Developing peer and self assessment in art and design

Following the training in the generic unit *Peer and self assessment*, it is important to consider how the key messages of the training apply to art and design. As part of the whole-school focus on this, the following subject development material is intended to help you consider the key messages of the training unit and identify any areas requiring development in your department.

The following is a brief summary of the training unit.

**Objectives**

- To provide the strategies that promote and develop peer and self assessment.
- To help participants to identify opportunities to introduce or extend these strategies when planning lessons.

**Key messages**

- To develop skills in peer and self assessment, learning objectives and intended learning outcomes must be made explicit and transparent to pupils. This will help to ensure that pupils are able to identify when they have met some or all of the success criteria.
- Sharing learning objectives and outcomes must be a regular feature of lessons and become an integral part of reviewing learning rather than a ‘bolt-on’ activity.
- Pupils develop their skills in self assessment after initially developing their skills in peer assessment and therefore pupils need to be taught the skills of collaboration in peer assessment. This will help pupils to assess their own progress objectively and become increasingly independent learners.
- To develop peer and self assessment in the classroom, teachers will need to:
  - plan peer and self assessment opportunities in lessons
  - train pupils over time to assess their own work and the work of others
  - explain the learning objectives and intended learning outcomes behind each task
  - frequently and consistently encourage pupils’ self-reflection on their learning
  - guide pupils to identify their next steps.

The following material builds on the tasks outlined in the ‘Ready for more?’ section of the *Peer and self assessment* training unit and it is intended for all those who teach art and design.
Reviewing existing practice in peer and self assessment

The table below provides a tool for a department to self-review current practice and to help identify an appropriate starting point.

As a department, agree and highlight the statements below that best reflect the practice of the whole department. At the bottom of each column is a reference to the tasks that will support your current practice and provide the appropriate material to develop from this point.

Having completed this review you should read ‘Making effective use of the subject development material’ on the next page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focusing</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Establishing</th>
<th>Enhancing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>There is no whole-school approach that enhances and promotes the use of peer and self assessment to raise standards. The subject leader has identified where: • planning does not focus on learning objectives and does not identify expected outcomes so pupils lack the information they need to peer assess and self-assess their work • teacher feedback does not relate directly to learning objectives and outcomes so peer and self assessment discussions tend to lack focus and are unproductive.</td>
<td>The department is beginning to collaboratively plan for peer and self assessment. Learning objectives and outcomes are made explicit and transparent to enable peer and self assessment. Practice is variable across the department. Some teachers lack the confidence to provide peer assessment opportunities.</td>
<td>There is an effective, coherent and manageable whole-school system for promoting self assessment and peer assessment. Whole-school collaborative planning enables success criteria for cross-curricular initiatives to be identified and used for peer and self assessment. Teachers work with pupils to identify success criteria related to progress in the key concepts and skills for the subject. Teachers orchestrate and maintain pupil dialogue with timely intervention to accelerate understanding and develop independent learning. Teachers continue to explore with pupils how they learn most effectively and how they can apply this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>The subject leader has identified that: • pupils lack the skills and dispositions for peer and self assessment and struggle to provide constructive feedback to each other • peer assessment discussions lack focus as pupils cannot judge the strengths and weaknesses of their work.</td>
<td>Pupils are beginning to assess their own work and that of their peers against the learning objectives and learning outcomes. They are gaining confidence in paired and group discussion and are beginning to provide constructive feedback.</td>
<td>Pupils can use success criteria to improve their own work and that of their peers and can recognize the standards they are aiming for in the subject. Pupils are increasingly confident in assessing their own work and provide informative and constructive feedback to others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start with Task 5A</td>
<td>Start with Task 5B</td>
<td>Start with Task 5B or 5C</td>
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Making effective use of the subject development material

The tasks you have been referred to are intended to support the development or extension of peer and self assessment in art and design and provide guidance on how to embed this into regular practice in art and design lessons.

The results of the self-review will have suggested the appropriate task(s) that will support your department’s development needs.

To make best use of the supporting material the following sequence will be helpful.

1 Read the task and the supporting exemplification.
This describes how a department has approached the task and worked through each of its stages. It is given as an example of how the task might be addressed. It is not intended that you follow this approach, which is given as a guide to the process that will support improvements in your subject.

2 Identify what the department did and the impact it had on pupils.
Discuss as a team the example provided and establish the key areas that helped to develop this practice and the impact it had on pupils. It will be helpful to identify the changes in teachers’ practice and how these impacted on pupils’ learning.

3 Agree and plan the actions that will develop your practice.
As a department, agree how you intend to approach this task. Clarify what you are focusing on and why. The example given will act as a guide, but be specific about which classes, which lessons and which aspects of the curriculum will be your points of focus.

