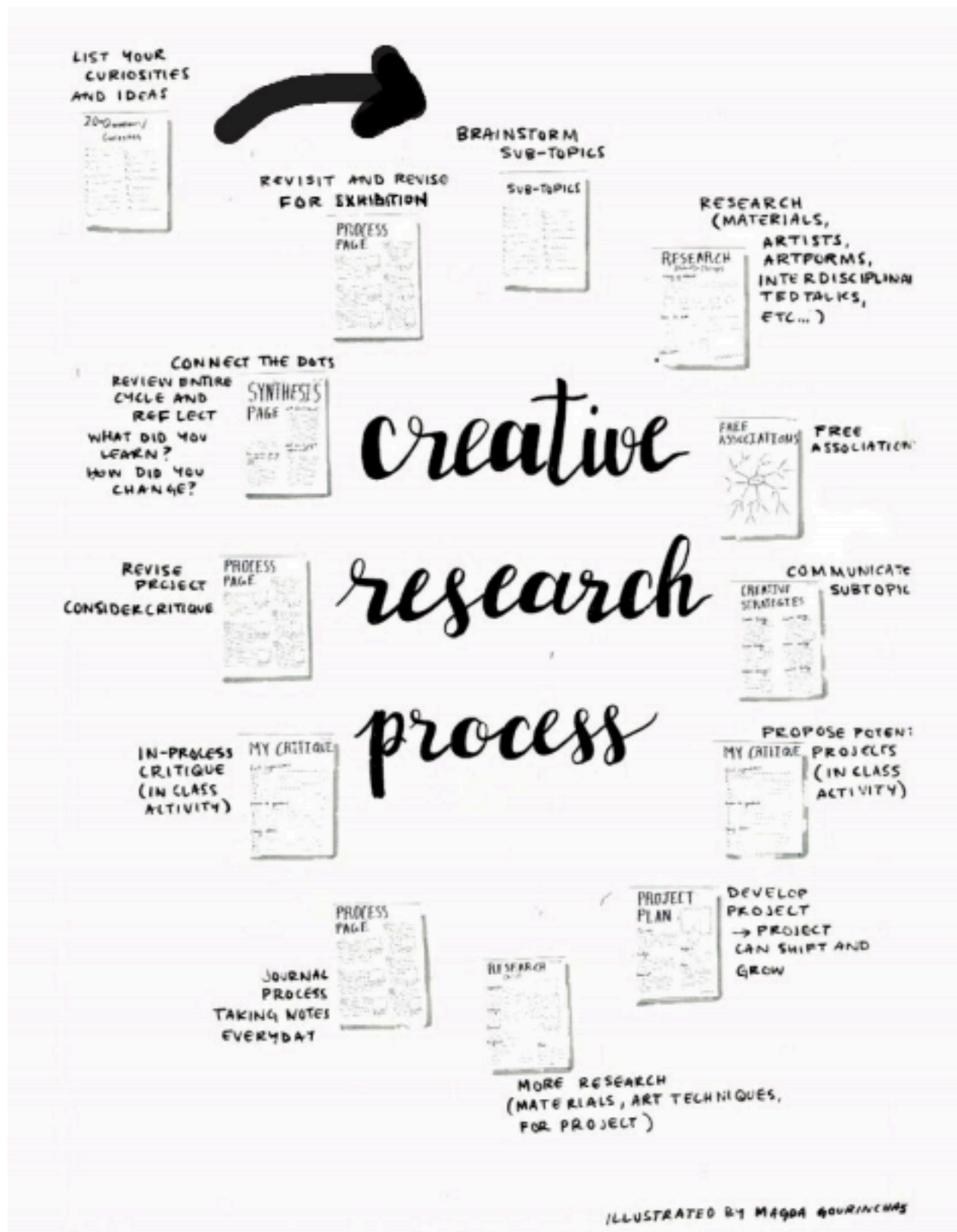
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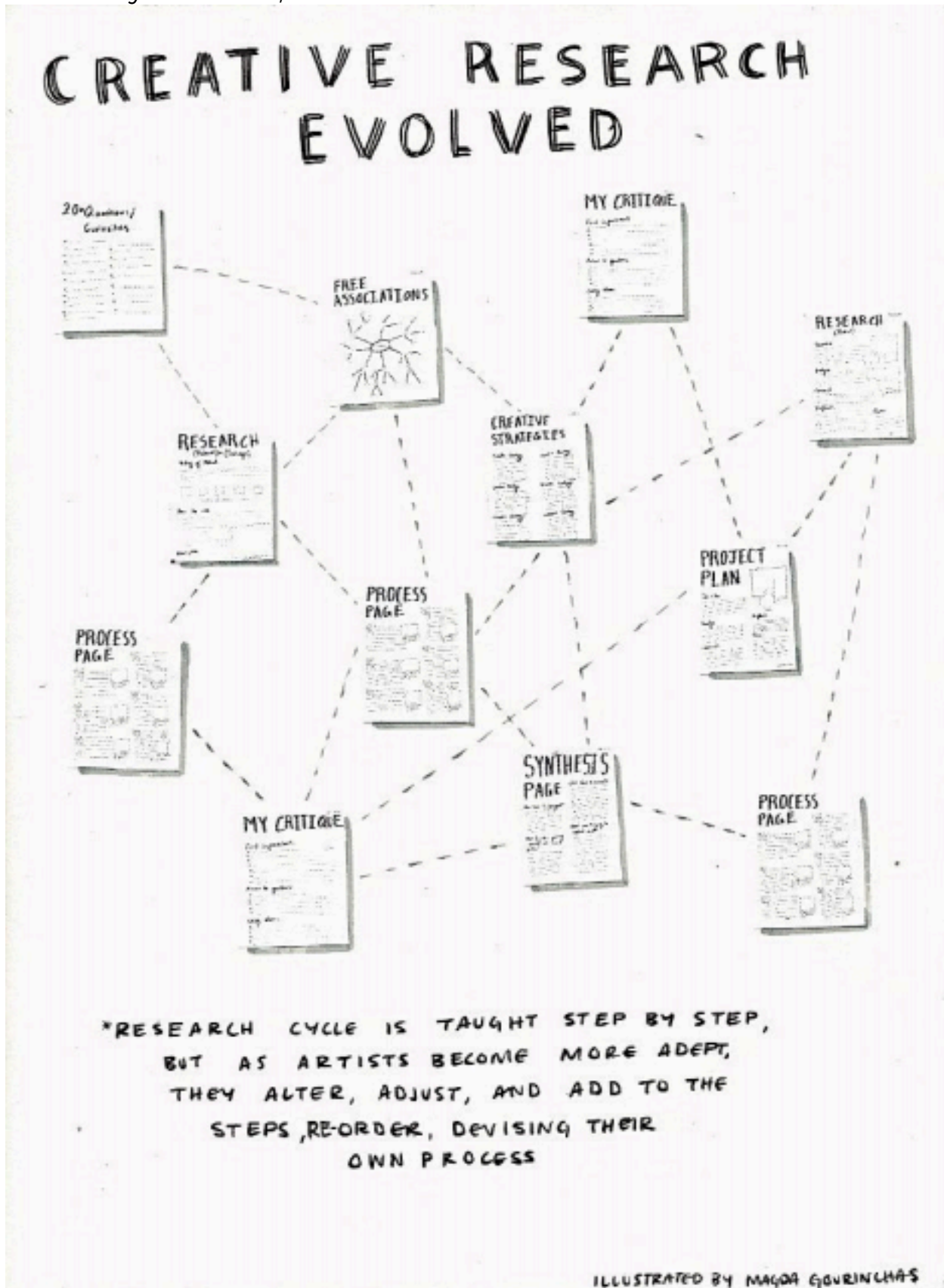
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Always iterative, but often non-linear for advanced learners



