

GUIDELINES FOR CRITIQUING A MENTOR EXAMPLE

1. Teachers or students select the appropriate mentor example.
2. With guidance from the teacher, students answer specific questions designed to deconstruct the mentor example and identify what makes it high quality work. Example questions may be:
 - What makes this sample stand out as high quality?
 - What design elements work well in this genre?
 - What makes this example stand the test of time?
 - What makes this example be regarded as aesthetically pleasing?
 - Why do other professionals look to this work as a good example?
 - What specific principles or standards can we take from this for our class?
3. Students use the mentor example to discover and articulate the steps, requirements, and parameters involved in production. Teachers facilitate these discoveries and articulations through clarifying and probing questions. Ask students to show specific pieces of the work in great detail that they identify as successful. Prod them to precisely state their reasoning. Record and share kind, specific and helpful statements made by students—they are creating a shared understanding of how they will create work that is similar to that of professionals.
4. Students share their discoveries to collectively arrive at a blueprint or set of principles to follow so that their work is closely aligned to that of professionals, regardless of the students' age or previous experience.
5. Once students have deconstructed the mentor example and created their own blueprint or design principles to follow, they decide on immediate next steps to take in their own work, and long term goals for their projects. Students begin work on their next draft.
6. Once student drafts are completed, students can engage in a critique process to clarify and refine their plans for the next iteration.