

HELLO ART CLASS,

As we adjust to this uncertain and unprecedented time, I wanted to take a minute to check in on you and give you an idea of what to expect next week, as well as in the weeks to come if we continue to have school closures.

First, and most importantly, I hope all of you are well and **taking care of yourselves**. If nothing else, I hope you are taking this time to get caught up on much needed rest.

As far as art my plan moving forward is to have you create a **daily illustrated journal/sketchbook**. For examples of what an illustrated journal might look like you can google illustrated journal and I will have examples posted in the materials section of our google classroom.

This journal will give you the chance to **reflect**, in writing as well as in doodles and drawings, your thoughts and feelings. Often in high school art we focus on the “how-to” of art. We spend a lot of time understanding, learning and mastering the process and the techniques used to create (ie: ways to apply acrylic paint, how to sculpt clay, techniques in watercolor).

Just as important in art is finding ways to express your innermost thoughts, feelings and impressions; the “what-for” and “how-come” of art. In fact, this really gets to the heart of what art is the **outward expression of our inner-worlds**. In high school art, we sometimes bypass that due to time constraints. But now, we are going to get the opportunity to really examine what art means to us and what it is inside of us that we really want to express it will be unique and different for each of us.

Each day you will be given a prompt in order to help bring some of your ideas to the surface. Sometimes it will be a question, sometimes you might be asked to view a short video or reading and respond, sometimes you will be asked to look at other art work or the world around and reflect. I will try to change it up as much as possible and keep it interesting. Where you go with the prompts is up to you. And, in a way, that might be the coolest thing that happens from these journals you get to decide how much you get out of it and make it meaningful; I see it as an opportunity for you to grown and understand yourself better. *It is up to you to grab that opportunity.*

As far as **materials**, you will minimally need a pencil, a way to sharpen that pencil and enough paper to get you through until the closures have lifted. If you also want to use colored pencils, crayons, markers, watercolors, pastels or collage or any 2-D medium that is welcome and would certainly add to your journal. I also understand that a number of you will not have access to those materials. Maybe not even a pencil and enough paper. Throughout next week I will be taking an inventory of what each of you have available to use and what each of you might need and we will go from there. We certainly have supplies in our room that I can give and/or loan out to you as needed, and as things move forward we can figure out the logistics of how to get it to you.

As far as the **format of the class** I am still trying to wrap my brain around that, both what the school/district envisions and what makes most sense for us. I am not sure if you do a daily check in with me/I with you or if we have actual designated class times set up and meet on a platform like google meeting or zoom. I will let you know as those answers become more clear to me. I will post a daily journal/sketchbook prompt on our google classroom page and I am expecting you to spend about 20 minutes on it. You won't even have to be silent while you work on it ;)

The **long game** (as far as how this will eventually play into our class and/or be graded): if we return to schools fairly soon within the next week or two, we will use our journals as a springboard for an individual project, based on your musings and thoughts throughout our closures. If the closure continues longer, we will play that by ear. Your sketchbook/journal may become your grade in and of itself or we may go another route. We will have to see.

You may be wondering about your **grade**. I have a stack of work to grade from each class from projects that were turned in before break. I am planning on going into the school and grabbing those, so you will get points for whatever is already turned in. For things that are missing that you were planning on getting done after the break I will talk to each of you individually about that and make a personal plan. As far as how I will grade the sketchbook/journal: I will create a rubric for them that I will post on our google classroom after next week if that is the direction things are going. Otherwise, if we return after next week, they will be for completion points.

I think one of the most critical perspectives and attitudes we can adopt right now is **flexibility**. This is totally uncharted territory for all of us. Things could and probably will change again and we will need to adapt, again. For those of us who are planners and want to know what is next, we will need to put the brakes on and know that a lot of this is out of our control and we can only do our best with what we have. I promise to be flexible with all of you as far as what I expect and what we can reasonably get done and I hope you can all approach art class and school in general the same way. It is more important than anything right now to treat each other not just your peers or teachers, but your family, friends and neighbors with **compassion and understanding**. *I hope each of you are taking time to take care of yourselves.*

Please let me know what questions you have.

Heather Fortner