

ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF

ART

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

RATIONALE

Art can be defined as “decorative or illustrative elements in printed matter” that influence our thought processes, emotions, and behaviors. And the fundamental elements and principles of art (or design) consciously and subconsciously affect our perception of what we are viewing. Understanding these elements and principles can guide an artist during the creative process or help a viewer objectively evaluate the finished product.

PROGRAM GOAL

- To increase the participant’s visual literacy and raise awareness of the elements and principles of art through definitions and examples, while helping participants understand why they may or may not like what they see when viewing art.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. Establish connections and context for the audience by defining art, artist, and viewing art.
2. Name and discuss the elements of art through definitions and visual examples
3. Identify and discuss the principles of art through definitions and visual examples

Establish connections and context for the audience by defining art, artist, and viewing art.

- Facilitator’s Guide
 - Provides information for each PowerPoint slide. If you are not using the PowerPoint, the Facilitator’s Guide will still help you with the content on the Visual Vocabulary Handout.
- Handout – Visual Vocabulary
- PowerPoint Presentation (optional)
 - Expands on handout and encourages discussion
- Evaluation

Resources for Participants

- Handout – Visual Vocabulary
- Evaluation

Facility and Equipment Needs for In-Person Lesson

- Meeting Room with chairs for participants (tables for participants are optional)
- Screen and projector capability if showing PowerPoint presentation

Preparation

- Copy vocabulary handout “Elements and Principles of Art” for participants.
- Copy Facilitator’s Guide for volunteer leaders who may present at other club programs.
- Program Leaders may want to have access to the slide notes pages. Information for each work of art is in the slide notes.
- Copy Evaluations for each participant.

OBJECTIVE 1: SHOW CONNECTIONS AND CONTEXT FOR THE AUDIENCE BY DEFINING ART, ARTIST, AND VIEWING ART.

INTRODUCTION SLIDES

Slides 1 – 3: This lesson is Part One of the KEHA 2022-2025 Cultural Arts and Heritage Three Year Program of Work.

- **Introductory Activity: Ask:** How many of you enjoy visiting museums or going to other exhibits, fairs, and contests to view arts and crafts? Do you find that you are drawn to certain items or really enjoy looking at certain things?
- After group discussion, reinforce that this lesson will help participants understand why they may prefer to view certain works of art instead of others.

Slide 4 What is “Art”?

- When someone asks, "What is art?" These might be some of the answers:
 - Art is a “significant form” that influences our thought processes, emotions, and behaviors. A “significant form” can refer to anything that we notice or consider important, or interesting.
 - Art can bring us pleasure (that pleasure can be subjective).
 - Art “moves the ideas and concepts from our mind into the world.”

Slide 5 The Artist:

- Has a personal need to create
- Has an audience in mind when creating the object
- Usually considers the meaning or effect the art will have on others

Slide 6 Viewing Art:

- When we view art, our interpretation may be affected by our perception or personal experiences.
- When we look at an art object up close, we consider how it was created. We may look at brush strokes on a painting, or the stitches used in a knitted object, or wonder why the artist may have chosen to use a certain color or fabric choice.
- Seeing vs. looking is like hearing vs. listening.
- We “hear” people talk, but are we really “listening” to what they are saying?
- We “see” lots of things, but do we really look at them? Do we take time to observe them?
- How do we define what is visually pleasing?

Slide 7 Viewing Art with a Purpose:

- By understanding the ELEMENTS and PRINCIPLES of art (or design), we can increase our “visual literacy” and become more aware of the powerful images that surround us. (This statement explains why this is a useful lesson.)

OBJECTIVE 2: NAME AND DISCUSS THE ELEMENTS OF ART THROUGH DEFINITIONS AND VISUAL EXAMPLES.

ELEMENTS OF ART SLIDES

Slide 8 – 9 Elements of Art:

- Let’s start by talking about the elements of art.
- They are line, shape, form, space, texture, value, and color. They are the physical or visual components with which an artist creates a work of art. Here, the terms are defined as they relate to visual arts.

Slide 10 LINE:

- Line is defined by a point moving in space; usually a long, narrow mark or band.
- Outline: the lines by which a figure (or shape) is defined; the sum of these lines forming the contour of the figure.
- In this example, the contour lines create a lifelike, animated portrait.

Slide 11 Implied Line: – omit if not using PowerPoint

- Implied lines are a series of points that are connected by the viewer's eye.

Slide 12 Implied Line: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- The added red lines show the “implied lines.”

Slide 13 SHAPE:

- Shapes exist in a two-dimensional space (“forms” exist in 3-D space). They can be flat or limited to height and width.
- They can be regular or irregular, simple or complex, geometric or organic. Geometric is usually with straight lines or regular shapes. Organic is irregular or asymmetrical; also referring to shapes found in nature.
- On the handout (and the slide), the artist uses the repeating geometric shape of the circle in various sizes and colors.

Slide 14 Shape: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- Shapes also may be implied. This artist used implied shape to create stability and harmony within the composition.