Scaffolding creative research for students and teachers, by students and teachers.

Overview:

Creative Research Stages

The Creative Research Stages developed in my classroom at Berkeley High as a way of helping students learn how to think creatively in any discipline. ([Marshall & D'Adamo 2011](#), [Marshall & D'Adamo 2018](#)) Essentially, this guide shows how to scaffold creative thinking stage by stage, helping students learn to ask questions, research, experiment, plan and make their thinking visible through documentation. These are designed differently than other creative processes in two important ways-the stages themselves are not what is unique in this work as there are many creative research processes which have been codified and used in classrooms all over. What my students helped develop was age-appropriate scaffolds for each stage, so the kinds of high-level thinking could be accessible and practiced by novice researchers. They also worked hard to create models for other young arts-based researchers, as examples. Please be mindful that this research was co-created with students, and cite them appropriately.

Trans-disciplinary

Teachers have found that these thinking routines can be used to support creative research into any unit or theme. They have been tested in multiple disciplines and with multiple age groups, and multiple teachers at Berkeley High (Andrea Sanguine, Smantha Borg, Amanda Green, among others) For the first unit of the year, teachers find it effective have been instrumental in designing them so they work in any discipline. At the beginning of the year, teachers find it useful to guide students through these stages using this same set of graphic organizers, sentence frames and steps to build the beginning of their creative research journal. This helps students practice the scaffolds for each stage and also ensures creates a common language among all students, around creative research.. As they become more facile at creative research, the graphic organizers for each stage can be modified and played with. Another effective technique is to do the stages as a class on larger paper, and then put those up to create the foundation of a class a [thinking wall](#). This is particularly effective in the lower grades.

Research Journal

Each stage is documented in their Creative Thinking Journal (or on a Thinking Wall if you are doing them as a class)-these pages become the bones of their documentation of creative thinking. These are not the only things kids include in their journal, but these are the stages and pages that are consistently used for each theme, and some are formally assessed to check for understanding. I found it useful when I printed out the handout and graphic organizer for each stage, and posted them on the walls, to help students understand the goals, questions and information that needs to be documented for as they progressed.

Iteration

The stages are intended to be iterative-they would do these same stages for each theme, so they really built those neurological pathways of thinking creatively through arts-based research. These scaffolds allow the lower skill students to grapple with the same kinds of thinking in new ways over

time, and also means you are teaching the stages once for the first theme, then helping students build mastery and go deeper in their thinking as they use the same stages again for subsequent themes. Scaffolding creative research in this way, creating thinking routines for each stage of research, also allows for less instruction of new routines, and more time for students to research and make.

Curiosities Stage

What is involved in the curiosities stage?

At the curiosities stage, you list every possible topic that interests you. It a visual representation of what you want centralize your art around. This stage helps you narrow down your interests.

Objectives

- Brainstorming ideas for research on an area of focus
- Can be used for investigations or individual projects
- Students will develop a deeper understanding of their interests



Guiding Questions

- What interests you?
- What confuses you?
- What inspires you?
- What do you think about a lot?
- What might you not get tired of?

Sentence Frames

- I am interested in _____.
- My favorite subject in school is _____, and I like how _____ challenges me.
- A political issue important to me is _____.

- I am curious about _____.
- An issue I want to solve is _____.

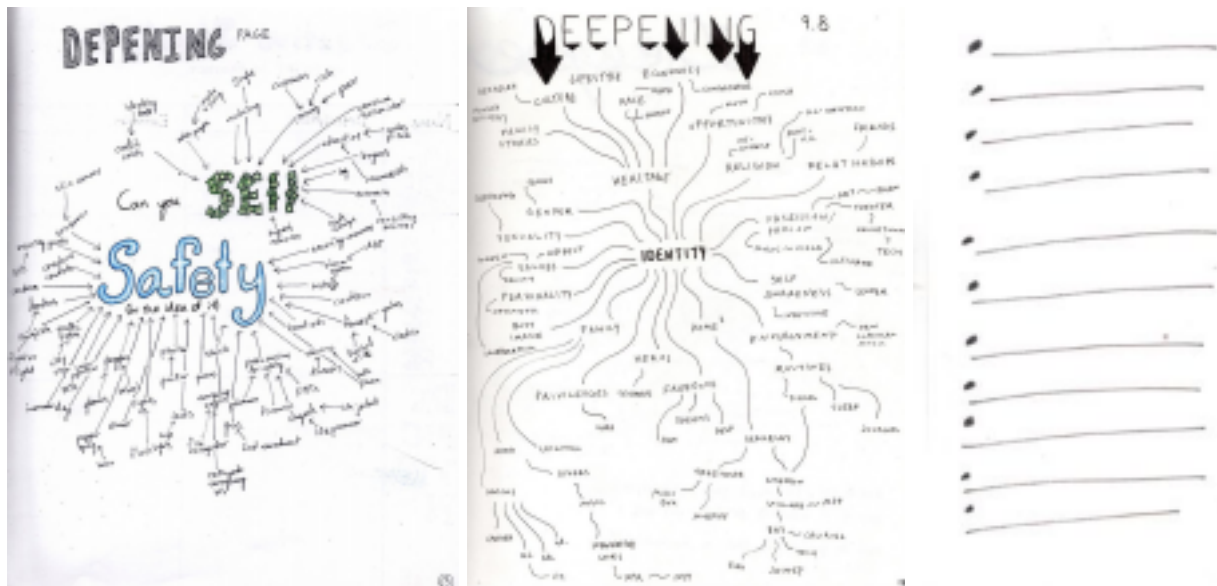
Subtopics/Deepening Stage

What happens at the subtopics stage?

