

Art Analysis Worksheet No.2

Art Analysis Worksheet 2.

This worksheet was developed by Max darby as part of his M. Ed Studies.

This worksheet assists you to carefully analyze and interpret artworks from your own point of view. It encourages you to have your own tastes and opinions about the artworks you see. It also helps you to notice the artistic qualities the artworks contain, and to change your mind should you wish to. If you need to, you can include more space for your writing. The worksheet could be located in your Workbook or Visual Diary. There is another worksheet in this website to help analyse artworks. It is **Art Analysis Worksheet No. 1.**

There is an excellent example below of the analysis of an artwork using the approach outlined in the 7 stages listed here.

What is your first impression of the artwork?

- Do you think the artwork is good or not good?
- Do you like or dislike the artwork?

- Briefly explain your answers?

Describe the artwork and everything you can see in it

- Objects
- Colours
- Shapes
- Textures etc.

Analyze how the artwork was made

- What artform was used?
- What working processes were used?
- What skills and techniques were used?
- What time do you think it would have taken to make the artwork?

Analyze how the artwork was designed

- How is the artwork composed or arranged?
- What elements and principles of design were used?

Interpret the artwork

- What meanings or messages can you find in the artwork?
- What is the intention of the artwork or why was it made?

What do other people think of the artwork?

- What do Art Historians or Art Critics think of the artwork?
- What does your Art Teacher think of the artwork?
- What do other students think of the artwork?
- Does your opinion about the artwork differ to theirs? How?
- What are the important points other people make about the work?

What is your impression of the artwork now?

- Has your opinion about the artwork changed at all?
- Explain any differences you now have to the artwork?
- If you changed your mind about anything what influenced you?

A Student Example of this approach

The following analysis of the painting *Delmore Downs Through Clouds* by Angeline Pwerle Kngarre uses the 7 stages outlined above. Notice how much information can be found in the work when a systematic approach is taken. Also notice how the student has explained why some of her opinions changed.



Angeline Pwerle Kngare. Utopia Country. Northern Territory.

Delmore Downs Through Clouds.

Acrylic on canvas. 1.0 X 1.0 Metre.

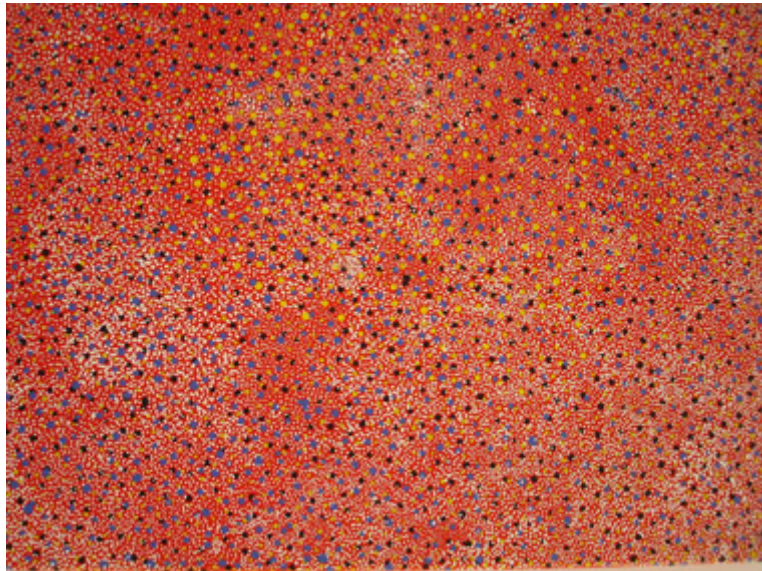
What is your first impression of the artwork?

I don't really like this painting because it just seems to be a pile of dots of paint that don't make any sense. I like paintings to show me something that can be recognised even

though the title says it is Clouds on Delmore Downs Station. It looks a simple painting that anyone could do.

Describe the artwork and everything you can see in it.

As I mentioned above the main thing you see in the painting is hundreds of dots and they totally cover the surface of the canvas. The shape of the whole canvas is quite square. The colours used are mainly reds, pinks, blues and some yellows. Some of the dots also let you see some simple shapes but no lines. These shapes are more obvious when you look at the painting from a distance. You can see some things better when you stand close to the painting and some better when you stand back from it. In some areas you can actually see some of the canvas underneath the coloured dots. I can't be sure whether that was deliberate or accidental. In some ways there doesn't seem to be any strong shapes or forms although the colours are clean and sparkly.



Detail of numerous dots

Analyze how the artwork was made

The artwork has been made with tiny dots. There is no clue what was used to make the dots although they are probably too small to have been made by cotton buds and too careful and precise to have been made with a paint brush or small twigs. Each dot is really clean and carefully made with no false strokes or slips that I can see. This was even more accurate when I looked at them using a magnifying glass to enlarge the dots. There appear to many layers of dots painted over other layers of dots. It is possible the dots were made using the blunt end of meat skewers used in cooking. They could also have been made, I suppose, using the end of nails. Making the painting would have taken an enormous amount of time because

to stop the paint smudging (which there is no evidence of) great care would have been needed to ensure the dots were totally dry before proceeding. One other important point is that to get the correct mix of the various coloured dots in any single area, the artist must have known exactly how different combinations of coloured dots would look, and would have needed to know exactly where they were going. Probably, many trials were made before starting or else many other dot paintings had previously been made by this artist.



