

As a studio art educator, I like to introduce a visual art practice as a language. I think in order for students to be successful in a studio art course, students need to treat the class like they would a foreign language class. A student's basic art language can be built in three steps. First, there needs to be constant practice with the materials to become familiar with them, like the basic memorization of terms in a new language. Next, there needs to be communication between the hand and eye and an understanding of the elements and principles of art in order to form a composition, like learning grammar and subject-verb agreement to form a sentence. Lastly, there needs to be an understanding and literacy of the art historical and contemporary contexts, that way a student can communicate a message more pointedly; this is learning to have a conversation with your viewer, like a conversation with another person in the foreign language.