At this stage, you choose one of your curiosities and break it down into subtopics. This stage will help frame your entire research cycle.

Objectives

- Students will investigate their topic further to find their final subtopic
- Making new connections to their subtopic
- Determining theme of your investigation



Guiding Questions

- What interests you about this topic?
- What inspires you about this topic?
- What is the most important part of your topic?

Sentence Frames

- One crucial part to my topic is _____.
- My topic can be broken down into _____.
- When I hear my topic, I think of _____.

Research Stage

What is a research page?

This is the page where you investigate your subtopic. You could research anything from materials to artists, or it could be where you record an interview with an expert.

Objectives

- Preparing to create your art by understanding everything to do with your subtopic



Guiding Questions

- What do you need to research about your topic in order to create art about it?
- What confuses you about your topic?
- Is there a material you don't know how to use?

Sentence Frames

- _____ originates from _____.
- The first known use of _____ was for _____.
- Techniques for working with _____ are _____.
- The benefits/drawbacks of the materials are _____.
- One artist that uses this material is _____, and they do this by _____.
- An interdisciplinary connection to my subtopic is _____.
- One uses this material by _____.
- A useful tip when working with this material is _____.

Free Association Stage

What happens at Free Association Stage?

At this stage you choose one subtopic from your subtopic page and brainstorm all possible associations with this subtopic. For example, colors, feelings, textures, smells, sounds are all possible connection for the subtopic. This stage will help give you a better idea of what you want to create around this subtopic.

Objectives

- Understanding your topic more
- Getting an idea of what elements you want to add to your art



Guiding Questions

- How does your topic make you feel?
- What does your subtopic remind you of?

Sentence Frames

- When I hear my subtopic, I think of ____.
- Feelings I associate with my subtopic are ____.
- Materials I associate with my subtopic are ____.
- Textures/tastes/sounds/smells I associate with my subtopic are ____.

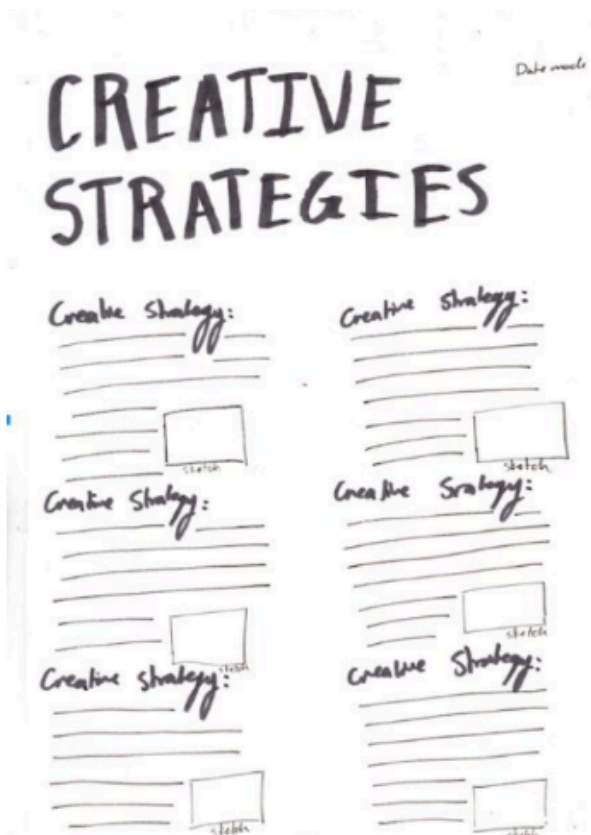
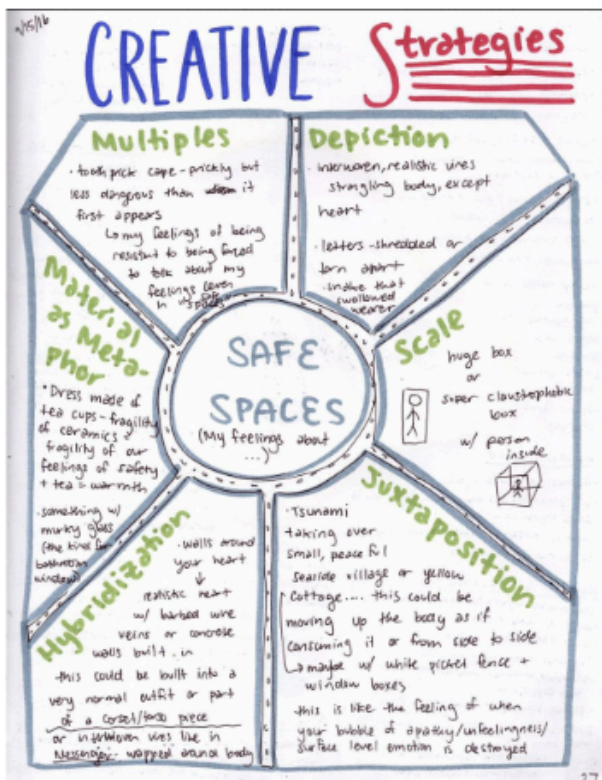
Creative Strategies Stage

