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***Using Appropriate Art Vocabulary***

**Composition Checklist**

**Principles of Design**

**Balance Emphasis Proportion Pattern Rhythm Unity Variety**

**Line**

**Shape**

**Form**

**Space**

**Value**

**Color**

**Elements of Art**

**Texture**

***Elements of Art***

***Color:*** Also referred to as hue, color is the appearance of an object created by the

quality of light it reflects. The term color also can refer to paint, dye, pigment, or other substance that conveys color.

***Form:*** A three-dimensional object or, in an artwork, the representation of a three dimensional object, defined by contour, height, depth, and width.

***Line:*** A mark on a surface, usually created by a pen, pencil, or brush. Lines vary in

width, length, direction, color, and degree of curve, and can be two-dimensional

or implied.

***Shape:*** A two-dimensional figure created by connecting actual or implied lines that

enclose an area of space. A shape can be geometric (such as a circle or square)

or organic (having an irregular outline).

***Space:*** The open or empty area round, above, between, within, or below objects.

Shapes and forms are defined by the empty space surrounding them (negative

space) and by the space they occupy (positive space).

***Texture:*** The way a surface feels (actual texture) or looks (visual texture). words such

as rough, smooth, shiny, and dull are used to describe texture.

***Value:*** The lightness or darkness of a color. For example, pink is a light value of red,

while navy is a dark value of blue.

***Principles of Design***

***Balance:*** The arrangement of the parts of an artwork to give an overall sense of

equality in visual weight. Balance can be symmetrical, asymmetrical, or radial.

***Emphasis:*** The visual accent, stress, or sense of importance created in an artwork by

the color, size, shape, and placement of an object or area; the area or object to

which the viewer's attention is drawn.

***Pattern:*** The regular repetition of colors, lines, shapes, or forms in an artwork.

***Proportion:*** The relationship between the size, placement, or amount of one part of an

artwork and that of another part of the whole. For example, an artist drawing a

head will keep in mind the size relationship of the nose to the face.

***Rhythm:*** A sense of movement achieved by the repetition of one or more elements of

art, such as colors, lines, shapes, or forms in an artwork.

***Unity:*** The quality that occurs when all parts of an artwork combine to create a sense

of wholeness and completion.

***Variety:*** The use of different elements of art to add interest to an artwork.

***Composition:*** The arrangement of elements of art such as line, shape, and color

to create a balanced, unified artwork.

***Design:*** The creative, organized and methodical arrangement of lines, spaces,

colors, shapes, textures, and other elements in an artwork. Also, the act of

planning and arranging the parts of an artwork.

***Related Vocabulary:***

***Color***

***Color wheel:*** A circular chart that shows primary, secondary, and intermediate

colors in an order that illustrates progression through the spectrum and

relationships among colors.

***Primary colors:*** The three colors (blue, red, and yellow) from which other colors

are made. The primary colors cannot be made from other colors.

***Secondary color:*** A color created by mixing two primary colors in equal

proportions. The secondary colors are orange (made from red and

yellow), green (made from blue and yellow), and violet (made from red

and blue).

***Tertiary or Intermediate colors:*** Colors created when a primary color (red,

yellow, or blue) is mixed with a secondary color (orange, green, or violet).

***Hue:*** Another word for color.

***Intensity:*** The brightness or dullness of a color. A color's intensity is highest, or

most pure, when it is not mixed with another color. Colors that contain

traces of other colors or of neutrals have lower intensity.

***Value:*** The lightness or darkness of a color. A color’s value can be altered by

adding white to make tints or black to make shades of the color.

***Shade:*** A dark value of a color made by adding black to the color.

***Tint:*** A light value of a color created by adding the color to white.

***Color family:*** A group of related colors. For example, warm colors and cool

colors are each color families.

***Cool colors:*** Related colors that range from green through blue and violet. Cool

colors bring to mind cool objects, places and feelings.

***Warm colors:*** Related colors that range from red through orange and yellow.

Warm colors remind people of warm objects, places, and feelings.