4 Identify when and how you will evaluate its impact on pupils.
The purpose of focusing on this is to improve pupils’ achievement and attainment in art and design. You will need to be clear on what has helped pupils to learn more effectively in your subject. Part of this will be how your practice has adapted to allow this. You should jointly identify what has worked well and which areas require further attention.

5 Having evaluated these strategies, consider what steps are required to embed this practice.
You will need to undertake an honest evaluation of what you have tried and the impact it has had on your teaching and on pupils’ learning. One outcome might be that you need to spend longer on improving this area or you may be in a position to consider the next task.

Other departments in the school will have been focusing on this area and you should find out about the progress they have made.

You may find that some teachers in the department will require further time to develop and consolidate new practice, while others will be ready to progress further through the tasks in this area (while continuing to support their colleagues). Practice across a department will need to be consolidated before focusing on a new area of Assessment for learning.
## The subject development tasks

### Task 5A
With a colleague, plan and observe one of each other’s lessons which has an agreed focus on peer and self assessment and uses one of the strategies on [handout 5.4](appendix5A.1) in the generic unit.

Jointly review your lessons and highlight the impact on pupils and your teaching.

Plan how and when this will be fed back to the department.

### Task 5B
In your department, identify existing and potential peer and self assessment opportunities from the scheme of work for a year group or unit.

Within the next half term, plan opportunities and experiment with a variety of types of peer and self assessment using some of the techniques outlined in [appendix 5.1](appendix5A.1) in the generic unit.

Agree a review meeting that focuses on the gains made in pupils’ learning.

Select some that had most impact on pupils and incorporate these into the medium-term plans.

### Task 5C
Select a subject-specific task or activity that enables pupils to evaluate their own performance.

Agree the criteria for assessment with pupils, the principles for how they should assess and, initially, model how you would expect them to do it.

Observe them assessing their work, and provide feedback on how well they did and how they might improve in the future.

If peer and self assessment is well established, arrange to interview a small group of pupils to determine their response to those strategies ([handout 5.4](appendix5A.1) in the generic unit) and how they help them to learn more effectively.

The following pages provide exemplification of each task.
Task 5A

With a colleague, plan and observe one of each other’s lessons which has an agreed focus on peer and self assessment and uses one of the strategies on handout 5.4 in the generic unit (see appendix 5A.1).

Jointly review your lessons and highlight the impact on pupils and your teaching.

Plan how and when this will be fed back to the department.

Context

Two members of the art department agreed, as part of the ongoing improvements in teaching and learning in the school, to develop a Year 7 project adapted from the QCA unit of work 7B, What’s in a building? They were eager to develop their pupils’ understanding of space and form in three-dimensional artwork, as well as building on their Key Stage 2 experience of pattern shape and texture.

Process

They wanted to give equal emphasis to the pupils’ developing ability to critically appraise their own work and use their own insights to inform their next steps.

In one class there were 28 pupils – 18 working beyond level 4, including four working at level 7 in art and design. Ten pupils were working at level 3. The teacher’s assessment of pupils’ learning was based on their capacity to develop artwork independently, supported by the ability to comment on and analyse artwork.

The learning objectives for the unit were as follows

- We are learning to select and identify the different features in architecture and the purposes they serve.
- We are learning how to identify the visual elements of the observed world.
- We are learning how to record and develop our observations and ideas.

Learning objectives for lesson 1, week 1

- We will understand how to use our sketchbooks to record our observations of and ideas about architecture.
- We will find out why some buildings look the way they do.

The teachers’ introduction to the lesson

The teachers made use of slides and posters to introduce images of vernacular architecture. They modelled a framework for describing the architecture, asking key (open) questions to encourage their pupils to reflect on the imagery.

- Why does this look like this? (decoration/style)
- What is this for? (use/function)
- In what way does this answer human need? (reinforcement of the learning objective)
The teachers referred to specialist vocabulary displayed on the art room wall and reminded pupils of its use in previous work. They encouraged them to use words that supported their understanding of the visual world. For example:

- tone
- asymmetrical
- symmetrical
- form
- composition
- texture
- primary colour
- secondary colour
- tertiary colour.

**The main activity**

The pupils were set to work together and were provided with folders that contained architectural images. The four most-able pupils worked in pairs in order to maximise their potential and provide exemplar approaches for further lessons. Level 3 and level 4 pupils were paired together to support one another. This was not only to encourage progress by the less-able in each pair but also to challenge the higher attainers. The teacher monitored their work to gauge the relative progress of each pairing. Other group combinations were introduced as appropriate.