What is the Creative Strategies Stage?

This stage will help you figure out how to clearly communicate your subtopic, through use of a variety of creative strategies. Using 5 different strategies, you will come up with 5 different project ideas that will fulfill your subtopic. Creative strategies include material as metaphor, hybridization, replication, scale, juxtaposition, mimicry, intervention, interactivity, reformatting, miniatures, and time.

Objectives

- Brainstorming different ways to communicate your subtopic
- Learning intentional strategies to depict your subtopic



Guiding Questions

- What are ways in which I can communicate my subtopic?

Sentence Frames

- One thing essential to communicate my topic is ____.
- I want to use ____ method to communicate my subtopic through my art. • Within my art, I want to compare ____.
- I can blend ____ and ____ to communicate subtopic.

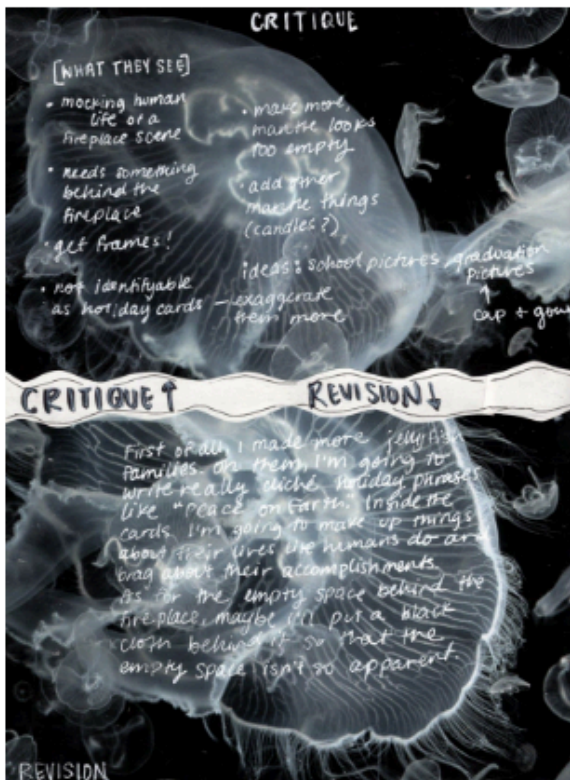
Process Critique Notes

What are process critique notes?

Here you will write notes from your process critiques with ideas or suggestions as to how to help your classmates.

Objectives

- Get constructive criticism from your peers
- Problem solve issues you are having
- Build team working skills



Guiding Questions

- Have I communicated my subtopic clearly?
- What is missing from your research?
- How is your artwork coming together?
- What solutions do you have to solve problems you encounter?

Sentence Frames/Questions

- I need help with _____.
- One thing I don't know what to do with _____.
- What should I do next with _____?