***Complementary colors:*** Colors that contrast with one another. Complementary

colors are opposite one another on the color wheel. Also called

contrasting colors.

***Analogous colors:*** Colors that are next to each other on the color wheel (for

example, yellow, and yellow-orange). Also called related colors.

***Monochrome:*** A painting, drawing, or photograph using tints and shades of the

same hue.

***Neutrals:*** A word used for black, white, and tints and shades of gray. Some

designers also consider tints and shades of brown to be neutrals.

***Palette:*** A flat board on which a painter holds and mixes colors. Can refer to the

range of colors used in a particular artwork, or a selection of colors most

often used by a particular artist.

***Colorist:*** An artist who uses color with great skill.

***Color scheme:*** A plan for combining colors in a work of art.

***Monochromatic color scheme:*** A color scheme based on the tints and shades

of one color.

***Analogous color scheme:*** A color scheme based on colors that are next to

each other on the color wheel.

***Complementary color scheme:*** A color scheme based on the use of two

complementary colors.

***Split complementary color scheme:*** A color scheme that uses three colors— a

color and the two colors on either side of its complement (for example:

green, red violet and red orange).

***Triadic color scheme:*** A color scheme that uses three colors that are equally

spaced around the color wheel (for example: red orange, yellow green,

and blue violet). The primary colors form a triad. The secondary colors

form a triad.

***Form***

***Contour:*** The outline of a shape or the surface of the form.

***Depth:*** A technique to show deep space on a two-dimensional plane.

***Edge:*** The outside line of a shape or form.

***Line***

***Converging lines:*** Actual or implied lines that move toward one another and

conjoin at a point in space.

***Diagonal:*** A slanted edge or line.

***Horizontal:*** Moving straight across from side to side rather than up and down.

For example, the top edge of a piece of paper is horizontal.

***Horizontal line:*** In an artwork, the line representing the horizon. Horizontal

lines generally appear peaceful and calm.

***Vertical:*** Lying straight up and down. For example the side edge of a piece of

paper is vertical.

***Zigzag lines:*** A series of diagonal lines moving in different directions (vertically,

horizontally, or diagonally) that come together at sharp angles. These

lines can create feelings of confusion, nervousness, or excitement.

***Line quality:*** The special character of any line, such as thick or thin, smooth or

rough, continuous or broken.

***Movement:*** In an artwork, a quality that evokes a sense or illusion of motion,

often created using lines or patterns.

***Shape***

***Geometric shapes:*** Shapes that are precise and mathematical. A circle,

square, triangle, oval, and rectangle are geometric shapes.

***Irregular:*** A term used to describe shapes and forms that are not geometric.

Also known as organic.

***Organic:*** A term used to describe irregular shapes and forms, particularly those

resembling objects found in nature (for example, the shape of a leaf or a

body part).

***Outline:*** The line that forms the edge or any shape or form. Also called the

contour.

***Border:*** A frame-like edge around a shape.

***Space***

***Negative space:*** The empty space that surrounds and defines a form or shape

in an artwork.

***Positive space:*** The space that a form or shape occupies in an artwork.

***Depth:*** A technique to show deep space on a two-dimensional plane.

***Foreground:*** The part of an artwork that appears to be nearest the viewer, or in

the front of the scene.

***Background:*** The part of an artwork that appears to be farthest from the viewer,

or in the distance of the scene.

***Middle ground:*** The part of an artwork that appears to lie between objects in

the foreground and objects in the background.

***Detail:*** A small part of an artwork that has been extracted and usually enlarged

for close inspection. Also, a minute or particularly interesting aspect of an

artwork.

***Overlap:*** To partly or completely cover one shape or form with another. Can be

used to show distance in an artwork.

***Linear perspective:*** A technique that makes use of line to create the illusion of

depth on a two-dimensional surface. If the lines in an artwork created with

this technique are extended, they converge at a point on an imaginary line

that represents the eye level of the viewer. This point is called the

vanishing point.