They were asked to do the following:

- use the framework for describing architecture, as modelled by the teacher, in a discussion to support their choice of certain images and features
- make drawings, diagrams, plans and notes in their sketchbooks, using the framework for describing the architecture, with particular attention given to decorative and structural features and their significance
- share views on the way they are using their sketchbooks to record visual information and thoughts as well as on the way they are learning. For example, are they more worried about presentation, neatness and pleasing the teacher than exploring their own creativity?

Pupils were told that the main activity would link to their homework and that this would involve them applying the same skills to their direct experiences and observations of chosen local buildings.

**Process exemplification**

The teacher moved among the groups, picking up issues raised and sharing them with the whole class as appropriate. The pupils were learning to read the imagery in terms of colour, shape, composition, line, pattern and texture.

The teacher reminded pupils of the way previous speaking and listening activities enabled them to share their understanding of colour in a previous homework about the domestic interior. For example, they were encouraged to share their views on the way that pattern had been used in two very different buildings.
During the feedback session, pupils shared what they had discovered about buildings. They presented their findings to the rest of the group, explaining both the process they had followed in producing their work and the elements of the peer relationship that supported their learning. They explained the progress they had made in relation to the objective and offered examples of the things that their peer had told them they needed to improve. The whole class was invited to offer its views on the success and drawbacks of the experiences of different peer groupings. This discussion was prompted by teacher questions such as ‘What sort of questions helped you to develop your ideas?’ and ‘Which were not helpful?’

**Evaluation**

The teachers jointly evaluated the effectiveness of the unit, with particular reference to pupils’ development of their understanding of space and form in three-dimensional artwork. This exercise led to the identification of improvements to their lesson planning and organisation to enable effective peer and self assessment to take place. This was then shared with the department and was supported with their short video excerpts of pupil discussions.
Task 5B

In your department, identify existing and potential peer and self assessment opportunities from the scheme of work for a year group or unit.

Within the next half term, plan opportunities and experiment with a variety of types of peer and self assessment using some of the techniques outlined in appendix 5.1 in the generic unit.

Agree a review meeting that focuses on the gains made in pupils’ learning.

Select some that had most impact on pupils and incorporate these into the medium-term plans.

Context

Another two members of the department decided to develop a Year 8 project adapted from QCA unit 8A, Objects and viewpoints. The focus of the project was to develop the ability to select and abstract the qualities of shapes in the creation of a painted composition.

Pupils had already been introduced to the work of Picasso and Braque and had explored how these artists challenged accepted conventions in European Art to encourage the viewer to see the world in a new way.

In addition, the teachers, as a consequence of attending a training day organised by the school’s literacy coordinator, were eager to develop their Year 8 pupils’ use of subject-specific vocabulary.

Process

The teachers decided to develop peer and self assessment activities to be used during whole-class reviews of homework. These extended their pupils’ use of subject-specific language and encouraged the sharing of methods and approaches. The teachers also wished to build on the use of key vocabulary in the pupils’ assessment of their own and their peers’ work. In their classes, there were 28 and 30 pupils respectively, with approximately two-thirds working between levels 5 and 7. The remaining third of pupils were working towards level 5 with a minority working at level 4.

The learning objectives for lesson 2, week 2 were as follows:

- We are learning to use subject specific language to describe how we developed our work.
- We are learning to evaluate how effectively materials, methods and approaches have been used.
- We are learning to set new targets for the development of our work.

The teachers’ classes had both completed Unit 3, Objective led lessons, and understood the purpose and importance of sharing learning outcomes with pupils. As a consequence they decided that the learning outcomes would be as follows:

- We are learning to describe our work and set new targets for its development.
• We are developing the ability to use specialist vocabulary to describe artwork and identify ways in which it can be improved.

The teachers’ introduction to the lesson
The teachers reminded their pupils of the homework task and used slides and posters to encourage them to identify the key techniques and artistic conventions they were asked to explore.

• Why did the Cubists encourage us to look at objects in a different way? (perspective)
• How did the Cubists borrow forms and ideas from other cultures? (African sculpture)
• How did the Cubists use line, tone, shape and texture? (the language of art)

Pupils were encouraged to make use of the key vocabulary displayed on the art room wall.

The main activity
The peer review took place during the middle part of the lesson, and while the class was working the teacher collected sketchbooks, selecting a cross-section of abilities and approaches. The pupils’ names were covered up and the work was then laid out on a large table. In pairs, the pupils were asked to look at the displayed work. The teacher made a conscious decision to pair able pupils with less-able pupils to ensure the less-able members of the group interacted with those pupils who were better at modelling the use of specialist vocabulary. They were encouraged to revisit the learning outcome and focus their minds on how they would describe the work and what advice they could give for its future development.

