

# Critical Thinking

Learning how to understand and make intelligent comments on a work of art or design is an important part of a visual education. The critique is a crucial component of the creative process. The maker presents his/her work and using the appropriate language discusses the intent, processes employed and result. The audience also using the appropriate language responds, asking questions, making observations, comments and suggestions on the presented work. A dialogue begins.

## Form, Subject and Content

Any artifact (a human creation) will have a form, subject and content.

**Form:** what it looks like. Think of the design elements of point, line, plane etc.

Materials used, structure and craft are also part of what we see.

**Subject:** what is represented, a shoe, a car, a chair, a person, an event.

**Content:** this is the why of the artifact, the emotional and intellectual message.

## Types of Critiques

**Objective:** deals with and addresses the form of the object

**Subjective:** deals with the content and subject of the object

**Descriptive:** a non-evaluative, non-conclusive careful description of the work,  
observing the visual organization and formal qualities

**Cause and Effect:** builds on the descriptive critique, discusses the consequences of the  
choices made

**Compare and Contrast:** similarities and differences between two works are noted

**Greatest strength / Unrealized Potential:** starts by pointing and commenting on the  
strength of the work, followed by a series of questions on how the  
work might be improved.

**Formative:** ongoing comments and discussion of what is being created and made

**Cumulative:** final discussion on what has been made and presented

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