

Y7 Exam

Preparation guide

You have been given an exam timetable. You must read and revise this before the exam.

You will be assessed on your ability to draw creatively, imaginatively, and skilfully. You must take an existing image and change it in a **personal** and **creative** way. You are being assessed on your ability to mix different images and themes into a new creative and unique drawing.

This year you must look at the work of Yayoi Kusama and how she uses **pattern and shape**. During the exam you will be expected to recall how she uses patterns and incorporate elements of this into your own creation along with the image you have chosen.

You will not be able to see the work of Yayoi Kusama during the exam, when answering questions, or when creating artwork in their style, so you must research images of their work as well as reading the accompanying information.

The Homework projects that you have worked on have prepared you for this mixing of artist and theme, when creating an original outcome.



You will also be assessed on your knowledge of Yayoi Kusama. You **must** research and look closely at the artist's work in order to answer multiple choice questions about their work. These questions will assess your visual knowledge and understanding of her work, as well as testing your recall of key facts.

Below, we have provided some information that you will also need to read before the exam. The answers to some of the exam questions will be found in this information.

Polka dots are Yayoi Kusama's calling card and the artist claims that her iconic style first originated in a hallucination that she experienced as a child.

A quote by Kusama:

"One day I was looking at the red flower patterns of the tablecloth on a table, and when I looked up I saw the same pattern covering the ceiling, the windows and the walls, and finally all over the room, my body and the universe," she explained.

Pumpkins are a major motif in Kusama's oeuvre, and the vegetable holds personal significance for the artist. The Kusama family grew fields of the squash at their family home and relied on the produce to get them through the Second World War.

Over the years the artist has painted them, created sculptures and even immersive pumpkins that the viewer can step inside.

Speaking of her interest in the iconography of the vegetable, Kusama said, "I was enchanted by their charming and winsome form. What appealed to me most was the pumpkin's generous unpretentiousness. That and its solid spiritual balance."

The record for a sale of Kusama's work is \$7,109,000, which was paid for her piece, White No. 28, an early work in her "Infinity Nets" series. This makes her the most expensive living woman artist.

Through her own preference, Yayoi Kusama has resided in a Japanese asylum since the Seventies where she receives treatment for her mental health problems.

Despite living in the Tokyo hospital full time, she remains a prolific artist and maintains a studio nearby where she can work on her paintings, sculptures and large-scale installations.

Speaking about her mental health, Kusama has said, "I fight pain, anxiety, and fear every day, and the only method I have found that relieves my illness is to keep creating art. I followed the thread of art and somehow discovered a path that would allow me to live."

To help you prepare, the KS3 exam will have an observational drawing task to complete before. This task will be to draw and copy the image as accurately as possible. This will help you by teaching you to think about the image that you are going to develop by looking carefully at the shapes and shading that make it up. This also gives you plenty of opportunity to think about what theme you want to combine and mix with the original image.

During the observational drawing preparation time, students will be expected to look at the image and copy it to the best of their ability, adding tonal shading, mark making and texture where appropriate. Students may use the grid method, and this will be explained and demonstrated in the lesson.

The grid method is a technique where students draw a grid over an image and then another grid over a blank rectangle or sheet. Students can then break the image into smaller sections, and this can help them keep the image in proportion.

The exam task enables us to assess students' ability to respond to the work of an artist, refine and experiment with themes, record images and create personal outcomes.