

Art Principles

Savor the flavors – combining
“ingredients” to make the cake

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IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
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Art Principles

- Design elements are the “ingredients” in making a great work of art. The design elements are line, shape, space, texture, color.
- Art Principles are the ways in which the elements or “ingredients” are used or mixed.

Introducing the Art Principles

BALANCE



movement

REPETITION

UNITY

PROPORTION

Emphasis

PATTERN

Rhythm

variety

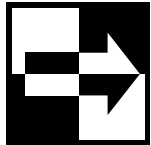


- Balance is visual weight of a piece of art.



Symmetrical balance

both sides are mirror images



Asymmetrical balance

one side is different



Radial balance

design radiates out from center of art

BALANCE



This poster shows asymmetric balance – notice how the pop bottle and row of white boxes appear to be equal in height. The two objects are different, but are balanced.

Emphasis

- Emphasis calls attention to a point in the artwork.
- This is a photo of a water lily. Notice the dark leaves on the outside of the pink flower. The darkness makes your eye look at the pink flower.



movement

- Movement is the path your eye takes through the art. Your eye can be asked to look at lines, edges, shapes and color.
- This mobile is a perfect example of movement. Look at the lines on the snake, and the hissing tongue – all showing movement



Pattern



- The repeating of an object or symbol throughout the artwork creates a pattern. Repeating the object or symbol can be organized or random.
- Notice the weaving in the corn. It is an organized pattern.

PROPORTION

- When all parts of the artwork – size, amount and location fit well together.
- This is a floor sized chess set. Notice the proportion of the bottles – how they are in proportion to the size of traditional chess pieces and to the size of floor size board.



REPETITION



- Repetition works with pattern to make the artwork seem active.
- In this exhibit, the member used the same photo but changed the colors to add interest and activity to the exhibit.

Rhythm

- Rhythm is repeating one or more elements to create organized movement . Rhythm creates a mood or feeling in the artwork.
- Look at the photo of the snowdrift. Do you notice the lines in the drift? How does the photo make you feel?



Variety

- Variety is shown when several elements work together to create variety, which holds your attention.
- This lamp shows interesting lines (from the antlers), smooth texture (from the lamp shade), and a single color (cream- monochromatic)



UNITY



- Unity is the feeling of harmony in an artwork. All of the parts belong together.
- Look at this pencil drawing of the bridge. Trees, sky, water, dirt road all fit. What would the drawing be like if a tiger was added? Would the artwork have unity?

Try your cake

- Just like we mix ingredients to make a cake, we combine design elements to make art principles and create great works of art. In the next series of slides, see if you can look at the exhibits and decide which elements made the principle.
- See if you can decide which principle is being featured.

Where is the emphasis?



- Look carefully at this exhibit. Where is the emphasis? What elements (color, shape, line, texture) were combined to make emphasis. How do you know?

Is It Rhythm or Is It Balance?



- Look at this drawing done by a 4-Grader. Which principle do you see?
- What elements were used to create the principle?

What element creates the rhythm?



- Look at this chair. What element – line, color, shape, texture, form, create the rhythm found in this upholstered chair?

Repetition is seen here- Can you find it?

- This stained glass piece of art is a great example of repetition.
- What design element is repeated?



Is it variety or is it emphasis?



- This wonderful wooden sculpture was designed by a first year member.
- Which is the stronger art principle – variety or emphasis? Why do you think that?

Is it proportion or is it movement?



- This quilt was made by a 4-H'er new to sewing. She used the elements of color and shape to design her quilt.
- Which art principle is stronger – proportion or movement? Why do you think this?

Putting it all together....

Look at a picture or object.

1 - Describe the **lines**.

Are they horizontal, vertical, dotted, zigzag, curved, straight, bold or fine?

2 - Tell about the **shapes**.

Circle, square, triangle, and freeform are words used to identify shapes.

3 - What **colors** are used?

4 - Describe the **texture** of an item. (Is it rough, smooth, soft, etc.)

5 - Describe the **space**. Space is the area between and around objects. The space around objects is often called negative space. Space can also refer to the feeling of depth.

6. Locate the art principles – look for proportion, movement, variety, balance, repetition, rhythm, emphasis, unity and pattern. Think about which elements combined to make the principle.

Adapted from handout by Janet Martin, Youth Specialist.

Want To Know More?

- Visit your local extension office and ask for
- 4H 633 [Color](#)
- 4H 634 [Design - Exploring the Elements & Principles](#)
- <http://4hccsprojects2.com/visualarts/>
- 4H-313 “Unraveling the Mystery of Elements and Principles of Design in Clothing”
- Publications are also available at
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pubs/Masterlist.html#4-H>



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