

Activity 2 – Identifying the Elements of Art and Principles of Design in Visual Art – SHAPE, SPACE, FORM, AND TEXTURE

Visual Art

Project
Outcome:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the elements of art and principles of design in visual art.

Refer to the elements and principles listed here when completing the activities:

Elements of Art

- line
- color
- shape
- space
- form
- texture

Principles of Design

- rhythm
- proportion
- emphasis
- balance
- pattern
- repetition
- variety
- unity

SHAPE

A shape is any space that is enclosed by lines. Geometric shapes include a square, an oval and a triangle while organic shapes are speech bubbles, a blob or any irregular free-form shape. A shape is an area defined by its edges. Notice the different geometric shapes in this painting.

Name all the geometric shapes you see in the piece below:



Just like colors, different shapes conjure up certain feelings:

- More rounded shapes create natural and calm emotions, while sharp edges grab attention.
- Squares convey rigidness, triangles convey energy and circles convey fluidity.

The principles of design are incorporated when using shapes to create patterns, repetition, and proportion, to name a few. Experiment with various shapes combined with different colors that stand out. See which combination works best.



Notice this drawing of a landscape. The various shapes include circles and elongated triangles.

In examining how the principles in the piece on the left are used, notice:

- Repetition is used by repeating the trees.
- Rhythm is created by different sizes of the trees and their reflection.



Examine the palm tree sketch.

What is the main shape used?

How do the palm trees create unity?

What is the focal point?

Activity using shape:

Choose a sketch or painting you have made (or make one) and describe it related to its shape or shapes within the piece. (Suggestion: Take a picture of your work and include it in your digital portfolio with the description below.)

Name of piece: _____

Describe the shape(s):

Describe the effect of the shape on the object: (Examples: Does it make you feel calm or excited? Is it pleasing to the eye?)

What major principle(s) of design is used?

How does the use of this principle affect the look or “feel” of the piece?

SPACE

When you look at space within your design, you are viewing all the areas within, around, above or below the object. Space can both connect and separate elements. Space can be positive or negative. Negative space is also called white space, which helps to group and organize elements.

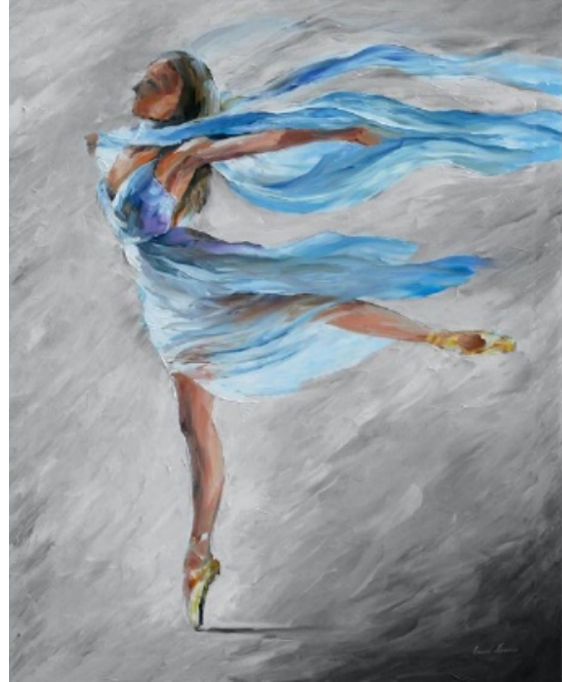
How to use space:

- Establish narrow spaces between elements to create a connection and wider spaces to convey separation. Both ways of using space generate a design flow.
- Remember that the space around items/objects in your painting can help create a focal point.



“Mountain Waterfall” by Bob Ross

In this painting, notice the space created by the lake area behind the waterfall. The calm sky also creates space. These areas allow your eyes to rest and create balance and interest.



Analyze the painting of a ballet dancer.

Describe the space created in and around the dancer:

What principles of design are used in this piece?

Activity using space:

Choose a painting or drawing you have made (or make one) and describe the piece related to the space created within the piece.

Name of piece: _____

Describe the space and how it affects the total look of the piece:

What major principle(s) of design is used?

How does the use of this principle affect the look or “feel” of the object?

Form

Form is an element of design that is three-dimensional and encloses volume. It includes height, width and depth (as in a cube, a sphere, a pyramid or a cylinder). These are usually called geometric forms. Forms that are not easily identifiable as geometric are considered free flowing. When creating paintings or drawings, you want to make the objects appear to be three-dimensional even though they are on a flat surface. Notice in this painting, which intentionally contains specific forms, the objects appear three-dimensional.



