

# CONCENTRATION THEME

Spend a good amount of time developing your Concentration theme. You will be working on it for a while and will create 12 works of art.

## TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONCENTRATION

1. It is not enough to focus on a subject (trees) or a medium (charcoal). If trees, why trees? Is it about growth? Negative space in nature? Protective canopies? Strength and endurance? Branch and leaf structures? The “design” of a forest in compositional relationships? Look at Mondrian, van Ruisdael, Courbet, van Gogh and Fairfield Porter.
2. Your exploration should go deeper than merely taking a subject and executing it in a variety of media or styles. Example: Apples rendered in watercolor, stipple, crosshatch, cubism, fauvism and surrealism.
3. Ideally you should develop a visual language that fits your idea, a style and medium and format appropriate to the theme you are investigating.
4. A concentration can be a series of works that are very consistent in theme and approach OR it may evolve and develop as the visual idea is explored, ending in a different place than where it began. In either case it is best to start out with a clear plan of attack; if the idea changes, the change will usually be the natural result of discoveries made in the process of exploration.
5. Do not choose to work in a medium in which you have absolutely no experience. This is not the time to try something completely new. The point of the concentration is to work in depth. This can usually be best achieved in a medium in which you are already familiar. You are developing concept, not technique.
6. Research artists who have worked in styles similar to your own direction or with similar subject matter. Do not rely totally on yourself for inspiration. Look at historical masters, contemporary artists, the world around you and your peers to cross-pollinate your own ideas.
7. If you choose to work in an area rich in cliché or teenage stereotypes your work must be very original. It is strongly recommended that you avoid topics such as blood dripping, skulls, large eyes, hearts, fairies, vampires, emotion through eyes, your girlfriend/boyfriend, sunsets, rainbows & clouds, or sad clowns.
8. ALL images must adhere to copyright laws. By using original imagery or drawing from life you will avoid any issues.
9. Themes such as “my feelings and emotions”, “nature” or “flowers” are much too broad for a concentration. Even the more common concentration themes such as portraits or still life need a specific focus. Still lifes that tell a story or emphasize a certain interest in composition or design will be more successful. If the concentration is “portraits”, you should consider things like format, intent, point of view, lighting, style and expressiveness.
10. Visit the College Board Website. READ the Concentration Statements and then look at the artwork. Really LOOK at how the artwork is connected and the artist developed the idea.

- Pattern & Actual Texture
- Repeat Serial Forms
- Scale in Landscape – Extreme Depth
- Light Sources
- Organic Repeated Form
- Layers & Meaning – Hung Liu
- Found Object Incorporation – Rauschenberg
- Surface Pattern Textile Design
- Symbolic Narratives
- Landscapes – Macro
- Figures in Space
- Birds
- Holidays
- Furniture as Art
- Movement & Light
- Light Source & Color – Monet
- Point of View
- Children in Motion
- Color in the City – Abstraction
- Quiet Landscapes
- City through the senses
- Self-Portraits
- Reflection of Light on People/Things
- Abstracting Symbolism
- Addressing time effects on an Object
- Develop recurring motif
- Motion effects of Wind – Make it Visible
- Sent Messages
- Nests
- Buckles & Clasps
- Contents of Purses/ Backpacks
- Abstracting Landscapes – Diebenkorn
- Construction Machinery
- Parks & Playgrounds
- Personal Spaces
- Closets
- Shoes
- After Dinner
- Refuge
- Out
- Power Over
- Quiet
- Multiples
- Grocery Store
- Restaurant
- Cooking
- Dishes
- Manifest Destiny
- Transition
- Recession
- Climbing Out
- Waiting
- Pathways
- Travel
- Instruments in Life
- Jazz – Bearden, Picasso, Saunders
- Effect of Light & Motion in Urban Settings
- Urban Decay
- Macro vs. Micro
- Color/Texture Triptychs
- Sign Posts
- Shorelines
- Fault Lines
- Farmer’s Market
- Reflections in Water or Metal
- Lamps as Family Groupings
- Book Cover Designs
- Effects of Placement of horizon line on ordinary objects
- Side view Landscapes
- Abstracted shape with detail
- Silhouettes
- Object as Chair
- Costume Design
- Set Design
- Vertical Spatial Composition
- Figure/Ground Relationships
- Make a Zine
- Graphic Novel – Maus, The Visitor
- Resting Places
- Childhood Fears
- Exaggerated Portraits
- Working with Hands
- Nature in Urban Landscape

