

Q&A

with Sara Dobrenov, student and Julie Seidel, teacher
St Peters Lutheran College, Indooroopilly

Visual Art, Internal assessment 1: Investigation — inquiry phase 1 and
Internal assessment 2: Project — inquiry phase 2

Sara Dobrenov, student

Q: What did you enjoy most about Visual Art?

A: I enjoyed the creative freedom to explore different concepts and ideas while seeing them come to life. Visual Art enables exploration of unconventional materials and reshapes the way people can see the world.

Q: How did you prepare for this assessment task?

A: I was inspired by the 2019 NSW bushfires and the numerous stimulus reference photographs I took over the Christmas break. I witnessed the destruction, changes and regrowth in the environment. By experimenting with a range of different materials and techniques, I was able to explore different ways to communicate my inquiry question about flux in the natural world with the viewer.

Q: How did your teacher prepare you for this assessment?

A: Our Visual Art classes went to a rural location for two nights and worked with a practising artist. Concepts were shared, and collaboration was encouraged among class members, which resulted in experimental and innovative thinking. Researching artists' work, both past and present, informed my artworks.

Q: What made you choose the topic or method of presentation?

A: Flux is all encompassing throughout different environments. The environment is ever changing and never still; I found this intriguing and meaningful. I have always had an affiliation with water and its constantly changing state. This affiliation led me to investigate the extremes: flood, fire and drought.

By using metaphors and symbolic elements in my work, different connections can be made. The panels are layered and can be viewed from both sides. The backlighting encourages the viewer to inspect the voids as well as the marks.

Q: What are your thoughts about this assessment and the approach you took when responding to the task?

A: I am proud of the quality of finish and the display of my work. My body of work was connected; however, each artwork is able to stand alone. The fragility of the material was a struggle at times; however, this added to the focus of flux and the metaphor of the resolved artwork.

Q: How will you use what you have learnt in this subject?

A: Creative problem-solving skills are used in everyday life. Visual Art developed and refined my ways of thinking: alternate ways of doing things, expressing ideas and finding solutions.

Julie Seidel, teacher

Q: What was the purpose of this assessment and what key decisions were made in the design of the task?

A: The initial stimulus for this assessment was the personal experience and sensory reaction felt while at 'Ironbark', a rural location near Crows Nest.

Q: How did your teaching and the student learning experiences prepare the students to complete this assessment?

A: A stimulus experience was undertaken towards the end of Year 11, when the class stayed for a weekend at a rural location near Crows Nest. This rural location gave students individual pathways to explore, such as contrasts between the city and bush, farm life, change in pace, patterns in nature, personal memories, and fears and phobias.

Students participated in a variety of workshop experiences, including with a visiting artist, to broaden their learning and experimentation with media and concepts in different contexts.

A variety of approaches and contemporary artists and artworks were discussed in class. The different contexts were analysed through a variety of artists/artworks. Students were encouraged to explore and experiment with different media, materials and techniques to develop their understanding of the visual language.

Q: How does this assessment reflect the unique characteristics of your school and your students?

A: As a large city school, experiencing the stimulus of the rural environment and a working farm is a new experience for many students. Most of the students had been to 'Ironbark' in Year 9 for a period of five weeks, and this brought back memories of this extended time away from family. We are also a boarding school, so a few of the boarders felt at home in these surroundings. Our school also has international students, and these students had never been to any rural part of Australia, so it was their first experience with the landscape, swags and rural life. There was something for everyone to experience that was personal.

Q: Can you explain the exemplary aspects of Sara's response?

A: Sara's work demonstrates an individualised practice, advanced and refined methods, and the justification of an independent viewpoint. Both IA1 and IA2 show an individual approach to develop and inform an investigation of their inquiry question: How do artists respond to the state of flux in the natural world?

Extensive exploration of materials, techniques, processes and modes of display shows creative approaches to making, and enables the expression of complex meaning through the artworks.