**Encounters, Experiences and Meetings**

* The meeting between mother and child / adoption / birth;
* The clashing of those who despise each other;
* Friends in a bustling and crowded restaurant;
* SEX and other forbidden encounters in a teenage world;
* The shields we put up in our brains: the filter between ourselves and those we meet;
* The joining (or meeting) of two halves;
* Meetings between strangers…The million people we pass on a daily basis, but never connect with;
* Drunken encounters;
* Encounters with god;
* Online encounters and the changing social landscape of the world;
* The clashing of cultures;
* Meeting someone who has suffered a great loss;
* Shameful encounters / those you regret;
* A meeting room, filled with business people who go about their daily lives in a trance;
* A boisterous meeting between children;
* A birthday party;
* Meeting at a skateboard park;
* Reunion at an airport;
* Meeting for the last time;
* A life-changing moment;
* Focus on the senses (an event experienced through sight / audio etc);
* Something that made you cry;
* A déjà vu experience;
* Remembering an experience, a long time ago: the passing of time / generations;
* The meeting of truth and lies;
* The meeting of fiction and reality;
* Encountering animals: the interaction between human and animal kind and our influence upon them (for good or bad);
* Meeting your childhood self or yourself fifty years in the future;
* The meeting of land and sea;
* Physical meetings between two things: the boundaries and edges, perhaps at a cellular level (plunging into / stabbing / tearing apart);
* The meeting of theory and practicality;
* How our own biases, backgrounds and modify/influence every experience we have: the influence of the mind;
* Truly seeing yourself as you really are;
* Conception;
* The aftermath of a meeting that never happened;
* Meeting temptation: the battle of wills;
* The meeting of technology and nature;
* Ancient man meeting the modern world: the conflict between genes and the modern environment;
* Terrorist encounter.

Combinations and Alliances

* A young child holding the hand of their mother;
* Bad influences (combinations of friends) and peer pressure;
* A family unit, in alliance against the world;
* The butterfly effect (how a combination of actions / behaviors leads from one thing to another until every tiny moment in a life is interwoven with all the moments that came before);
* Political alliances;
* How ‘good’ people can complete horrific acts when lead on by the wrong situation and the wrong company;
* Still life combinations: salt and pepper, sweet and sour, fish & chips, apple and cinnamon; peanut butter and jam; the literal combination of ingredients used to make a meal;
* Unpleasant combinations we would rather not be reminded of: chocolate and obesity; that cute lamb and the juicy steak;
* The legal binding (combination) of lovers: marriage / civil unions;
* Combination of genes: Darwin’s theory of evolution – how traits are passed on etc;
* A study of two people (or animals), or people who care about each other;
* A person and something that they use to embellish their identity (i.e. fast car, makeup, fashion accessories, label clothing, iPhones);
* You and the one thing that defines you;
* Twins;
* Siblings;
* Mismatched couples;
* Unfortunate combinations: drugs and celebrities; childbirth and pain; cats and water; sugar and tooth decay;
* Discipline and being cruel to be kind;
* Combinations of exercises / sets / routines;
* Mixing of light (light streaming through coloured glass windows etc);
* Lock combinations;
* Combinations of numbers – gambling, addiction;
* An uneasy alliance: a dog about to break its chain;
* Things that depend on each other for survival: a plant growing in dirt trapped in a hole in the rocks; tiny creatures that live in on the fur / skin of others – ticks on cows / hair lice / germs;
* Vaccinations and the alliance of ‘good’ germs fighting against bad…
* Eco-systems – the interconnection of water / life etc;
* A trusted alliance: horse and rider; blind person and guide dog;
* Business networks that rely on one another;
* Uniting against a common enemy.

Fossils

* Highly accurate, scientific records;
* The layering of time;
* Disintegration and memory;
* Bones: the structure of life – the architecture of a living form;
* Fish skeletons;
* Archaeology and the documenting of fossils;
* Unexpected items as fossils (i.e. a fossil of an iPod or other contemporary object – remnants of a modern existence);
* Dinosaurs / extinction.

Society Today

* Modern diet / processed food;
* Digital technology and the impact it has on our lives;
* Soaring depression levels / the psychiatric torment of modern man;
* Soaring caesarian rates;
* Drugs and mind-numbing forms of escape;
* Slowing down;
* More, more, more: ever increasing consumption;
* The mechanized processes involved in the production of meat: pigs in tiny cages / battery hens / images from an abattoir;
* Disconnection from the whole: i.e. a factory worker who spends his/her whole life assembling one tiny part of a product, without having any input into the big picture: disillusionment with life purpose.