- Fly Fishing
- Kayaking
- Swimming
- Family Traditions
- Color Theory Exploration
- Figures in Costume – Narrative
- Dramatic Weather Landscapes
- Environmental Impact
- Modern Portraits as Ukiyo-e
- Musical Instruments
- Bicycles
- Life of a Raindrop
- Glory of Food
- Stuff that Happens to Me
- Chrome, Reflection
- Busy Bodies – Stretch & Motion
- Animals
- Bananas or Fruit
- Seasons
- Contours
- Mirrors
- Openings
- Peeling
- Inside my Shoes
- Watches
- Rusty Machinery
- Tricycles
- Hats
- Storms
- Wings
- Barriers
- Crustaceans
- Restrictions
- Staplers
- Typewriters
- Eggs
- Boxes
- Fences
- Containers
- Package/Industrial Design
- Gum
- Kites
- Wheat Fields
- Windows
- Coverings
- Power Tools
- Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner
- Comfort Food
- Vegetables
- Mosquitos
- Nets
- Corners
- Fishing Lures
- Things that Unravel
- Ribbons
- Glasses
- Horses
- Cowboys
- Currency Design
- Kitchen
- Stove
- Fusion
- Marbles
- Boats
- Within the Jar
- Woven
- Zippers
- Buttons
- Work
- Turtles
- Teeth
- Nuts & Bolts
- Roots
- Bridges
- Ripples & Waves
- Cocoons & Life Cycle
- Shattered
- Out of Focus/ In Focus
- Pockets
- Inside of Fruit/Nuts/Vegetables
- Ropes
- By the Waterfront
- Soda Can
- Wrapped Food
- Geography/Topography
- Dark Alleys/Hallways
- Fish
- Underwater

- Sounds
- Luggage
- Tea/Coffee
- Divers
- Feathers
- Drop
- Easels
- Ladders
- Piles
- Forgotten Things
- Combinations
- Feet
- Holes
- Morning
- Endangered Species
- Garbage
- Oxymorons
- Maps
- Weights
- Snakes
- Tunnels
- Numbers
- Cracks
- Hairdryers
- Races/Jumps
- Pieces
- Things in my Car
- Things in my Refrigerator
- Balloons
- Rocks
- Crumpling
- Screw on Lids
- Tupperware
- Inside Out
- Altered Book
- Closure
- Gloves
- Wheels
- Sit
- Interior Spaces
- Exterior Spaces
- Illness & Injury
- Interior as Contour Line
- Roller Coaster
- Skateboards
- Fortune Cookies
- Program & Poster Design
- Image & Text Incorporated
- Illustrate a Poem
- Groups of People
- Cancer/Disease
- Abandonment
- Chores around the House
- Tea Party or Dinner Party
- Daily Rituals
- My Life in Small Moments
- Tree Forms, Structure
- Abstracted Figure
- Chairs as Portraits
- Personal Totems
- Dreams Personified
- Uncommon/Unusual
- The Mannequin
- Close-ups of Old Cars
- Enlarge to Abstraction
- Unrelated Imagery – Rosenquist
- Butterflies
- Insects
- Inside Looking Out
- Design in Nature
- Triptych Devotional Paintings
- Architectural Renderings showing (exploring) the interior and exterior space with a strong focus on light, perspective and structure
- Exploration using realistic and non-objective animals (stipple technique...a series of black and white ink drawings moving into color)
- Process piece showing the making and baking of a cake
- “The Wedding” from the engagement ring to the sealing kiss
- “The Attic” the childhood experiences
- An exploration of design textures related to nature – Art Nouveau

