

Week 4 & 5

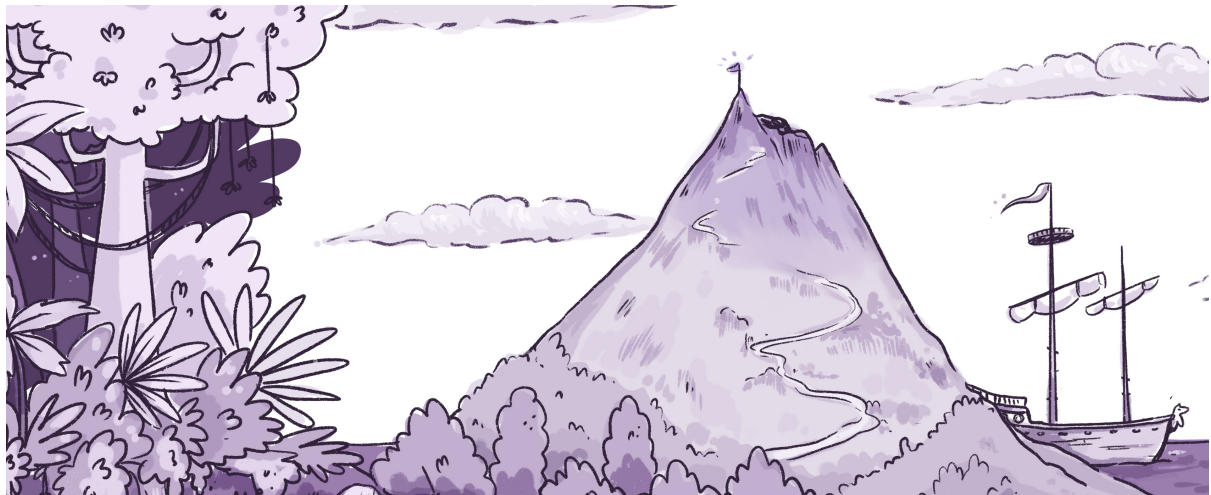
Your Statement Piece

We are now stepping into week 4 & 5 - your time to shine! It is an important step, to move from the theory, mood boards and ideas to PAPER! And it can also be a moment where your inner critic comes crawling back, or maybe you just go blank.

No worries! I'm here to help!

There are no specific assignments this time, but guidelines. I will introduce some ideation games; tell you about my step by step method for projects (so it might inspire you) and we'll also talk about recording your process (and why).

In this part of the journey, not only will visualising your goal will be of great importance, but also planning. Just like the hike up a mountain, you need to keep a pace, know when to take breaks and carry the right supplies.



"I begin with an idea and it then becomes something else" —Picasso

Before we begin...

Ok, so let's be honest, **2 weeks is very little time**. I know this because like you, I also have a job and family/social obligations (like walking the dog).

So the first thing you need to do is to be honest about **how much time will you be able to set aside** for this statement piece?

No one is judging; but you have to know before you start so we can avoid feeling guilty or drop everything half way because *"I'm not gonna make it anyway"*. Write it down, block it in your calendar or add a post-it on your wall.

Good.

Ideation - What to Draw?



I know that some of you will already have 100 ideas what to make, and making a choice is the hard part (scroll further down). But others might dread that **blank page**. So here's some tips that might help:

Brainstorm session: Set a timer to 10min and do a written brainstorm session. Look at all your notes from the last 3 weeks and start scribbling: themes, colours, materials, products, questions. Don't stop until the 10min have passed.

Magic Bowl: Write down different themes or key words that you'd like to work on and cut them out into individual pieces of paper. Fold them and put them in a bowl. Take out 2 at the time and put them together.

Can you find interesting combinations that trigger interest?

Sketchbook Flow: Set a timer for 15min and start doodling. Draw to your heart's content and explore ideas or characters. You could say this is a drawing brainstorm.

Get a cup of tea and come back to look at your messy page. What catches your attention?

Ideation - What to Choose?

So many great ideas! But *where to start* or how to choose???

The most important thing to remember is that this *will not be* your last work ever. It's one of many.

When I have lots of ideas, I answer the following questions and cross them off as I go:

- **How much time do I have** to complete this? (*a weekend? a day? a few nights?*)
- *Narrow down my choices to 3 or 5*
- **Can I break it down** into smaller parts? Or is this a “complete project”?
- Do I want to **try something new** and need to do lots of research? Or is it in my **comfort zone**? (*again pair with time*)
- What materials will I be using?

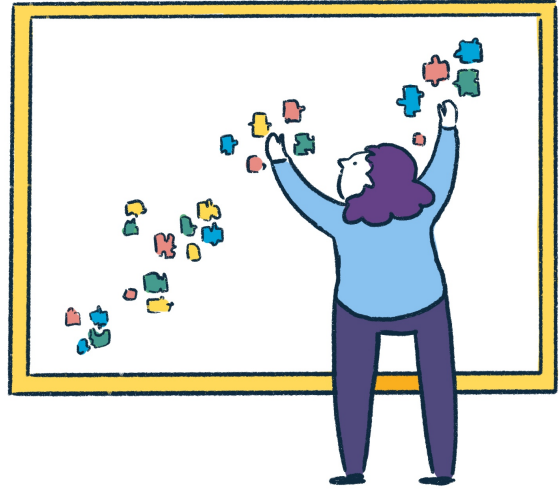
I personally like to sketch thumbnails and have a proper brainstorm session with the narrowed down list, and see what I feel most motivated to work on. What sparks joy ;)



Planning

For the planning stage there are various ways to tackle this, and maybe you already have your favourite process. But I recommend to always start with your Minimum Viable Product - or in other words; what the most basic finished version of your work that you'd be happy to share.

Example: So if my big plan is to have a series of postcards, then in 2 weeks maybe my MVP is to have one design ready and a plan for the other 2.



To-do List: Break down the steps to complete your piece into bite-size chunks. I always start with: brainstorm; sketch; line-work: colouring. From here I add more if necessary. You can have these in a list or as post-its!

Working Backwards (I'm sure this has a more serious name in the project planning world!): Start with your end product, for example a postcards series, and then work backwards.

Let's take the postcards and assume we want 3 designs; it would look like this:

- Sending your files to print
- Files ready in digital format for printer
- Have your 3 designs ready - digital
- Cleaning up and editing files - digital
- Scanning designs
- Designs ready to scan!
- Etc etc..

Keeping records

A journal of your work

I would like you to keep a journal or records of your process. Partly to share with the group, but also to get you into the habit. *Why?*

- **Taking a step back:** we sometimes get too engrossed in the process of making that it's hard to stop and look at where you are. Taking pictures is a great way to create distance from your piece, like walking backwards, and checking if it still makes sense.
- **Archive:** I like to be able to re-trace my steps in case I'd like to try the same process again. Keeping an archive of my process helps me to remember how I approached specific pieces.
- **Content for your portfolio:** instagram, your website or a proposal; all places where you might need images to show/explain how you work.

I would also say there are 2 types of pictures: process (messy pictures of your table, details etc) and “product or clean” pictures, where you stage your work. For both:

- Be clear on what you are aiming for to convey,
- Use good light or edit your pictures,
- Do close-ups and distance pictures.