Inside / Outside

* Framing / windows;
* Blurring of the boundary between inside and out;
* Prisons / loss of freedom;
* Breaking in the exterior barrier of things i.e. injuries in flesh resulting in the spilling out of insides;
* Autopsy;
* Opening a can of preserved fruit;
* Pregnancy /birth;
* Shelter from the rain;
* The inconsistency between what is going on in the outside world and the inner turmoil of someone’s brain;
* The change in state as something moves from outside to inside the human body (i.e. food > energy);
* An environment that is devoid of ‘outside’ i.e. fluorescent lights / poor ventilation…lacking in plant life…unable to see nature outdoors…the dwindling human condition etc;
* Apocalyptic future: what will happen if humans destroy the outdoor conditions; or a wall is erected to keep an infected virus-ridden population ‘outside’;
* The peeling back of interesting things to expose what is underneath (inside)…i.e. banana skins, seedpods, envelopes.
* Vegetables or interesting fruit sliced through to expose the insides (things with lots of seed / pips / bumpy skin etc);
* Something opening to reveal something unexpected (i.e. inside a cardboard box);
* The Impossible Staircase: indoors blending into outdoors in an indeterminable fashion / a blurring of dimensions;
* Inside the human body: complex, organic form: the miracle of life (human anatomy drawings / x-rays;
* Inside an animal carcass;
* The human ‘outside’ – an exterior presented to those around us. The fixation we have on creating the best exterior possible: weight control/dieting; makeup; cosmetic surgery; latest fashions;
* Inside the earth: minerals / geology / the underworld;
* Sectional views through a landscape (i.e. showing a slice through the ground / inside the earth): mines / slips / erosion / quarries, with trucks and machinery taking soil and rocks away;
* The soul: inside / outside – leaving the body;
* Plays upon storage and scale, i.e. miniature ‘scaled down’ items inside other items, like large wild animals stored inside tiny jars;
* Castings of the insides of objects – things you don’t normally think about – that are then exposed for all to see;
* Walls / divisions / outsiders;
* Deterioration that has occurred to something as a result of being left outside (i.e. an ice sculpture that is left in the sun or a decayed, rusted, weathered structure showing the long term effects of the elements);
* Light streaming in a window from outside;
* Kids in a daycare facility looking longingly outside;
* Animals in a small enclosure: a sorry life in comparison to those wild and free outside;
* Looking outside from an unusual perspective, i.e. as if you are a mouse looking through a small crack into a room;
* Inside a bomb shelter;
* Inside is meant to equal haven / shelter: what if inside is not this at all: a crime scene / an inside that has been violated;
* In the palm of your hand;
* The contents of something spilling out;
* Shellfish or snails inside their shells.

Harmony and Discord

* Love and hate relationships / fighting between families and loved ones;
* The human mind, swinging from joy to misery and despair / schizophrenia / the meddling mind: our own worst enemy;
* A whole lot of similar things, with one different thing that clashes with the rest;
* Disturbing of the peace: a beautiful scene which is rudely interrupted (i.e. a hunter firing a bullet into a grazing herd of animals or someone pulling out a gun in a crowded shopping mall);
* Musical interpretations: jazz bands / instruments / broken instruments;
* Money: the root of good and evil;
* The broken family / divorce / merged families;
* The clashing of humans with the environment;
* Something beautiful and ugly;
* Meditation to escape the discord of modern day life;
* Prescribed medication (happy pills) to minimize the discord in life – but eliminates the harmony?
* A visual battle: a mess of clashing colours;
* Things in the wrong environment: placing objects unexpectedly in different locations to create discord (or at least alertness and aliveness) a scene of apparent harmony.

Changed Landscape

* Erosion;
* Changing seasons;
* The impact of human waste / litter on the environment;
* Urban sprawl;
* Forests cut down to make way for new developments;
* The pattern of crops, farming and paddocks on the land.

Sky High

* Black holes / stars / solar systems / the big bang;
* Skateboarders or snowboarders;
* A drug induced high;
* Cloud formations / the science of rain;
* Flying in sleep;
* Views from an airplane window;
* Patterns humans have made in the landscape – i.e. motorways / city grids;
* Hang-gliding / hot air balloons / free fallings / parachuting;
* Insects / birds flying;
* Wing structures;
* Airports;
* Aftermath of a plane crash;
* Superman / superheroes
* Things blowing into the air (old newspapers / an open briefcase / seed pods / dandelion seeds);
* Falling off a high rise building;
* Paper airplanes;
* Giants / over-scaled items
* A inner cityscape of high rise buildings – glimpses through windows to people living lives contained in tiny capsules in skyscrapers;
* Athletes / sports people leaping through air.