Details of the structure of dots.

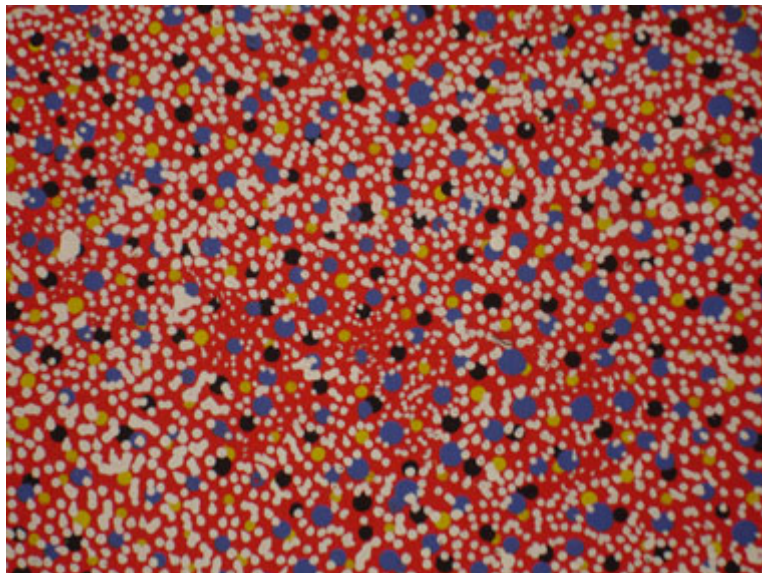
Analyze how the artwork was designed

At first the design looks really simple with dots being placed all over the canvas until it was all completely filled. I now don't think that's true. I feel the dots were very carefully planned and managed. This became more obvious when I saw how carefully the dots had been made and placed onto the canvas. Even though there are many layers of painted dots they all seem carefully arranged not just put onto other dots. The placement looks very meticulously and carefully placed side by side to create an illusion of being on top of other dots, when actually they weren't. The placement of dots from a distance looks more like you are looking through transparent screens of different colour dots. I also noticed when standing back that these different levels or screens form the shapes of the clouds mentioned in the title. Once I saw this it suddenly became easier to imagine that the artist had deliberately done this to contrast the white-shaped dots to the red-shaped dots. This is very imaginative and clever and the reds form the sandy ground of the Delmore Station cattle station below the white clouds. I researched to find that Delmore Downs is one of the biggest cattle stations near the Centre of Australia (about 300kl above Alice Springs). The Aboriginal Community that the artist comes from and which is on Delmore Downs Station is known as Utopia.

Interpret the artwork

The artwork is much more than the pile of dots I first thought it was. Of course it is still many dots but I now feel that great care and thought has gone into how the dots were used in layers to create a picture. And, that picture isn't just an accident. To me, the artist obviously set out to try create

many layers that look as though you're looking at something through clouds – that is what the layers are, layers of clouds. Like clouds they can be seen right through and are kind of transparent since they are made of small droplets of water. Maybe the tiny dots used were deliberately chosen to show small droplets of water, or to suggest it. The use of red dots for the land below helps to show that the countryside is very hot and dry. The ground varies in many of its hot colours with some small shadows and differences in tones. The sand isn't just one colour. I also believe the artist is trying to show us by using such skill and great care that she really loves this place and it means enough to take so much time to show this place. What I've since found out about the artist, and place she has painted, helps me to understand better much of what I've just written above (see below).



Detail of the layout and design on the dots.

What do other people think of the artwork?

My teacher suggested I undertake some research or investigation into the artist, Angeline Pwerle Kngale, and I found she is from a family with a number of outstanding Aboriginal artists. This is important to understanding her use of numerous dots since that is a traditional Aboriginal form of painting and very popular today. Many Aboriginal paintings show the land from above, a little like a map. Her work is generally well-acknowledged as being outstanding in its quality and its 'spiritual interpretation' of the area where she lives. I was surprised that almost everyone else I spoke to really loved the painting for its great skill and technical competence. Really, I was more surprised that at first I had not liked it when everyone else seemed to. They also admired it for its strong messages about her love of the area she lived. She is highly valued by the people who own Delmore Downs Station who promote and sell her works. The artist is very successful and has been a great ambassador for her people.

What is your impression of the artwork now?

My impression has changed enormously. Although I did at first recognise some skill in how the dots had been made, I didn't understand exactly what the artist was trying to do and couldn't see it without taking time to really look very carefully. Although I found many things to admire about her painting style myself, I was also strongly influenced by the things I found out about her. One thing I did try was to do a dot painting of my own and that made me realise how skillful she had been and how much care, skill and competence it took to be so successful. Once I realised about the layers upon layers of dots I had a different appreciation for what she achieves in all her works. Most importantly, I think they are also amazingly, interesting and I changed my mind a lot about this work.



Details of the numerous dots

You would benefit from using the worksheet above to undertake an analysis of an artwork of your own choosing.

This could be located in your visual diary or workbook. If you do this I'm interested in you sending me a copy for inclusion on this website.

You can also use the worksheet to analyse your own artworks.