During the group review, pupils were encouraged to:
• identify what success looks like and describe what they feel makes a good piece of work
• use specialist language to analyse the Cubist techniques that have been used, such as the use of unusual angles, multiple views of one object and strong contrasts of light and dark
• identify any unusual approaches that have been employed
• explore the use of different styles, e.g. dark, dramatic or angular lines
• identify how work can be improved.

Process exemplification
The teacher moved among the group, asking questions to evaluate pupils’ understanding and to provide feedback that, where necessary, redefined and explained the task. The teacher modelled the use of specialist vocabulary, encouraging the pupils to share their observations and extend their use of language in the description of what they saw. They were reminded of how they had used language in the past to describe visual imagery, and reference was made to the key vocabulary displayed on the art room wall.
During a whole-class feedback activity in the last five minutes of the lesson, pupils were encouraged to reflect on the peer review activity they had completed.

Finally, during the plenary they were asked to write down, on the page facing their homework, three areas of strength and three areas for improvement that they identified in their own work. They were then told to develop their drawings for a further week in response to the issues they and others had identified, building on their strengths and adopting the good features of the work they had seen earlier in the lesson when focusing on areas for development.

**Evaluation**

The two teachers evaluated the effectiveness of the unit, with particular reference to the pupils’ developing ability to select and abstract the qualities of shapes in the creation of a painted composition. They supported their evaluation with a short video of their discussions with small groups of pupils who had been assessing each other’s work. This was shared with the whole department at one of their programmed meetings.
Task 5C

Select a subject-specific task or activity that enables pupils to evaluate their own performance.

Agree the criteria for assessment with pupils, the principles for how they should assess and, initially, model how you would expect them to do it.

Observe them assessing their work, and provide feedback on how well they did and how they might improve in the future.

If peer and self assessment is well established, arrange to interview a small group of pupils to determine their response to those strategies (handout 5.4 in the generic unit, see appendix 5A.1) and how they help them to learn more effectively.

Context

One of the department, on behalf of her colleagues, agreed to pilot a Year 9 project adapted from QCA unit 9B, Change your style. The project was designed to link to a recent museum visit, and focused on pupils’ knowledge, understanding and use of decorative and applied arts from other cultures. The teacher was keen to use exemplar materials from a year group who had already completed the project, as this enabled her to illustrate the learning objectives with a range of approaches and outcomes.

In her class of 28 pupils, 14 were working beyond level 6 and eight were working towards level 5. A teaching assistant supported a small group of six pupils who were working towards level 4. She used the levels diagnostically and, in confidence, to ensure that pupils were supported, challenged and engaged at an appropriate level.

Process

During the museum visit, pupils were encouraged to make annotated drawings that could be used as a reference for later work. For a number of lessons following the visit, the teacher encouraged her pupils to evaluate their work and consider how it might be used in the creation of a design for body adornment.

The learning objectives for lesson 3, week 3 were as follows:

- We are learning to explore a preferred style or styles.
- We are learning to analyse the visual and tactile quality of materials.
- We are learning to develop an idea from a number of sources to create a personal design.

The teacher was aware of the importance of learning objectives in the development of self assessment and understood that pupils require clear targets against which they can measure their progression and attainment. To this end, the department developed ‘pupil friendly’ level statements against which pupils were able to measure their own achievement, as the examples below show.
Learning outcomes for this lesson were as follows (words in bold indicate key aspects for progression identified by the teacher).

- Level 5: You can discuss and describe the work and techniques of artists and designers and recognise how work is produced in different ways to meet different needs.
- Level 6: You can discuss, judge and describe the work and techniques of artists and designers and recognise how work is produced in different ways to meet different needs.
- Level 7: You can discuss, judge, describe and use the work and techniques of artists and designers and recognise how work is produced in different ways to meet different needs.

The teacher’s introduction to the lesson
The teacher made use of sketchbook investigations produced by a previous Year 9 class and encouraged her pupils to identify the strengths of the work, using key subject vocabulary to explore the techniques and approaches that were employed. Using the exemplar materials, she emphasised the key skills and outcomes she was looking for and matched the level descriptors to specific pieces of work. The session took place with the pupils sitting around a large table. They were encouraged to share their views on the work, i.e. how key features link to art and design level descriptors.

The main activity
The pupils were asked as individuals to review the work that they completed during their visit to the museum and to add further notes and drawings so they could communicate their answers to the following questions.