Shade

* An intricate still life that creates shadows which become an integral element of the composition;
* Translucent sculptures;
* Images containing only shadow (without the source object);
* Woven shadows;
* Overlapping shadows from multiple light sources;
* Shadows that are not of the object shown;
* A dark alleyway or other location where the lighting conditions are dramatic;
* Photographs of paper sculptures: artificial manipulation of form to explore light and shadow;
* Skin colour;
* A monochromatic subject, with the emphasis on tone (light & shade) rather than colour;
* Sunhats and sunscreen / skin cancer;
* Buildings with visible shading screens built into the facade.

Icons

* Toilet symbols in airports with crowds of people of multiple ethnicities (i.e. icons communicating without language);
* An absurd aspect of a pop star’s life;
* The worship of a pop star by an ordinary teen (posters peeling off a crowded bedroom wall etc);
* Religious icons – relevance in a modern world;
* Someone using icons to communicate;
* The lie of the icon: a pop star with a public image that is nothing like they really are;
* Sex symbols: the disparity between ‘real’ bodies and those portrayed in magazines…

Memorabilia

* An obsessed fan’s memorabilia collection relating to a particular famous person;
* Objects related to something negative that you don’t want to remember: i.e. a night out on the town (cigarette butts, empty beer bottles);
* Memorabilia related to a famous wedding (i.e. Prince Charlies and Diana);
* A collection of tacky plastic characters from a particular film, that lie forgotten and dusty in the bottom of a box;
* War memorabilia, interspersed with photographs.
* *Note: See some of the comments below for more ideas related to this Art exam topic*.

Neon

* ‘Sleazy’ signs from a dodgy part of town…with litter / other traces of human life / dark alleyways underneath;
* A inner cityscape crowded with brightly lit signs – perhaps exploring things to do with the clutter of human life / overpopulation of space etc;
* An decrepit sign (on an entertainment park or tired motel, for example) with broken bulbs / peeling paint;
* Disassembling old neon signs and reassembling different signs together in tongue-and-cheek ways;
* Inspiration drawn from the [Neon Boneyard](http://imighthavestolethat.wordpress.com/2011/11/11/neon-boneyard/) – where old neon signs go to die (part of the [Neon Museum](http://the-original-neonneon.blogspot.co.nz/2010/08/it-doesnt-get-much-better-than-this.html));
* Focusing on the eye-catching aspect of neon colour to draw attention to unexpected subjects…

Playing

* Young children playing with toys;
* A family playing a card or board game;
* Playing in water – or at the beach, with a bucket and spade in the sand;
* Sports – competitive playing;
* ‘Playing the field’;
* Dress up games;
* A young child putting up make-up in the mirror (playing at the imitation of adults);
* Wendy houses;
* An early childhood education scene;
* Playing gone wrong: an injured child / fighting children etc…

Folding Structures

* Origami;
* Paper airplanes (see [Christina Empedocles](http://www.davidbsmithgallery.com/artist/show/christina-empedocles) and [Ali Page](http://alicpage.blogspot.co.nz/2010/11/fold.html))
* Paper bags (see the painting below by [Karen Appleton](http://karenappleton.blogspot.co.nz/2011/08/bags.html))
* Architectural models;
* Folding architectural structures;
* Tents;
* Beach chairs;
* Weaving.

Journey

* A physical journey from a particular destination to another (i.e. the mundane drive between your home and school…seeing beauty in the ordinary etc; your first visit to see something that moved you);
* The transformational journey from old to new (old structure demolished for something new / old technology making way for new etc);
* A journey through time, such as a person aging / physical changes, or a record of memorable occasions in a life;
* Childhood to adulthood;
* Getting through an emotional circumstance, such as a loved one passing away or overcoming illness;
* Conception/pregnancy/birth;
* A miniature journey  (i.e. walking down your garden path – with viewpoint at your feet etc; brushing your teeth in the morning – the journey from arrival at the sink to bright white smile);
* Achieving a goal;
* An academic journey – through school etc (ambition / academic goals / failure / success / test papers / assignments / grades etc…as in the hurdles you need to get to university);
* On a bus or a plane or a train;
* Memorabilia related to a particular journey (i.e. an overseas trip);
* A still life made from tickets, maps, timetables;
* The journey of an animal (i.e. a bird or fish, swimming upstream);
* The journey of an insect walking a short distance over interesting surfaces;
* Terrorism and the journey you will never forget.

Domestic

* A family argument;
* Domesticated cat or other animal;
* Domestic chores – focus on a mundane ordinary task such as doing the dishes (see [Sylvia Siddell](http://www.artisgallery.co.nz/artists_show.asp?id=144) and [Jo Bradney](http://bradney.com/domestic.html));
* Housewives / the female role / feminism etc;
* [Wild versus Domestic](http://www.amiria.co.nz/artist/ncea-level-3-painting-folios/);
* The ‘perfect’ home situation illusion and what bubbles below the surface…
* Domestic versus foreign / invading / other;
* Domestic goods = items made in your own country…a still life featuring country-specific items…

Digital Dreams

* The merging of reality and our ‘online’ lives;
* The fictional online persona (the person we craft in our Facebook profiles and so on);
* iPods / digital devices and brightly lit screens;
* Cyber dating / online love;
* Brain waves and digital imaging of human brains while dreaming.

