

# Critical Activity GRAPHIC DESIGN

In this Critical Design essay you will look at two GRAPHIC designers, describe one GRAPHIC design by each designer and, compare these two GRAPHIC DESIGNS.

You should show examples of the designers' work to help illustrate your essay. You should type out your essay. Look at these examples below:



There will be nine parts to this essay:

1. **Introduction**
2. Short history of graphics (This part is optional)
3. Information on **ALPHONSE MUCHA**. (Graphic designer from the past)
4. Study a piece of **GRAPHIC DESIGN** by **ALPHONSE MUCHA**.
5. Information on **JOANNA BASFORD** (contemporary/modern Graphic designer)
6. Study a piece of **GRAPHIC DESIGN** by **JOANNA BASFORD**.
7. **Compare both pieces of Graphic design.**
8. **Conclusion**
9. **Bibliography** (list of books/websites/notes you used in this essay)

Try to write the essay in **YOUR OWN WORDS**. Avoid copying information.

## 1. Introduction

Write a brief introduction to your essay. You might begin something like this:

*In this essay I am going to write about the work of two famous GRAPHIC designers, their lives and influences.....*

This is just a guide; the introduction can be written in **YOUR OWN words**.

## 2. Short history of GRAPHIC DESIGN

(This section is Optional)

Include a short history of **GRAPHIC DESIGN** for a better grade. For this part you should do some solo study (online / or in the library); you should find out the reasons why Graphic design became important in advertising and illustration, and how it has changed over time. Use [www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk) to research this part of the essay.

## 3.& 5 Information about your first GRAPHIC designer - ALPHONSE MUCHA. You will repeat the same set of questions for your second designer JOANNA BASFORD.

Firstly, pick which GRAPHIC DESIGN you would like to discuss - Use the picture worksheet hand out.

Read the information on the designer (this can be found on the back of the picture worksheet).

**Now...Answer the questions below:**

1. What is the background history of the designer? Where and when were they born? Include dates.
2. What kind of design education did the designer have?
3. What trends influenced the designer? e.g. music, politics, fashion, nature, design movement of the time etc?
4. What Design movement, if any, were they part of? What was/is this design movement influenced by?
5. What types of GRAPHIC DESIGN has the designer produced: eg: Illustrations/packagings/book covers/ promotional materials for shops/etc
6. Which companies did/does the designer work for?
7. What materials did/does the designer use to draw/paint their GRAPHIC DESIGNS?
8. How original and how effective were/are their GRAPHIC DESIGNS? - Does the GRAPHIC DESIGN fulfil its function? (Does it communicate a message/ explain about a product /appear decorative /include a company brand name etc....
9. What technology (machines/computers/modern design methods etc if any - did/does the designer use to produce their design?
10. How popular were/are their designs and which target market was/is the designer aiming at?

This part of your essay is very important because it will be based on your own opinions about each piece of GRAPHIC DESIGN. Answer all of the questions in FULL sentences.

First pick which GRAPHIC DESIGN you will discuss - Use the picture worksheet hand out(s).

### **Introduction**

*Introduce the piece of GRAPHIC DESIGN that you will be writing about.*

- Does the GRAPHIC DESIGN have a name?
- When and where was it made?
- Who designed it?
- What was it designed to be used for eg a packaging design for..../ a poster/ an illustration etc?

### **Function**

*This is what the GRAPHIC DESIGN is meant to do/ or the job it has to perform*

- What do you think the main functions of this GRAPHIC DESIGN are? (What does it advertise/ what does it communicate/what does it contain or package/ how are words used in the design)
- Is it a simple or a decorative GRAPHIC DESIGN (Plain, or busy with shapes and patterns?)
- Where would this GRAPHIC DESIGN be used/ by which company?
- Is it mass produced? - if so explain why?.....

### **Materials**

*This refers to the materials used to produce the design*

- What materials have been used to produce this design?
- How was the GRAPHIC DESIGN originally produced? - using paint/pencil/inks/pens etc?
- Is the design for a poster/illustration/packaging - how does this affect the use of materials?
- If you can't tell for sure say, "It appears to be..."

### **Aesthetics/Inspiration**

*This is the way the design looks*

**Now describe the GRAPHIC DESIGN in detail...**

- What inspiration has been used for the theme of this GRAPHIC DESIGN? Eg - Nature/flowers/women/leaves/Christmas etc?
- Are shapes used in this GRAPHIC DESIGN to make any kind of pattern? Describe the shapes and patterns in the GRAPHIC DESIGN carefully.....

- Which colours are used in the GRAPHIC DESIGN? Warm /Cold/ Primary/Secondary? Complementary/ Harmonious/ Metallic /Neutral/ Tones of one colour?
- Describe how important the choice of colour is to the design ... why do you think the COLOUR SCHEME was chosen?
- What does the lettering communicate in the design -eg: a company name/ a product name/ quality of product etc?
- Where is lettering placed in the GRAPHIC DESIGN? - Does it take up a lot of room / or very little room? -explain why.....

### **Manufacture/Cost**

*This refers to the process involved in making up your design*

- What kinds of technologies (**MACHINES**) have been used to create the GRAPHIC DESIGN?
- Are any parts of the design produced using a printing technique/ a computer/ a scanner/ or hand design processes?
- Is the design mass produced (**MADE IN LARGE NUMBERS**)? Say why/or why not. Give a good reason.....
- Do you think the GRAPHIC DESIGN was/is cheap /expensive to produce - give reasons?

### **Client/Target Market**

*This is the person or group your design is aimed at*

- This GRAPHIC DESIGN was designed for a product - who was /is the likely TARGET MARKET?
- Who do you think would use the product/ GRAPHIC DESIGN - give reasons?

### **Personal opinion**

- In your opinion does the GRAPHIC DESIGN look good?
- Does it suit its target market and the period in which it was made?
- Do you like it....say why?

## **7. Compare and Contrast BOTH GRAPHIC DESIGNS. Note the differences and similarities-referring to the following:**

- Graphic Design name/title
- Functions
- Materials
- Aesthetics/Inspirations

- Manufacture/Cost
- Client/Target Market

The easiest way to write this part is to draw a table with two columns MUCHA/ BASFORD, and then compare 'Similarities' and 'Differences'. Quickly jot similarities and differences in the 2 designs - then turn these notes into sentences.

### **7. Conclusion (Ending sentence)**

The best way to conclude your essay is to tell the marker why you enjoyed looking at the work of the 2 designers, and then to say which of the two GRAPHIC DESIGNS you liked best, giving a reason why.

### **8. Bibliography**

It is very important that you include a Bibliography at the end of your essay. This should include all web sites, books you have used for the essay.

It must be quite precise so that the marker can see where you got your information. If you do not include a Bibliography, you will lose marks. It is a good idea to write down every book you use/ every website you visit, at the time. Note any websites on your draft notes for this essay.