Slide 15 Shape: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- The yellow triangle highlights the implied triangular shape created by the positioning of the subjects.

Slide 16 FORM:

- Form is three-dimensional and encloses volume. It includes height, width, and depth. Sculpture, performance arts, and crafts are all three-dimensional.

Slide 17 Form: (continued)

- Artists explore positive and negative space within forms. The teapot's 3-D form mixes positive space (for example the handle) with negative space (the area near the handle).

Slide 18 SPACE:

- Space is the area around, between, and within shapes or forms.
- Composition is the arrangement or positioning of elements within the pictorial space.
- In two-dimensional works of art, the positive space is called the figure while the negative space is called the ground.

Slide 19 Space: (continued)

- Atmospheric perspective produces the illusion of space and distance within the picture plane using color and focus.

Slide 20 Space: (continued)

- As objects recede into the distance, they become paler, hazier, and bluer in color. The illusion of depth of space is heightened by the dramatic differences in color and light between the foreground, middle ground, and background. The three areas of space each take up approximately one third of the picture plane.
- **Discussion Question: Ask:** Does this image look three-dimensional to you? Does it seem like the mountains in the background are far away? Why or why not?

Slide 21 Space: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- By using the techniques of OVERLAPPING, SIZE, PLACEMENT, and SHADING, space is implied.
 - **OVERLAPPING:** The object that is closest will overlap and obscure objects that are further back in space.
 - **SIZE:** Larger objects appear to be closer while smaller objects appear to be in the distance.
 - **PLACEMENT:** Objects higher in the picture plane appear to be further away.
 - **SHADING:** Light and shadow create the illusion of form and three-dimensionality.

Slide 22 TEXTURE:

- Texture is the way things feel, or look like they might feel, if touched. It is the tactile or perceived surface quality of an object. Texture can be real or implied.

Slide 23 Texture: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- **On the LEFT (on the PowerPoint Slide 23):** This is a photograph of a three-dimensional fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon. The object (sculpture) has real texture. Texture can also be applied in two-dimensional works of art such as a painting, by applying thick, heavy strokes of paint.
- **On the RIGHT (on the PowerPoint Slide 23):** The soft, furry texture of the rabbit's fur is implied or simulated by the artist's skillful painting technique.

Slide 24 VALUE:

- Value is the relative lightness or darkness of a color which can be used to define form.
- A color's value changes when white or black is added.
- In the handout (or on the PowerPoint), the artist has used value to create the illusion of a strong light source in the etching. The light seems to pour down from the upper left corner, illuminating the face of the child as well as casting bright spots on the knees and forehead of the mother.
- The value creates a sense of solidity in the forms. Value may also be used to emphasize emotive qualities within works of art.
- As the mother cradles the body of her child, the light source falls directly on the head of the child, whose pale face seems to glow.

- The darkest values within the etching are in the hair of the mother and beneath the body of the child, creating deep spaces that seem to express her grief, loss, and emptiness.

Slide 25 COLOR:

- Property of an object that is produced when light strikes it and is reflected and viewed by the eye.
- (Example on PowerPoint Slide 25) When the white light of the sun passes through a prism, it is refracted into the colors of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet.

Slide 26 Color Wheel: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- Color Wheels are circular models that help us understand the relationships colors have with each other.

Slide 27 Defining Color: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- We will explore color by using this “Munsell Color System” model. This is based on the color theory work of American artist, Albert Munsell (1858 – 1918).

Slide 28 Defining Color: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- Color has three main properties:
 - Hue
 - Chroma or Saturation
 - Value or Brightness
- **Discussion Question: Ask:** Have you heard these words before when talking about color? Let’s find out exactly what they mean.

Slide 29 Defining Color: (continued) – this definition can be used to go along with handout

- **HUE** is the actual color (e.g., red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet)

Slide 30 Defining Color: (continued) – this definition can be used to go along with handout

- **CHROMA** or Saturation is the level of intensity (how much gray or strength of the hue)

Slide 31 Defining Color: (continued) – this definition can be used to go along with handout

- **VALUE** or Brightness is the lightness or darkness (how much white or black is added)

Slide 32 Defining Color: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- For tint, add white
- For tone, add gray
- For shade, add black

Slide 33 Let's Describe This Color: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- If you are describing this color "blue" you might say:
 - The “color” is "clear"
 - The “tone” is "muted" or "saturated"
 - The “shade” is "dark" or "light"

Slide 34 Color: (continued) – omit if not using PowerPoint

- (On the LEFT image PowerPoint) This artist uses a complementary color scheme (for example, blue/ orange). Complementary color schemes are vibrant and dramatic because they group colors which are usually opposite each other on the color wheel. This painting depicts the October 1834 burning of the Houses of Parliament in London. The blue captures the chilliness of the October evening, and the orange is the heat of the massive fire burning across the River Thames.
- (On the RIGHT image PowerPoint) This monochromatic color scheme uses variations of a single color. The monochromatic blues increase the sense of coldness, loneliness, and isolation of the figure depicted.
- **Discussion Question: Ask:** Do you prefer certain colors instead of other colors? Are they bright (saturated) colors or muted colors?