***Horizon line:*** The line created in an artwork by the meeting of sky and ground,

usually on the viewer's eye level.

***Vanishing point:*** In an artwork using linear perspective, the point at which

converging lines meet.

***Atmospheric perspective:*** A technique used to create the illusion of air and

space in an artwork. Close-up objects are bright and consist of darker

colors; faraway objects and air consist of muted colors and large portions

of white.

***Texture***

***Tactile:*** A texture that can be perceived through the sense of touch, such as

smooth or rough. Also called actual texture.

***Visual texture:*** Texture that is perceived by sight rather than by touch, as in an

artwork.

***Value***

***Value scale:*** A series of blocks showing the gradual increase of color shading.

***Shading:*** A way of showing gradual changes in lightness or darkness in a

drawing or painting. Shading helps make a picture look more threedimensional.

Techniques include blending, stippling, hatching, and crosshatching.

***Contrast:*** The difference between to unlike things, such as a dark color and a

light color.

***Balance***

***Visual weight:*** The extent to which the viewer's attention is drawn to a shape,

form, color, or other feature of an artwork.

***Formal balance:*** A type of balance in which the visual properties or features on

both sides of a center line (vertical, horizontal, or diagonal) are similar or

identical. Also known as symmetrical balance.

***Informal balance:*** A type of balance in which two sides of an artwork are not

alike but carry equal or nearly equal visual weight. Also known as

asymmetrical balance.

***Asymmetry:*** A type of balance that results when two sides of an artwork are

visually balanced even though they are not alike.

***Asymmetrical balance:*** A type of balance in which two sides of an artwork are

not alike but carry equal or nearly equal visual weight. Also known as

informal balance.

***Radial balance:*** A type of balance in which lines or shapes spread out from a

center point in a regular pattern.

***Symmetrical balance:*** A type of balance in which the visual properties or

features on both sides of a center line (vertical, horizontal, or diagonal) are

similar or identical. A human face, for example, is symmetrically balanced

along a vertical line. Also known as formal balance.

***Emphasis***

***Center of interest:*** The part of an artwork the viewer notices first; the most

important part of an artwork.

***Dominance:*** The way an artwork shows emphasis in which one element or

object in the composition is the strongest or most important part of the

work.

***Exaggeration:*** Showing something in a way that enlarges or overemphasizes its

importance.

***Focal point:*** A way to show emphasis in an artwork in which the artist sets an

element apart from the others to set up a center of interest.

***Pattern***

***Alternating pattern:*** A pattern or visual rhythm, produced in an artwork by

repeating a sequence of two or more elements.

***Proportion***

***Altered proportion:*** A technique used by an artist to change the size

relationship of shapes in an artwork.

***Scale:*** The proportional relationship between an object represented in an

artwork and the real object. If something is drawn to scale, all of its parts

are drawn equally smaller or larger than the parts of the original.

***Size relationships:*** A technique that alters the proportions of compositions.

The three categories are monumental, miniature, and exaggerated.

***Monumental:*** Artworks that are larger-than-life proportions.

***Miniature:*** Artworks that are of smaller-than-life proportions.

***Exaggerated:*** Artworks that have distorted proportions of objects to show

emphasis--enlarging or overemphasizing an object's importance.

***Rhythm***

***Alternating rhythm:*** Rhythm created in an artwork by repeating two or more

elements on a regular, interchanging basis, such as a triangle-circle,

triangle-circle, triangle-circle.

***Regular rhythm:*** Rhythm in an artwork created by repeating an element, such

as a shape, without variation.

***Progressive rhythm:*** Rhythm created in an artwork by showing regular

changes in a repeated element, such as a series of circles that

progressively increase in size from small to large. The changes may also

progress from light to dark, or bottom to top.

***Visual rhythm:*** Rhythm created by repeating elements, such as colors and

lines. Visual rhythm might remind a viewer of music or a dance rhythm.