- Why did you choose a specific style or styles?
- How have you been influenced by work in different styles and from different cultures?
- Where have most of your ideas come from and how have you developed them?
- What would be the next stage in the development of your ideas and work? (To complete this task they were encouraged to look at the level descriptors displayed on the art room walls.)

During this exercise, the teaching assistant, as previously agreed with the teacher, supported the less-able pupils, focusing them on the key words that the teacher had introduced and discussing with them how the task had been completed in the exemplar materials on display.

Process exemplification, lessons 3, 4 and 5
Over a series of lessons pupils were seen by the teacher and asked to explain their responses to the four evaluation tasks that were set. She encouraged them to reflect on their work, asking open questions that focused on how they had developed their ideas. For example, the pupils were asked to review their use of techniques and media when representing different materials and
surfaces. The teacher reminded each pupil of the four learning objectives and used the ‘pupil friendly’ level statements as a means of measuring each pupil’s movement towards the learning goal. During the course of each conversation, she added value to their thinking with a conscious teaching strategy that was designed to close the gap between the learning target and their current state of knowledge.

Throughout the project, pupils were encouraged in class to develop their sketchbook work to support the evolution of their finished designs, and homework reviews were completed at regular intervals to support this activity (see subject development Task 5B).

**Evaluation**

The teacher evaluated the effectiveness of the unit, with particular reference to pupils’ use of techniques and materials. This exercise led to the identification of improvements to planning, which was then shared with the department through the pencilled annotation of documentation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for peer or self assessment</th>
<th>Key benefit(s)</th>
<th>Example of how and where it could be used in a lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 Encourage pupils to listen to pupils’ responses to questions and presentations made in class and to ask questions on points that they do not understand. | • Pupils think about what they have not understood  
• Pupils publicly acknowledge that they can, and want to, learn from each other  
• Promotes the idea of collaborative working – ‘many brains better than just one’  
• Can help establish ‘working together’ protocols | • Have whole-class discussion, making conjectures about comparison of data displayed in two pie charts. Pupils respond using whiteboards followed by episodes during which successive pupils add to or refute explanations.  
• Pupils research different alternative energy resources and make short presentations to the rest of the class about how each one works and its advantages and disadvantages. The teacher acts as chair and takes questions from the rest of the class, feeding them to an appropriate pupil on the presentation team. |
| 2 Use examples of work from anonymous pupils and ask their peers to suggest possible ways of improving the work and how they would meet the learning outcomes. | • Pupils see what success looks like and explicitly identify the features that make for a good piece of work  
• Helps moderate shared understanding of standards  
• Sets benchmarks for target setting | • Pupils are given some solutions to a problem and asked to evaluate the efficiency of the strategies chosen, to identify errors and make suggestions for improvement.  
• Pupils are given some background and results from a particular scientific enquiry and a set of results. Before writing their conclusion of the enquiry, pupils are shown examples written by other pupils and discuss which is the better conclusion and why.  
• The teacher uses a piece of work that is not perfect but is about the standard that the pupils might achieve. Pupils work in groups, using the criteria to agree the level. |
| 3 Ask pupils to use the expected outcome to comment on strengths of each other’s work and to identify areas for improvement. | • Pupils identify their own strengths and areas for development  
• Pupils are sometimes more receptive to constructive criticism from peers than from the teacher  
• Helps moderate shared understanding of standards | • The whole class evaluate and revise an anonymous written draft explanation interpreting the data given in a graph or chart. Pupils then work in pairs and fours to draft, evaluate and jointly revise similar explanations for other charts. |
| 4 Ask pupils to ‘mark’ each other’s work but without giving them the answers. Instead, ask them to find the correct answers from available resources. | • Helps pupils distinguish between learning objectives and learning outcomes (and how to ‘come up with the goods’)  
• Helps pupils recognise a range of alternative appropriate responses  
• Promotes research and independent learning | • Pupils share their conclusions to an enquiry and discuss what might improve each other’s work. |
### Strategies for peer or self assessment

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#### Example of how and where it could be used in a lesson

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5. Ask pupils to write their own questions on a topic to match the expected learning outcomes and provide them with mark schemes and a resource to check their answers. For homework, provide them with mark schemes and a resource to check their answers.

6. Ask pupils in groups to write five questions and, following whole-class discussion, identify the best two from each group (to generate 10–12 questions, e.g. for homework).

7. Ask pupils to mark each other’s work using the given mark schemes and devise their own assessment criteria for periodic tasks.

8. Ask pupils to decide whether they think an answer is reasonable, whether they can add to the answer, or whether they would have given another answer.

9. Encourage pupils to develop periodic assessment criteria for their particular work.

10. Ask pupils for their level of confidence with a particular piece of work.