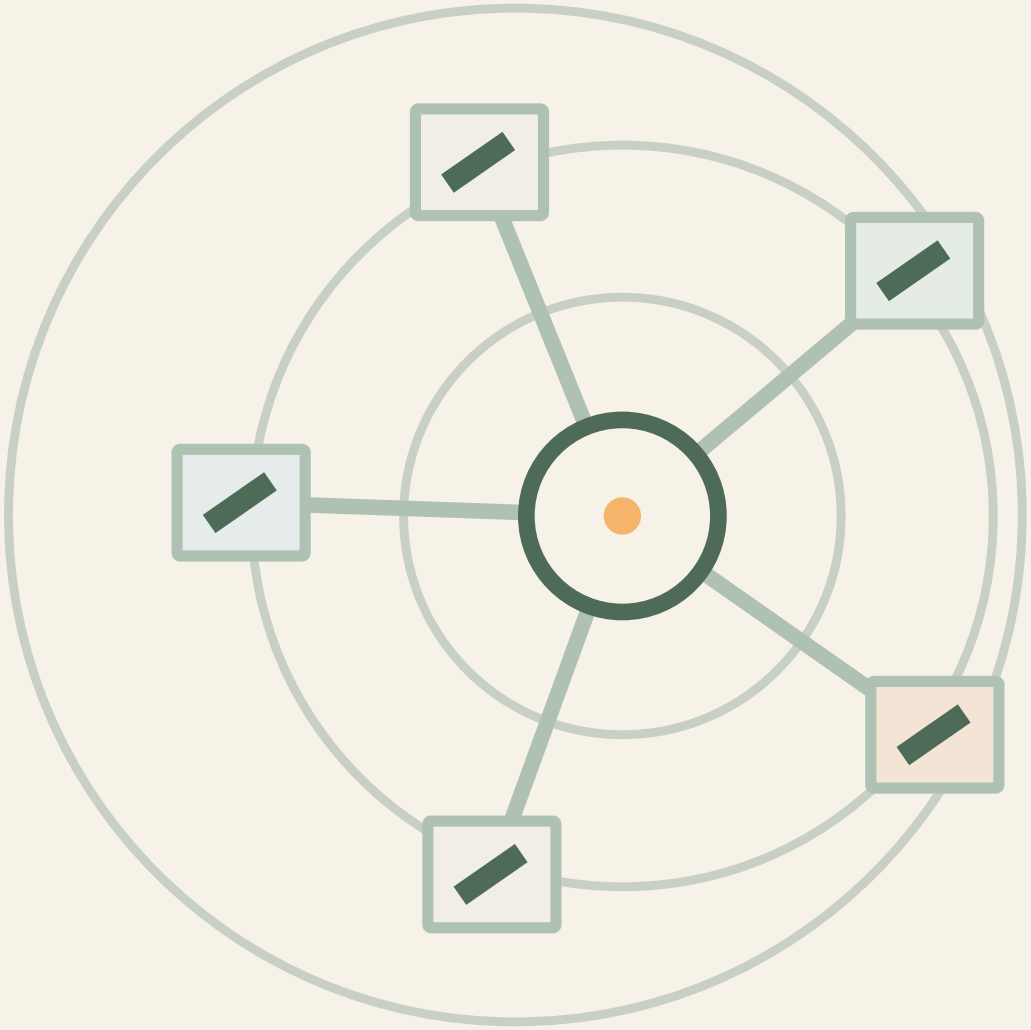
The Visual Research Edit

A VISUAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION WORKBOOK

For fashion, textile and art students
Record sources. Compare what you notice.
Choose what to explore next.



ATLAS&NATION

Use it as a working system

Choose the pages your project needs. You do not need to work in a fixed order or complete every page.

ON PAPER

Print only the pages you need. This design uses A4 landscape.

DIGITALLY

Write or draw over the PDF in your note-taking app. Keep photographs, notes and source records together.

WITH A SKETCHBOOK

Put a source code beside each important sketch, sample or note.

ONE SOURCE RECORD

Keep full details once on page 27. Reuse the same code throughout the project.

ONE CODE THROUGH THE PROJECT

SOURCE LOG

S06 - full maker, work, date and location

DRAWING OR SAMPLE

S06 - the detail I studied

DECISION

S06 - what it helped me notice or choose

MY RECORDS WILL LIVE HERE

KEEP IT CONNECTED

Record a source once. Follow its contribution through the work.

Choose a route through the workbook

Use this short route to begin. Add other pages when a real need appears.