- Landscapes based on childhood experiences
- Portraits and the human form
- Pistolero Poses (gun fighters)
- Toilets and water closets
- Monkeys or Primates
- Junk yard still life
- Tomatos from seed to fruit
- Tennis shoes, boots
- Figures with striped clothing
- Fantasy characters – gargoyles, fairies, dragons, etc. – convincingly rendered
- Low riders
- Circus life
- My ancestry
- Crime and punishment
- Things that come in pairs
- The movie experience
- Foreshortened figures and objects
- Portraits
- Subject showing progression through historical references from a variety of artists
- Women in feminine roles
- “Exhaustion”
- “Seven Deadly Sins”
- “Things That Make Me Smile”
- Cartoon character through animation cells
- Architectural viewpoints that are unusual. Architectural forms that are unusual.
- Historical events
- Reflections of images wherein the reflections are an emotional exploration (of literal reflections)
- Instruments that make music
- Generations of my family
- Icons within our society
- Strength of Women
- Dreams and Dream Images – Chagall
- Dance Images – Degas
- The Infinite – M.C. Escher
- Emerging Images of Tiger in my Culture – Melissa Miller, Hokusai
- Struggle to Find One’s Self – Dali, Picasso
- Home
- Figure Studies in Strong Lights/Darks
- Car Interiors
- Abstract Portraits
- Unconventional Angels
- Architectural Drawings from a Different Point of View
- A Particular Style of Art
- An Object or Product Drawn in a Succession of Locations and/or Styles
- Illustrate a Classical Character or Story in a New or Modern Way
- Childhood Memories
- Toys/Games
- Visions of the Future
- Evolution of an item as it Deteriorates or Decomposes
- Time Lapse of a Person, Place or Thing
- Deconstruction of Still life, Subject or Portrait
- Families/Couples – Alice Neal
- Transformations – Dali, Magritte
- Bizarre Interior Spaces/Perspectives
- Appliances – Warhol, Oldenberg
- Tools or Utensils – Dine, Warhol
- Furniture
- Portrait/Figure Distortions in Color/Shapes – Ed Paschke
- Family Celebrations – Carmen Lomas Garza
- Figures in Motion or at Rest from Extreme Perspective – Bird’s or Ant’s View
- Common Objects that Investigate Social Issues
- Architectural Landscapes w/ Morphing Shadows – deChirico

- Figure Drawing – Contour, Gesture, Portrait
- Architecture from Unusual Viewpoints – Cropped Closely, Bird’s or Ant’s View
- Abstracted Objects
- Mechanical Elements
- Organic Objects Drawn w/ Mechanical Analysis
- Personal or Social Issues
- Object Emerging from a Bag – Escape/Cultural Bags/Social Commentary
- Illustrate a Descriptive Work – Livid, Scrumptious – Munch, Bacon
- People Morphing into Objects Integral to their Lives – Ken Veith, Steve Desteve
- People Morphing into Objects that have become Obsolete
- Illustrate Folklore Landscapes or Real Areas
- Abstraction Dealing with Light & Liquid – Pfaff, Baldessare
- Minimalist Images of Architecture Focusing on Light & Shadow
- Influential Women – Alice Neel, Lucien Freud
- Same Thing Over Time w/ Different Light
- Geometric forms into Organic
- Organic forms into Geometric
- Animal Bones
- Skeletal Structure
- Social Issues
- Desert Landscape
- Visual Puns – Magritte
- CD Jackets
- The Human Form Within Nature
- Travel
- The Graphic Self
- The Cinematography of Fellini
- Hunger
- Family Relationships
- Urban Symbols
- Suburban Interpretations
- “My Cultural Icons”
- Fears
- “The Power of Words”
- People That Have Influenced My Life
- Organic Abstractions in Mixed Media
- Illustration of Bible Stories with References
- Canterbury Tales in Anime
- Electronic self-portraits and figures from realism to abstraction
- Black and white photographs of buildings interiors and exteriors
- Toys and the idea of what a toy is to different people and age groups
- Japanese patterning (Japanese student)
- American quilt patterns – Gee’s Bend, Faith Ringold
- Signage
- Doors
- Exterior Design
- Clothing
- Mechanical Illustration
- Transportation - trains, planes, autos
- Pattern in Nature
- Distortion
- Radial Composition
- Melting
- Logos
- Media Package
- Illustration of a Fairy Tale
- Invent a Toy
- Calendar w/ a Theme
- Page Layout
- Life Cycles
- Portraits as Pattern – Klimt
- Food
- Historical Events
- Analytical Sketchbook – daVinci
- Automotive Design
- Asymmetrical Composition

