

Elements of Art

Color: having the physical properties of hue, intensity, and value. A piece of artwork can have a color scheme or mood. For example, warm colors (oranges, yellows, and reds), or complementary colors (colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel).

Value: the relative degree of light or dark. Think about value scales and black and white. Color can also have value. For example, dark blue or light blue.

Texture: the surface character of a material that can be experienced through touch or the illusion of touch. The artwork has texture when you touch it or it looks like you could touch it and feel a sensation.

Shape: is something distinguished from its surrounding by its outline within your design. You can make your whole work a certain shape besides the common square, and then have shapes within your design shape.

Form: when a shape looks 3D, and also when the design looks like it is meant to go together.

Space: the interval, or measurable distance, between points or images.

Line: a series of connecting points. Line can dictate the position and direction of the design. For example there could be straight, broken, spiral, or curvy lines. Lines can add to the movement and rhythm of a design.

Principles of Design

Contrast: occurs when two elements are different such as color, size, or texture.

Emphasis: the focal point of the piece of art. The emphasis is what the artist wants the viewer to focus on and look at more than the other elements of the artwork.

Balance: concept of a visual equilibrium. Symmetry and asymmetry also play a part. The artwork is weighted evenly and the viewer is not just looking at 1/3 of the piece of art, for example. The design is well-balanced.

Unity: the result of bringing the elements of art together to achieve a sense of oneness. The piece of artwork looks like a unified whole.

Pattern: a repeated design or element.

Movement: is the suggestion or illusion of motion in a painting, sculpture or design. When there is movement in a piece of artwork, the viewer's eye moves around the entire piece of art.

Rhythm: a continuance, a flow, or a sense of movement achieved by the repetition of regulated visual units. There is a flow and the viewer's eye moves around the piece of artwork with a sense of rhythm, similar to rhythm in music.

