

A zine is a small self-published work made using a copier and circulated by hand. Zines began as a way for 1930s sci-fi fans to distribute fanfiction to one another. Zines took off with easier access to copiers, resulting in many punk musicians using this as a method to advertise their bands. In Art History II, students are asked to make a zine of a contemporary artist. The zines focused on a major theme the student discovered in their research and utilized text, imagery, and design to create a successful project.

Moving into the world of information, business, and ever-changing society means that students need to have a deep knowledge of options, both historical and modern, to gain and spread information. Zines themselves are a unique opportunity. They are flexible in requirements and what kinds of information can be shared. They are also effective for cost and availability so that the spread is for a wider audience. They also enable those who may not have access to resources or artistic background to display easily read and even well-designed and formatted information. The content is up to the author, but this could lead to the potential spread of misinformation, so the inclusion of resources used is important.

The assignment for art history students was to study an artist, compile their stories and art, and then creatively organize that information. Research and organization are important in any assignment of this nature. Art can sometimes be lost in meaning to viewers who are unaware to look for deeper messages behind art. This type of average person needs to digest this information differently than an art student who has been taught how to delve for more. Zines are meant to enable people. With knowledge but also understanding. Breaking down information is a better way to understand for any student. It is also important to personally investigate many artists. Students of art should be encouraged to explore beyond their understanding. The best way to do that is to stand in the places of those who go before. Making creative and instructive zines helps students get to know artists. The project itself is a great way to expand a student's way of thinking. It also expands the prospects of communication. Art is a vital source of human communication, and it is necessary for all people.