

CREATE! Adapting the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy to Studio Art and Creative Practice



The research and corresponding library instruction that supports studio art coursework and artistic practice often looks different from the methods used to conduct scholarship in other disciplines. The Framework for Information Literacy, with its emphasis on knowledge practices and dispositions, resonates with art librarians because it provides much more flexibility for discipline-specific applications across a broad array of institutions than the previous Standards.



Four teaching librarians identified concepts that illuminate research practices in studio art and design disciplines and developed the memorable mnemonic device CREATE (Conversation, Revision, Exploration, Authority, Thoughtful, Experiential) to draw parallels between the research process and the creative process. CREATE can be used to introduce, reinforce, and enhance information literacy for learners in the arts. In keeping with the ethos of the Framework, CREATE is meant to be flexible in its application; it is not prescriptive and does not provide a "how-to" guide for working with art students. Instead, its concepts (and the Framework concepts) can help to contextualize information literacy within the discipline and to cultivate new knowledge practices and learning activities that are tied to the specific curricula and goals of individual art and design programs or institutions. So, what is CREATE?

CONVERSATION

Making art is an expression of new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations. By providing attribution to relevant previous research, you not only participate in the conversation, but help move it forward. Your work is a way for you to enter this ongoing conversation and contribute to the discourse or build on the work of others. It is important to recognize the contributions of other thinkers in order to contextualize your work and place it in relation to the larger context of art history, ideology, and social communities.

REVISION

Artists create, go through critique, research, and revise their work in order to develop images and formats that most accurately represent their vision. Similarly, information creation is a process that requires mental flexibility to research, create, revise, and disseminate information. Just as the development of your work is an iterative process, so too is the research process as you will ask increasingly complex or new questions that lead you to different lines of inquiry.

EXPLORATION

Creative research is a non-linear process in which one identifies a need and seeks the best resource to meet that need. Like inspiration, quality information can often be found where it's least expected, through serendipitous means, and through a very intentional, strategic approach. It's important for one to cultivate mental flexibility in their learning process as well as their art practice and observe how one informs the other. Considering a range of resources to begin any creative endeavor furthers the process of exploring, interpreting, and analyzing all types of relevant media which in turn will guide you through this iterative phase of learning.

Bibliography:

ACRL Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education | Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL). (2011). Retrieved April 9, 2016, from <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/visualliteracy>

Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education | Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL). (2015). Retrieved April 9, 2016, from <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/iframework>

LeBlanc, R. E., & Quintiliano, B. (2015). Recycling C.R.A.P.: Reframing a Popular Research Mnemonic for Library Instruction. *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice*, 3(2), 115-121. <https://doi.org/10.5195/palrap.2015.105>

Meeks, A. (2015). Alignment Charts for ACRL Information Literacy Framework, Information Literacy Standards, and Visual Literacy Standards. Retrieved December 22, 2016, from https://docs.google.com/document/d/1w3AX1-XRYBla6gxxoTFSoLY9cp3pr4yD85ON0-qlq34/edit?usp=drive_web&usp=embed_facebook



AUTHORITY

Your work, be it visual or printed, formal or informal, reflects your expertise and credibility. While you are the authority on your own creative work, it is shaped by the context in which work is presented or used. Additionally, there are many different types of authority to acknowledge and grapple with, including professional experience, subject expertise, and public office. When incorporating others' work, for inspiration or as a resource, it is important to critically consider and evaluate the authority of those creators and their contributions to your field or discipline.

THOUGHTFUL

Continually asking increasingly complex or new questions can inspire future lines of inquiry for creative work. To further enrich your work, strive to consider every possible solution and angle one can approach a creative project from. It is important to brainstorm ideas that are both possible and impossible, as well as challenge any of your own or others' assumptions or bias that may arise in this process. Self-reflection and the critical evaluation of ideas will help you synthesize what you have learned to deepen your understanding, interpret meaning in your work and others', and help you create informed artwork and design solutions.

EXPERIENTIAL

Whether processing past experiences or exploring new avenues of inquiry, the work is an expression of one's own observations and understandings. While a "traditional" research process can lead to inspiration and focus, all of the materials experimentation, sketches, false starts, and iterations are a kind of tactile/haptic research and are an important part of the creation of a piece. These experiences are affected by the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of the artist and it is their synthesis that produces the work.

Contributors:

Amanda Meeks
Northern Arizona University

Ashley Peterson
School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University

Larissa K. Garcia
Northern Illinois University

Alyssa Vincent
Northeastern Illinois University

Presented at Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)
March 22-25, 2017
Baltimore, MD