

Process Journals

Generally, students work at different speeds and with different inclinations. Class activities on all units I teach, are broken into four stages (all reflected in process journals): historic and cultural research, experimentation and skill assimilation, work on provisional compositions, and the final work. The pace of the work and the emphasis given to any part of the unit depends on the student population and skill level.

In this color unit, the first assignment is to collect and post images of painters with interesting color systems. I have given a list of artists on the assignment sheet, that use color in interesting ways. But students are free to look anywhere for artists who use color in a way they like. It is important for the students to annotate their posts to demonstrate that they understand the vocabulary and concepts being taught.

I use the journals even when I am not teaching an MYP program because I grade as much on process as I do any finished work. I have found that by demanding preliminary research, experimentation, and practice, my students achieve a level in their final work that they could not have realized without following this pattern. This does not so much demand harder work, as a longer time for units.

This approach also gives teachers a way to scaffold the work to fit the student population and it prevents students from trying to meet assignments the night before they are due.