

# Art in Response to Social Issues



This will certainly be one of your most challenging drawings and for that reason it will be one of your very last assignments. It's not difficult because drawing is difficult, but because **COMMUNICATING** with your drawing is harder than you think. You must plan out your composition **VERY** carefully so that the concept you want to illustrate is obvious to the viewer without any explanation.

Before you dive into your final draft, do lots of quick preliminary sketches and ask your friends and family if they “get it”. If they don't, rethink the composition or how you're approaching the issue. If this project is done well, it'll probably be one of your best works and end up in your Quality section. If not, it'll be one of those slides that the class laughs at next year... And

remember, the “easiest” idea is the one you feel the most excited about, the one that moves you, the one that you have a connection with.

**Some preliminary questions:**

**-Do artists have a role in reflecting and commenting on the society in which they live?**

**-Should artists provoke divergent (differing) points of view about political, moral or other social issues?**

**-What are some issues that our community/school/nations/world is currently confronting?**

**-How might an artist depict one of these current issues in order to promote constructive discussion?**

**Process:**

- 1. Study an artist whose work is concerned with social issues. Some to consider: Picasso’s “Guernica”, Goya, Kohlwitz, Segal, Kruger,**
- 2. Select an issue that you have strong opinions about or reactions to from the list below or come up with your own.**
- 3. Do some research on the topic- gather facts and statistics BEFORE designing your piece. YOU MAY NOT USE ANY WORDS- tell the story visually!**
- 4. Narrow the scope of the issue to make it personal (for you and for the viewer). Decide the angle from which you will approach the issue. What is it that “moves” you about this topic, and be specific. Determine what kind of statement you want to make.**
- 5. Do a minimum of 3 thumbnail sketches or sculpture mock-ups, each with a totally different way of expressing a single idea.**
- 6. Execute the best of the three sketches in a medium of your choice.**

**7. Be prepared to share the COMPLETED piece at the critique, along with the 3 initial sketches and the research info you have gathered.**

**My LONG List of possible topics:**

**•Man's inhumanity to Man- War (9/11), Genocide, the Holocaust, Rape, Murder, Human Rights Violations, Internment or Concentration Camps, Refugees, Slavery, Terrorism, Innocent Casualties,**

**•Urban Issues- Homeless, Gangs, Drugs, Prostitution, Poverty, Class Struggles, Education, Police Brutality, Crime, Rich & Poor Gap,**

**•Health Issues- AIDS, Abortion, Cancer, Infanticide, Mental Illness**

**•Family Issues- Divorce, Abuse, Stress, Single-Parent Homes, Latchkey Kids,**

**•Discrimination- Racism, Ageism, Gender Bias, the Glass Ceiling, Sweat Shops, Prop. 187,**

**•Environmental Issues- Famine, Drought, Pollution, Overpopulation, Destruction of the Rainforest, Ozone Hole, Endangered Species, Old-Growth Deforestation, Off-Shore Drilling, nonnative species introduction,**

**•Political Issues- Republican vs. Democrat, Gun Control, Abortion, the Economy, Corruption,**

**•Teen Issues- Drinking, Drugs, Pressure, Suicide, Stress, Gangs, Violence**