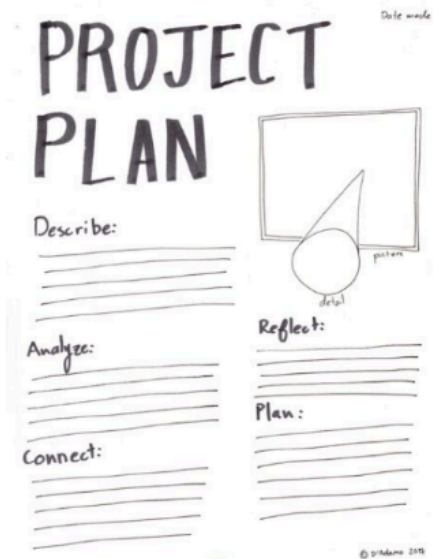
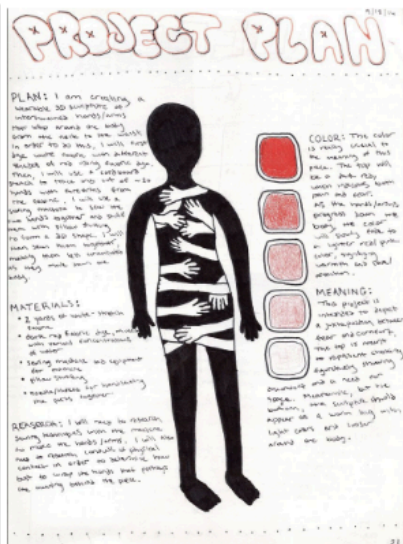
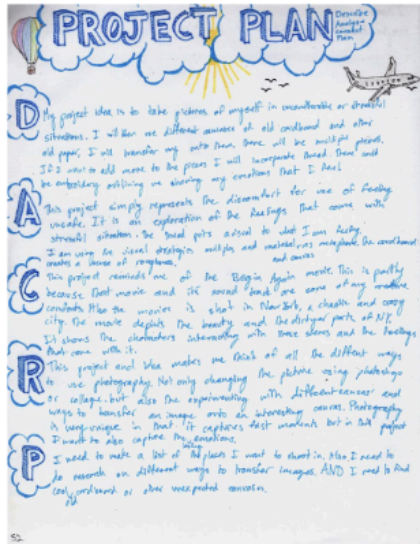
Project Plan

What is a project plan?

This is where you will clarify your final project idea by giving a description, justification, research plan, sketch, materials and timeline for completion.

Objectives

- Effectively communicate your ideas
- Describe, analyze, connect, research and plan how you will carry out your project



Guiding Questions

- How would you describe your project?
- What materials do you need?
- What is the timeline?
- What do you need to research?

Sentence Frames

- My project's concept is _____.
- Materials I am using are _____.
- I would describe my project by _____.
- A justification of my project is _____.
- The timeline of my project is _____.
- Things I need to research are _____.

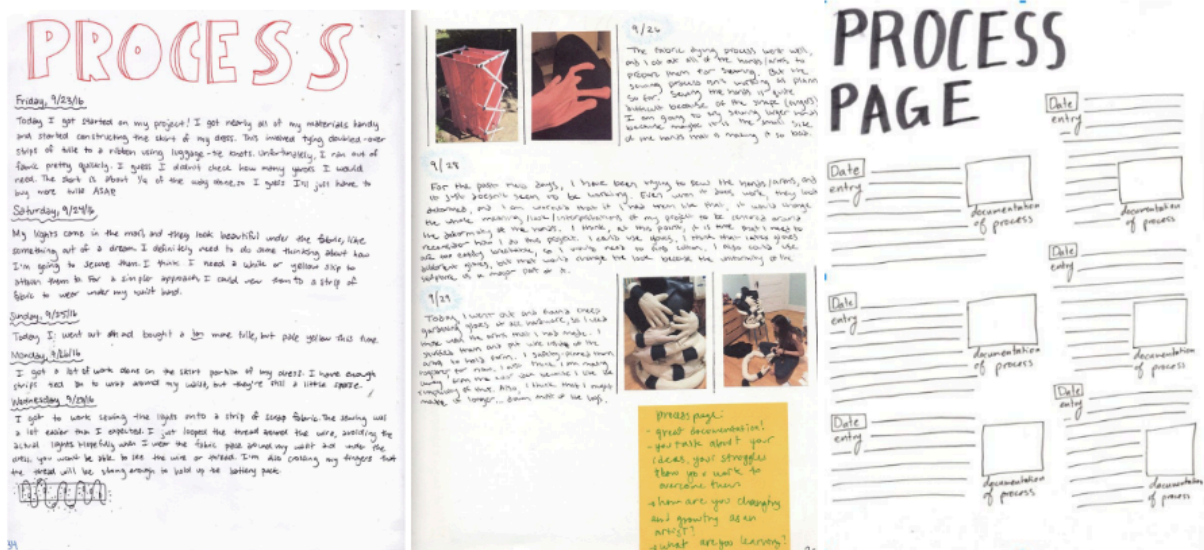
Process Pages

What is a process page?