Looking Through

* Windows / frames – from unexpected locations / unexpected angles or in places where the outside scene contrasts the inside scene;
* Transparent layers / glass / distortion / interesting views through things;
* X-rays;
* Old overhead projector transparencies;
* Flicking through an old recipe book or photo album;
* Looking through small gaps between leaves in the foreground at a natural scene;
* Trains / tunnels;
* A child looking through cracks in a jetty at the water below;
* Invisibility, and the feeling you get when someone ‘looks through’ you – i.e. doesn’t notice you at all;
* Kids playing hide and seek, peeking out from a hiding place;
* Inappropriate snooping through someone else’s personal belongings…

People – Ordinary and/or extraordinary

* People engaged in ordinary mindless actions, i.e. brushing teeth, doing one’s hair, eating breakfast;
* Scars / tattoos / deformities that are out of the ordinary;
* The vices of ordinary people (cigarette smoking, alcoholism, food addiction etc);
* Portraits of really ‘plain’ people – seeing the beauty in the ordinary;
* The facades / layers people build up around themselves to make themselves seem extraordinary – make-up, fashion accessories etc;
* A person of extraordinary importance in your life (your mother or grandmother etc);
* Ordinary people who have extraordinary roles (i.e. a firefighter);
* The extraordinary;
* Merging images of people with other objects to make fantastical creatures;
* A portrait of an ordinary stereotype: the gossip or the cheerleader etc;
* The desperate attempts or lengths someone will go to become extraordinary;
* Depictions of ordinary people, so that they look eerie and extraordinary, like the awesome artworks by [Loretta Lux](http://www.lorettalux.de/);
* Sculptures of the ordinary, at extraordinary scales, like [Ron Mueck](http://sunseven.hubpages.com/hub/Awesome_Sculptures_Of_Ron_Mueck) (viewer discretion advised).

Old and New

* A grandmother or other elderly person holding a baby;
* Meeting your childhood self or yourself fifty years in the future;
* Ancient man meeting the modern world: the conflict between genes and the modern environment;
* Ancient artefacts, alongside modern instruments;
* Discarded outdated computers / technology, to make way for new (things that become rapidly obsolete);
* Fresh fruit alongside rotted and decaying produce;
* Plastic surgery: an attempt to make old into new;
* A decaying structure alongside a new, contemporary form;
* New posters overlaid onto an outdoor wall layered with old, peeling posters;
* An old architectural form demolished for something new / old technology making way for new etc).

Here and Now

* The impact of digital technology on modern lives;
* Advances in preventative health and medicine;
* The prevalence of natural disasters in recent times;
* Terrorism;
* Time;
* The mechanics of an old clock;
* A topical issue, such as food addiction.

Arrival / Departure

* Birth;
* Death;
* Train stations / Airports / Looking out windows at that which is left behind;
* Divorce / departure of a parent;
* Parents who leave their children;
* Recovering from a departure / coping mechanisms;
* First day at school (or some other place);
* Feet walking away;
* A decaying, decrepit building after the departure of the occupants;
* A look at building entrances and exits;
* Motorway exits;
* Maps / subway routes / directions for travellers…

Fruit, vegetables and gardening tools placed in a setting of your choice

* A freshly harvested outdoor setting;
* A farm-like scene with wooden crates / indoor wooden shed;
* Vegetables stored for animals;
* Vegetables hanging to dry, i.e. onions / garlic with tools leaning nearby;
* [A kitchen scene](http://pinterest.com/pin/56365432806443672/);
* A fruit and vege shop;
* A bustling marketplace;
* Preserving fruit – knives / chopped fruit / preserves in glass jars;
* Fruit, veges and tools in an unexpected location, i.e. [hanging in plastic bags](http://pinterest.com/pin/56365432806428200/);
* Abstract works derived from the patterns on the skin of fruit and vegetables or the interiors that have been sliced open with knifes;
* The brutal smashing of a watermelon or some other fruit or vegetable with a hammer;
* The hanging of [decaying fruit and vegetables](http://www.amiria.co.nz/artist/as-art-exam-ideas/).

Time-Honoured

* Wedding traditions;
* Birthday celebrations;
* Religious rituals;
* Guy Fawkes;
* Christenings;
* Coming-of-age rituals;
* Graduation ceremonies.

Ideas from

[http://www.amiria.co.nz/artist/a-level-art-exam-paper/#](http://www.amiria.co.nz/artist/a-level-art-exam-paper/).