



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2014 Volume IV: Eloquence

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## **Articulations: Crafting Credible Discourse on Art, Aesthetics, and Design**

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In this unit students will learn how to craft credible oral and written discussions of their theoretical interpretations of works of visual art. Writing critically about art has always been of particular intrigue within the content of visual arts curriculum in attending to essential standards for critical response. Class activities in this unit build on the sequence of the four-step art critical method-Description, Analysis, Interpretation, and Judgment-with the goal of understanding its objective operations as well as its implicitly rhetorical structures. Students will work collaboratively to grow skills in reading visual texts closely identifying organizational principles as well as cogent components that attempt to convey significance. Students will advance their examinations of established artworks within analytical frameworks and apply aesthetic theories as they explore a variety of solutions to interpretation.

Students will present rhetorical arguments for their interpretations employing strategies for public speaking that persuade their listeners to consider works of art from new perspectives. In a corresponding studio art project students will create rhetorical self-portraits. Through these varied approaches to rhetoric students will grow in appreciation of works of art as powerful communicators of ideas across time and culture. They will recognize the democratizing effects of credible interpretations of works of art and how eloquent public speaking can be a source of personal empowerment.

(Developed for Visual Art, Intermediate, grade 10; and International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program, Visual Art, Year 5, grade 10; recommended for Visual Art, Intermediate/Art II, and English Language Arts, grades 9-10)

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