OBJECTIVE 3: NAME AND DISCUSS THE PRINCIPLES OF ART THROUGH DEFINITIONS AND VISUAL EXAMPLES

PRINCIPLES OF ART SLIDES

Slides 35 – 35 Principles of Art:

- Now, we'll move on to discussing the “principles of art.”
- Unity, variety, proportion, balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, rhythm, and pattern are the effects or results that are created based on the use of the elements of art. Here, the terms are defined as they relate to visual arts.

Slide 37 UNITY / VARIETY:

- Unity in works of art occur when design elements are similar or identical.
- Variety is achieved when design elements are varied in size, color, shape, texture, or another attribute.

Slide 38 UNITY:

- This image represents UNITY. Although there may seem to be a lot going on in this painting, by using hard-edged rectangular shapes in a limited color palette of blue, red, yellow, and white, the artist creates a painting that feels analytical, meticulous, and clean. The repetitive colors and shapes provide unity/uniformity.

Slide 39 VARIETY:

- All the different shapes, colors, and other elements (depicted here) create VARIETY in this painting.

Slide 40 Unity/Variety: (continued)

- **Discussion Question: Ask:** Which do you prefer? The painting that is unified or the painting that has variety. Why or why not? (There is no right or wrong answer...)

Slide 41 PROPORTION:

- Proportion, as a design principle, refers to both the scale of objects individually as well as in relation to other elements.
- (On the PowerPoint) There are two different paintings, by two different artists, that both depict shipwrecks. Notice the way that the proportions of the figures in comparison to the sea and the sky produce very different effects?
 - On the LEFT: This painting is much more focused on the waves and forces of nature that are overcoming the ships.
 - On the RIGHT: This painting depicts an “up-close” view of the raft. It focuses on the human struggle of the shipwreck.

Slides 42 BALANCE:

- Balance refers to the distribution of visual weight of shapes and forms.
- Balance can be asymmetrical and symmetrical.

Slide 43 Balance: (continued)

- (On the LEFT in the PowerPoint) **Symmetrical** balance may also be achieved by arranging multiple identical parts around a single axis. This is called **radial symmetry**. The Rose Window of Chartres Cathedral in Paris is an example of this.
- (On the RIGHT in the PowerPoint) **Asymmetrical** balance is achieved when different shapes or forms in a work of art are arranged in such a way as to create a sense of balance. In this portrait, the artist arranges all the various shapes within the picture plane to create a sense of balance.
 - For example, the heavy black dress is balanced by the large dark curtain opposite. The objects are different shapes and sizes, but the work of art is still balanced, so the composition has asymmetrical balance.

Slides 44 CONTRAST:

- Contrast is achieved by pairing opposites, such as light and dark colors or smooth and rough textures, together in a single work of art.
- On the handout (and on the PowerPoint slide) the column-like male figure clothed in black contrasts with the pale, curving form of the female in both value and shape.

Slide 45 EMPHASIS:

- Emphasis is a way of directing the viewer's eye to the most important aspect of the work. Artists may create emphasis using a variety of methods including size, color, placement, or contrast.
- On the handout (and on the PowerPoint slide) the emphasis in this painting is on the young woman who is placed near the center of the picture plane. To further emphasize the woman, the artist paints her dress in a color that contrasts with her surroundings and floods her in bright light. The movement of her gown further draws the attention of the viewer.

Slide 46 MOVEMENT:

- Movement is the way in which the viewer's eye is directed in a work. It can imply motion, hint at a narrative, or simply create a pleasing effect.
- In the painting on the handout (and on the PowerPoint slide), the artist flattens the figure into geometric planes and records the pattern of motion as she descends from the upper left to the lower right corner of the canvas. The abstracted painting captures the movement of the figure remarkably.

Slide 47 RHYTHM:

- Rhythm occurs when similar shapes or forms are repeated within a work of art. Rhythm is the visual beat or tempo within a work of art.
- In this painting on the handout (and on the PowerPoint slide), the artist presents the viewer with a loop of repeating shapes creating a complex rhythm within the work.

Slide 48 PATTERN:

- Pattern is the regular and planned repetition of an element in a design.
- Pictured on the handout (and on the PowerPoint slide), this vase is decorated with a pattern of recurring mythical creatures.

Slide 49 Questions?

- In summary, suggest participants visit museums and fairs and remind them to take time to genuinely look at the art or items they see and encourage them to think about why they like or do not like what they are viewing.
- Ask for participant questions.

Slide 50 References

Slide 51 Credits

EVALUATION

Please distribute the evaluation form and collect the completed evaluations before the participants leave. If you wish to have them compiled for you and the results shared, you may scan and email, or copy and mail, the evaluations to:

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SOURCES AND REFERENCES

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Sachant, P., Blood, P., LeMieux, J., and Tekippe, R. (2016). Introduction to Art: Design, Context, and Meaning. Fine Arts Open Textbooks. <https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/arts-textbooks/3>

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