This page is where you will document your artistic process. Here you will write down any struggles, realizations and thoughts as your project progresses. Throughout one research cycle, you should do at least three of these in your workbook. You should also take photos of yourself in the process of making art in order to document your entire process.

Objectives

- Document your process using drawings or pictures
- Reflect on concerns about your piece and research
- Explore how your artistic voice is changing as you make art and do research • Document materials



Guiding Questions

- How is your research shifting the way your project unfolds?
- What you learning about how your materials work?
- How is your understanding changing during the process?
- What is/isn't working?
- How is the artwork coming together?
- How is the process impacting your artistic goals and voice?

Sentence Frames

- I have struggled with ____.
- I worked on ____ today.
- I fixed ____ by ____.
- My art has evolved by ____.
- I have grown as an artist by ____.
- I learned ____.

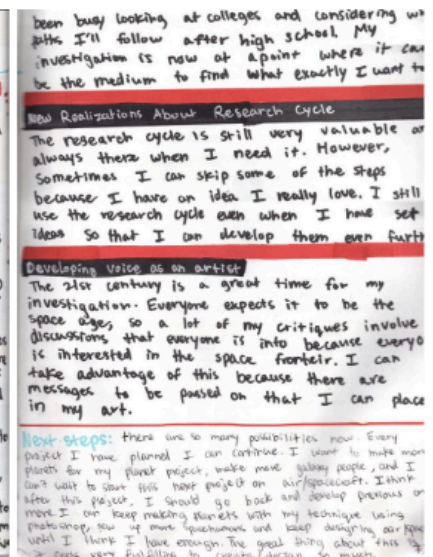
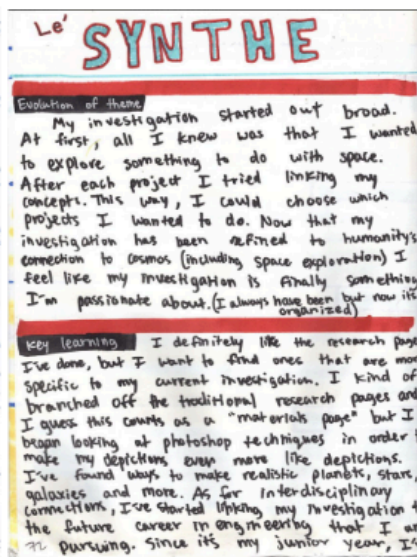
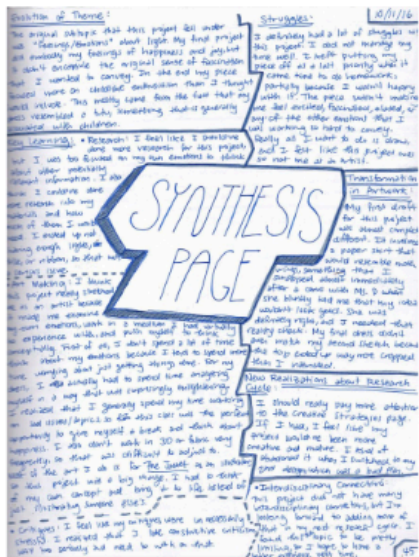
Synthesis Stage

What happens in synthesis stage?

Probably the most important stage of your learning, this is the final page in the research cycle. Ideally, it will take up two pages, including pictures, sketches, and writing. In this page, you will reflect deeply on your process. Review how the project impacted you and let you grow.

Objectives

- Looking back on what you've done so far in the project
- Coming to new conclusions from thinking/research
- Making new connections in your research
- Thinking of how old art can transform new art
- Reflecting on your growth as an artist and learner



Guiding Questions

- What was my initial goal?
- What did I learn along the way?
- Has this changed me as an artist/thinker?
- What do I want to explore next?

Sentence Frames

- My theme has evolved by _____.
- I learned _____ about the research process.
- Research critical to my work was _____.
- Interdisciplinary connections to my art include _____.
- I struggled with _____.
- My artwork transformed by _____.
- My work developed my voice as an artist by _____.