Coneflowers in a Retro Vase



In examining the painting of coneflowers in a vase to the left, you can see that it is a sphere form of the vase with an opening at the top. There are also spheres formed by each flower.

The principles of design used include repetition and pattern.



“A Sunday Afternoon on La Grande Jatte”
by Georges Seurat

Examine this painting.

Identify the forms used:

What elements and principles are used to create interest?

Activity using Form:

Choose a painting or drawing you have made (or make one) and describe the piece related to form.

Name of piece _____

Describe the form(s), including the name of the 3-D shape (sphere, cone, etc.):

What is the effect of the form on the piece?

What major principle(s) of design is used?

How does the use of this principle affect the look or “feel” of the piece?

Texture

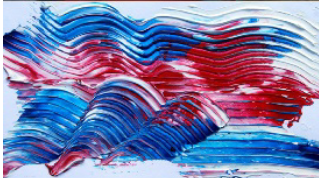
Texture can come from techniques used in your work. Even if we can't physically touch something, we can see how it would feel. For example, you can "see" how a tree trunk would feel rougher than the bike that might be leaning against it. Creating this effect using different techniques in your paintings or drawings is important to create interest. Techniques to consider include build-up of paint, shading, spattering or stippling techniques, and the use of sponges or painting knives.



Build up of paint



Silicone shapers



Using a painting knife

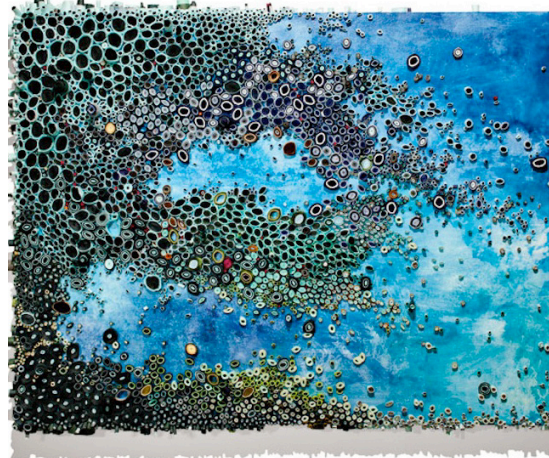
How to use texture:

- Use texture to create a focal point or contrast, or to help with balance.
- Consider the look you are trying to create - whether smooth, rough, shiny or dull - and use techniques, color, or surface effects accordingly to create interest.

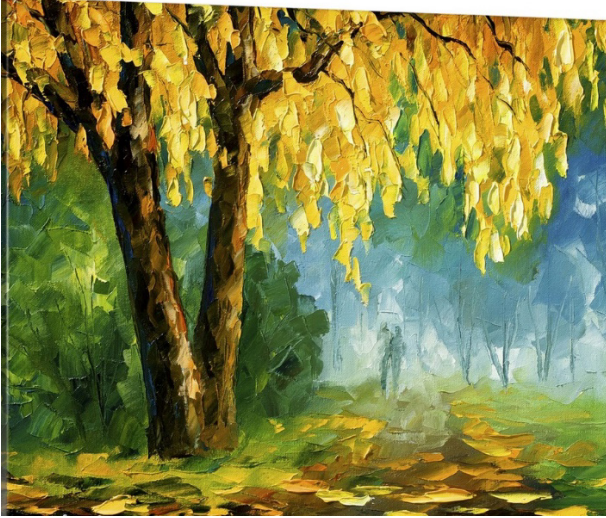


"Wheatfield and Cypresses"
by Vincent Van Gogh

In this painting, notice the rough texture created in the sky by the swirls in the clouds. Also, notice the slanted lines in the wheat, creating texture. Contrast in the colors used in the clouds create interest. The contrast in color as well as the type of lines used add to the unity of the piece.



This painting uses acrylic paint for the water (smooth texture) and small rolls of paper to create the illusion of pebbles in the water. Notice the difference in the textures.



Examine the painting above.

Describe the difference in the textures of the tree in the foreground and the “blue” trees in the background:

What principles of design are used in the painting (describe how they are used)?

Activity using texture:

Choose a painting or drawing you have made (or make one), and describe the piece related to texture.

Name of piece: _____

Describe the texture:

Describe the effect of the texture on the piece:

What major principle(s) of design is used?

How does the use of this principle affect the look or “feel” of the object?

Source: designwizard.com/blog/elements-of-design



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