PAGE 09
Read the brief

PAGE 10
Start an enquiry

PAGE 18
Plan

PAGE 27
Keep source records

PAGE 32
Look closely

PAGE 35
Check a source

PAGE 38
Consider care and use

PAGE 42
Group and compare

PAGE 47
State an insight

PAGE 49
Choose a next step

PAGE 53
Share the research edit

ADD WHEN NEEDED

24 Before fieldwork
34 When a small trial could help
52 When you need another view
55 When preparing credits

MY NEXT CHECKPOINT

What will I show, to whom, and when?

KEEP THE ROUTE LIGHT

Choose a few relevant sources, then leave time to act on them.

A worked visual research trail

Constructed example: how might an uneven shoreline edge suggest a textile surface? These are imagined observations and trials.

01 SOURCE DETAIL



S01: an illustrative shoreline sketch. Study the edge, not just the subject.

02 OBSERVATION



Uneven gaps appear in the drawn edge. This describes the sketch only.

03 INTERPRETATION



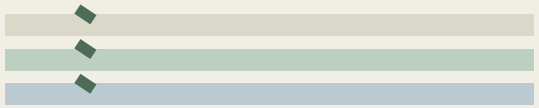
Could uneven openings suggest change or fragility? A reading to explore.

04 OPTION SET ASIDE



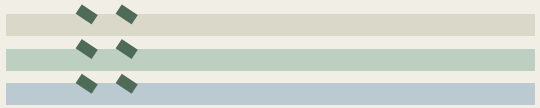
Copying the whole outline may be too literal. Keep the idea of gaps.

05 IMAGINED TRIAL



Layer and cut paper strips. Imagine a narrow join separates during handling.

06 NEXT DECISION



Compare two joining widths. Record what holds, what moves and what changes.

NEXT QUESTION - How can a layered edge keep irregular openings without falling apart? More observation and trials are needed; this example establishes no general claim about erosion or fabric behaviour.

Start an enquiry you can change

Begin with a brief, object, image, place or material encounter. A first question can be rough.

MY STARTING POINT

Place, sketch or describe what you are beginning with.

WHAT I NOTICE

What catches my attention? What do I not yet understand?

MY WORKING QUESTION

MY NEXT ACTION

Observe, compare, read, ask, draw or test. If your brief requires aims and objectives, add them in its format.

ALLOW THE QUESTION TO CHANGE

What changed after exploring, and why?

Source & Attribution Log

Record full details once, then reuse the source code beside related drawings, samples and decisions.

SOURCE CODE S____

MAKER / ORGANISATION

OBJECT / WORK / TITLE

PLACE / COLLECTION

DATE OF WORK

MATERIAL / TECHNIQUE (IF RELEVANT)

ACCESSED / VISITED

URL / PUBLICATION / CATALOGUE NUMBER / LOCATION

CARE / USE NOTE

SOURCE CODE S____

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KEEP THE TRAIL

Could someone else find this source from my record?

Separate evidence from interpretation

A source record keeps the origin clear. A possible reading and a next decision show what the source contributes.

COMPLETED SOURCE RECORD - S06

MAKER

Katsushika Hokusai

WORK

The Great Wave, from Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji (short title)

DATE / MATERIAL

ca. 1830-32. Woodblock print; ink and colour on paper.

COLLECTION

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Object JP1847.

SOURCE

metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/45434

ACCESSED / USE

30 September 2026. The record labels the image Public Domain. Keep the maker and collection credit.

S06 - RECORD DETAIL

The museum describes a scale contrast between the wave and the mountain. This is a credited catalogue description.

S06 - POSSIBLE READING

The contrast could suggest vulnerability. This is a proposed interpretation, not an established audience response.

S06 - NEXT DECISION

Make two drawings with different proportions. Compare the effect before deciding whether either direction is useful.

S06 is a separate real-source example. The shoreline sources on page 8 are fictional placeholders.

KEEP THE DISTINCTION *What can I point to, and what am I interpreting?*

Build the evidence wall

Paste, sketch, move, cross out and draw arrows. Place fragments before naming themes; keep each linked to a source code.

LET THE FRAGMENTS MEET *What becomes visible when I put these sources beside one another?*

Show how you reached a decision

Connect what you encountered to what you decide to do. A drawing or annotated sample can carry part of the explanation.

1

OBSERVATION / EVIDENCE

What can I point to in a source or trial?

2

INTERPRETATION

What might it mean? What else could explain it?

3

WORKING INSIGHT

What can I reasonably say so far?

4

NEXT DECISION

What will I investigate, test or develop, and why?

LANGUAGE CHECK

Match the claim to the evidence. Say what remains uncertain and avoid turning one example into a universal rule.

NOT READY TO CONCLUDE? *Record the unresolved question and choose an action that could clarify it.*

Copyright & credits

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