



Line



Form



Color



Shape



Space



Texture

Elements of Design

The arrangement or way of organizing what the eye sees and the brain decodes—line, form, color, space, shape and texture (the tools) in an artwork.

Line is a continuous mark with greater length than width. Lines can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, straight, curved, zigzag, thick, thin, smooth or jagged.

Forms are three-dimensional shapes, expressing length, width, and depth like sphere, cube, pyramid, cone and cylinder. Forms can be seen from more than one side.

Color is light reflected off objects. Color has three main characteristics: hue (red, blue, yellow, green, etc.), value (light or dark), and intensity (bright or dull).

Shape is a closed line that can be geometric (squares, triangles and circles) or organic (free formed). Shapes are flat but can show length and width.

Space is the area between and around objects. Negative space is often around or behind the objects. Space can give the feeling or illusion of depth.

Texture is surface quality that can be seen with the eyes (visual) or felt by touch (tactile). Texture can be rough, smooth, soft or hard.

REVIEW

Authors: Maureen Toomey, Area Youth Development Educator, UI Extension; Erika Jeffries, 4-H Program Specialist, UI 4-H Youth Development; Judith McShane, 4-H Program Specialist, UI 4-H Youth Development

Contributors: Alysson Statz, 4-H Program Coordinator, UI Extension; Kelli Loftus, Assoc. Extension Educator, UI Extension; Joan Gill, 4-H Program Coordinator, UI Extension

Artwork: Balance, Emphasis, Movement & Pattern by Judith McShane, Proportion, Rhythm, & Variety by Erika Thiel Jeffries, Repetition by Alysson Statz, Unity by Maureen Toomey

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Principles of Design

The principles of design are how we use the tools. Learning and using the elements and principles of design will help youth in creation and discussion of artwork.

Repetition: Repeated use of one shape, color or element, making the artwork seem active, creating unity. A “visual echo” reinforcing aspects of the piece.

Proportion: All parts of an artwork are relative in size; for example, the size of the head compared to the rest of the body.

Unity: A feeling of harmony among all parts of the artwork, creating a sense of completeness.

Variety: Differences among elements (varying shapes, colors, etc.) to hold one’s attention and add interest.

Emphasis: A point differing in size, color, texture, shape, etc., contrasting with the other elements to make it dominant, to catch the viewer’s eye.

Balance: How elements are arranged. Symmetrical: elements have equal weight. Asymmetrical: sides vary but work together. Radial: based on a circle.

Pattern: A combination of elements repeated in an ordered arrangement.

Movement: Use of lines, edges, shape and color to indicate movement, action, direction; guides a viewer’s eye through the artwork.

Rhythm: Repeated or alternating elements arranged to create beats as with music and a sense of movement.



Repetition



Proportion



Unity



Variety



Emphasis



Balance



Pattern



Movement



Rhythm

PREVIEW