

KS4 Fine Art – Key Word Definitions (In addition to KS3 Words)

Key Word	Definition
Acrylic	Thicker and stronger than tempera or watercolour paint, Acrylic is a water-based "plastic" paint.
Basic colour principles	All colour theory is based on the principle that 'colour is light'. An object that we see as red contains pigmentation which absorbs all of the coloured rays of white light except the red colour, which it reflects. White pigment absorbs none of the coloured rays, and black absorbs all of the colours of the spectrum.
Balance	An art and design principle concerned with the arrangement of one or more elements in a work of art so that they appear symmetrical (even) or asymmetrical (uneven) in design and proportion.
Batik	Paraffin or beeswax is used to resist paint or dye on fabric or paper. Designs and patterns are produced on the non-waxed areas.
Black	The complete absence of light. Because of impurities, you cannot create black with pigments. In most black pigments, there is a slight blue trace. A black surface absorbs all light.
Canvas	Fabrics that are prepared for painting. Available in panels, stretched on frames, or obtained by the yard.
Collage	Collage is from the French meaning "paste up". The combination of pieces of cloth, magazines and other found objects to create artwork.
Collograph	This name is derived from the word 'collage'. It is an image built up with glue and other materials.
Colour	When light is reflected off an object, colour is what the eye sees. The primary colours are red, yellow and blue. The secondary colours are orange, purple and green.
Complementary Colours	Complementary colours are those which appear opposite to one another on a colour wheel. The complimentary colours are red and green, blue and orange, and yellow and purple.
Contrast	Contrast is created by using opposites near or beside one another, such as a light object next to a dark object or a rough texture next to a smooth texture.
Dominance	Dominance is an object or colour that stands out in relation to the rest of the painting.
Fixative Spray	For fixing charcoal drawing on canvas before painting. Fixative spray is available in spray cans, or for use with mouth atomizer
Highlight	Small areas on a painting or drawing on which reflected light is the brightest.
Hue	Hue is another word for colour. The attribute which describes colours by name, i.e. red, blue, yellow etc.
Impressionism	Impressionism is referred to as the most important art movement of the 19th century. The term impressionism came from a painting by Claude Monet. His painting was titled Impression Sunrise. Impressionism is about capturing fast fleeting moments with colour, light, and surface.
Intensity	This term is used to describe the brightness, or the dullness of a colour.
Intermediate colours (tertiary)	Obtained by mixing adjoining Primary and Secondary colours.

Line	A line is an identifiable path of a point moving in space. It can vary in width, direction and length.
Medium	The art material that is used in a work of art such as clay, paint or pencil. Describing more than one art medium is referred to as media. Any substance added to colour to facilitate application or to achieve a desired effect.
Monoprint	A print that has the same underlying common image, but different design, colour or texture.
Organic	Shapes that are not regular or even, using a combination of edges that are curved or angular.
Pastel	Colours go from soft to brilliant in a stick form. When the paper is covered completely, it is known as a pastel painting. When the paper is exposed through the pastel, it is known as a pastel sketch.
Perspective	Perspective creates the feeling of depth through the use of lines that make your image appear to be three dimensional. The closer the image is, the more detailed it will appear, and the larger it will be.
Plaster	When mixed with water, this powder will harden into a chalk-like solid used to create sculptures, and other forms of artwork.
Repetition	Repetition is created when objects, shapes, space, light, direction, lines etc. are repeated in artwork.
Rhythm	When the regular repetition of particular forms or elements occurs in a work of art, that work is said to have rhythm. It suggests motion.
Secondary colours	Orange, Violet, Green. Each colour is midway between the Primaries from which it can be mixed.
Shape	Shapes can be in the form of squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, and ovals.
Shade	Using a mixture of black mixed with a colour to make it darker. The opposite of shade is tint.
Stencil	The process in which an area is cut out of paper, or material such as cardboard to enable paint or ink to be applied to a piece of paper, or canvas through the cut-out.
Symbol	A symbol is a picture or image that tells a story of what it is without using words.
Symmetry	Symmetry is when one side of something balances out the other side.
Tertiary colours	Colours that represent a mixture of secondary colours.
Texture	Texture creates the feeling of an object.
Unity	A feeling of completeness is created by the use of elements in the artwork.
Tint	Tint is the opposite of shade. Tinting is combining white with a colour to make it lighter.
Value	Shadows, darkness, contrasts and light are all values in artwork.
Wash	A highly fluid application of colour.
Watercolour	A translucent, water-based paint that comes in cake or tube form