



Teaching and Learning in Art Education 2nd Ed

Cultivating Students' Potential from Pre-K through High School

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Elements of Art and Principles of Design

Elements of Art

Line	The basic element of art, line is made from a series of dots moving in one or more directions.
Color	The amount of reflected light on a surface determines its hue, value, and intensity.
Shape	Shape is a two-dimensional area created by an enclosed, line, space, or color.
Form	Form refers to a three-dimensional object having height, width, and depth.
Space	Space refers to the two- or three-dimensional area within or surrounding a work of art. It shows the distance between or within objects in an artwork.
Texture	The way a surface feels or looks like it would feel is its texture.
Value	Value describes the range of lights and darks within an artwork. It is used to show shading and mood.

Principles of Design

Balance	The stable distribution of visual weight within an artwork provides a feeling of equilibrium and organizes a composition. Balance can be symmetrical (formal), asymmetrical (informal), or radial.
Contrast	The relationship of opposite elements in an artwork, called contrast, is used to show emphasis and organize spatial relationships.
Emphasis	This is also known as dominance , and it refers to an area or object within an artwork that stands out the most and grabs the viewer's attention.
Movement	This actual or implied motion in an artwork is referred to as movement.
Pattern	The repetition of the elements of art within a composition is called its pattern.
Proportion	This refers to the relationship of different elements or different sizes within an artwork.
Repetition	The arrangement of similar elements or objects within an artwork. All patterns show repetition, but not all repeated elements form patterns.
Rhythm	The visual movement within an artwork that dictates the direction the viewer's eye will travel, rhythm is influenced by repeated elements in a composition.
Variety	Variety refers to the visually satisfying arrangement of different elements and objects within an artwork.
Unity	Also known as harmony , unity provides a sense of order in which all elements and principles effectively come together in a composition and give the work a sense of completion. Nothing needs to be added to or taken away from the composition. All parts belong together.