

Using word cards to describe, interpret and compare artworks

- > **View** your first artwork
- > **Separate words** into two groups: those that fit in some way with the artwork, and those that don't. Words can be considered descriptive or interpretative, that is, 'dark' could refer to the tones or colours as well as the mood or themes
- > **Narrow down** the selection into your top three
- > **Justify and share your choices.** Did you interpret the chosen words in the same way as other people?
- > **Repeat** with a second artwork and compare and contrast between the two artworks
- > **Reflect:** What connections did you find between your descriptions of the artworks and any interpretations you made?

GENERAL SET 1 (BASIC)

| | | |
|------------|-------------|------------|
| gentle | simple | exciting |
| smooth | shiny | calm |
| floating | bumpy | dangerous |
| soft | hard | safe |
| repetitive | complicated | natural |
| structured | loose | free |
| fragile | powerful | weak |
| tense | rhythmic | futuristic |

GENERAL SET 2 (ADVANCED)

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| ordered | organic | mysterious |
| broken | bold | smooth |
| bright | monochromatic | minimal |
| intense | dark | overwhelming |
| gestural | flat | balanced |
| neutral | busy | warm |
| static | comforting | energetic |
| spontaneous | subdued | nurturing |

LINES

Words that can describe formal elements and can be used across a range of artworks (OBJECT):

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| continuous | layered | geometric |
| etched | random | free |
| transparent | delicate | strong |
| chaotic | spontaneous | solid |
| flowing | rigid | scratched |
| rough | bold | organic |
| curved | splattered | thick |
| broken | organised | smooth |

COMPOSITION AND SEQUENCE

| | | |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| balanced | looped | free |
| circular | separate | upright |
| spiralling | spacious | linear |
| cluttered | fragmented | harmonious |
| asymmetrical | focused | overlapping |
| confined | chaotic | rigid |
| rhythmic | recessive | flowing |
| horizontal | empty | adjacent |

COLOUR AND TONE

| | | |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| bold | cool | harmonious |
| bright | deep | loud |
| clean | flamboyant | mellow |
| sombre | vibrant | vivid |
| earthy | contrasting | flowing |
| subtle | warm | dark |
| dramatic | light | intense |
| muted | pure | rich |

TEXTURE AND FORM (good for analysing sculptural works)

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------|
| rough | smooth | hollow |
| convex | silky | coarse |
| sleek | firm | flat |
| unsteady | woven | greasy |
| gritty | embossed | velvety |
| angular | engraved | firm |
| polished | corrugated | solid |
| blistered | multi-axial | concave |

PHOTOGRAPHIC

| | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------------|
| shallow | crisp | recessive |
| contrast | reality | evocative |
| candid | mysterious | monochromatic |
| artificial | glow | cropped |
| contemplative | intimate | confrontational |
| macro | rich | still |
| blurred | staged | nostalgic |
| wide angle | glossy | vignette |

Different focuses or themes in artworks (SUBJECT, CONTEXT):

LANDSCAPES

| | | |
|------------|-------------|--------------|
| dark | loud | violent |
| bright | warm | mysterious |
| dull | cool | restrained |
| faded | blustery | agitated |
| stormy | wild | exhilarating |
| exciting | still | relaxing |
| calm | frightening | suggestive |
| harmonious | tranquil | isolated |

SOCIAL/POLITICAL THEMES IN ARTWORK

| | | |
|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| energetic | organic | spontaneous |
| utopia | passive | bold |
| rough | smooth | alienation |
| confrontational | light | busy |
| sensitive | intense | overwhelming |
| dark | flat | content |
| deep | ordered | gestural |
| broken | warm | dystopia |
| free | balanced | peaceful |

PORTRAITURE AND IDENTITY

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| calm | weak | powerful |
| thoughtful | confident | spiritual |
| knowledgeable | reserved | proud |
| aggressive | gentle | energetic |
| isolated | intense | ordered |
| chaotic | rigid | connected |
| rich | laboured | harmonious |
| bold | natural | constructed |