- Culture in the Classroom
- Community in the Lesson
- Second Languages
- Personal History
- Who Are We?
- Bicultural Ideals
- Notions of the Ideal
- Unity through Proximity
- Scale: Human Referencing
- Transnational Identity
- Color as Emphasis
- Family Ideals and/or Realizations
- The Multicultural Family
- The TV Family
- Color as Emotion
- Generational Attitudes
- Multigenerational Culture Differences
- Color as Balance
- Value as Space
- What is a Family?
- Emphasis through Value
- Emphasis through Place
- Contextual Placement
- Repetition as Unity
- Horizontal/Vertical Balance
- Balance Using Pattern
- Space as Balance
- What is Personal Balance?
- Textural Balance
- Radial Balance
- Progressive Rhythm
- Rhythm as Motion
- Alternating Rhythm
- Lines Defining Contour
- Direction through Line
- Value as Line
- Epidemics: Past & Present
- Natural/Distorted Realities
- The Natural vs. Ideal
- Imagining War
- Communities & War
- Women & War
- Men & War
- Children & War
- Impact of War
- Social Ideals
- Abstracted Shapes
- NonObjective as Real
- Rectilinear/Curvilinear
- A Positive or Negative Shape
- Trompe L'oeil in Life as a Metaphor
- Tactile Textures
- Aerial Space
- My Space/Perspective
- Amplified Perspective
- Emphasized Foreground
- Memorializing
- Designing Memorials
- Ofrendas & Altars
- What is Enemy?
- What is Empowerment?
- Representing War
- Representing Community
- Representing Family
- Psychological Color
- Timeline as Design
- Skin and Structure
- Contradicting a Form
- Activated Surroundings
- Light as Medium
- White on White
- Growth/Decay
- Arbitrary/Symbolic Color
- Framing Audience
- Foreshortening as Metaphor
- Place as Metaphor
- Erasing
- Advertising Campaign
- Power of the Word
- Personal Relationships
- Making an Object Speak
- Trees – Growth/Fertility/Structure – Mondrian
- Figure Distortion – Schiele
- Boxes
- Portraits with Text
- Anatomy

- Botanical Studies
- Transportation
- Artist's Book
- Water in Vessels
- The Artist at Work
- Tape
- Bowling
- Golf
- Pens & Pencils
- Tall Stacks of Objects
- Electronic Interiors
- The Artist's Tools
- Compositional Studies
- File Cabinet Abstractions
- Shape vs. Form
- Abstraction
- Cubism

Once you have chosen your Concentration topic, it is time to start planning and working.

#### THINGS TO CONSIDER:

1. You will need to create 12 cohesive pieces.
2. A theme does not mean that they all look the same.
3. Show a full range of contrast.
4. Point of View – An interesting point of view can have a powerful impact
5. Have unique compositions:
  - a. Asymmetry is better than Symmetry
  - b. Create movement that leads to your area of emphasis/interest
  - c. The eye likes thirds
  - d. Diagonals are more exciting than horizontal or vertical lines
  - e. Avoid a central composition – A bull's eye does not move the viewer's eye
  - f. Consider both positive and negative space as well as background
6. Work with references:
  - a. Best – Observation from life
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Best – Combine 3 photographs to create a unique composition OR use an image from a shot that you set up.
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Best – Enlarge a small section from a photograph
  - d. NEVER – Copy an existing photograph that you did not take.
7. The work should be no larger than 18"x24". If it is larger than those dimensions, it may not be sent in as a Quality work.

#### IN YOUR SKETCHBOOK:

1. BRAINSTORM A LIST OF:
  - a. 10 activities that interest you
  - b. 10 objects that interest you
  - c. 5 artists that you like – what do you like about their work that you would like to bring to your own work
  - d. Your favorite 5 artworks (identify with artist)
  - e. Elements of Art that interest you
  - f. 10 images that interest you – there doesn't need to be a reason they interest you