

Using the Principles of Design

If the Elements of Art are the ingredients, the Principles of design create the “recipe.” They are the combinations of different ways to arrange the Elements. As with the Elements, by using the Principles of Design in your Art Smart projects, students will gain a better understanding of the art around them, and their own art work. Incorporating the Principles of Design into your lessons, students will learn so much more, and create better artwork.

Below are the 6 Principles we teach our children. As with the Elements, some people have been taught there are more or less, or different terms with the same meaning. I will try to cover all the various names you may have encountered.

1. Balance

Balance talks about where you place the lines, shapes/forms, colors, textures, or values within the given space. There are 3 basic types of balance.

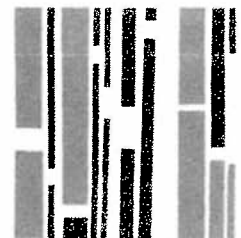
Symmetry (formal) - if divided down the middle, both sides match identically.



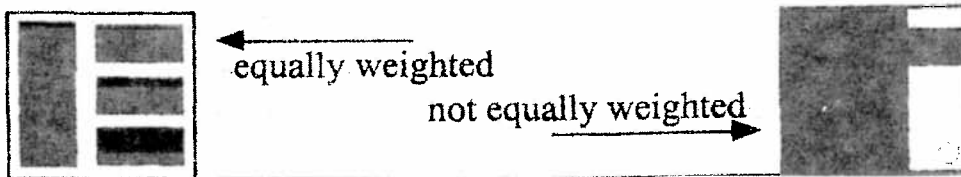
Asymmetry (informal) - if divided down the middle, both sides do not match.



Radial (from the center) - there is one location from which all lines/shapes originate.

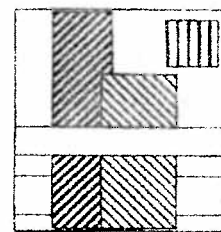
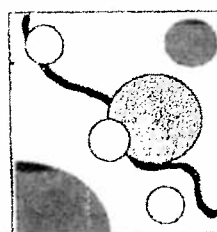


Another thing to think about with balance is whether or not each side is equally “wighted”, regardless of the sides being identical or not.



2. Unity

Unity (harmony) is created by using many similar lines, shapes/forms, colors, textures, or values in one work of art.



3. Form

Form is 3 dimensional. It has Height, Width, and Length. You deal with form when you create sculpture, or other 3D projects.

organic form is curvy - sphere, egg

geometric form is angular - cube, pyramid

4. Color

When talking about color, you are addressing color schemes. Colors can help convey moods, emotions, importance of objects, etc.

Primary - RYB

Secondary _ OGV

Complementary - (colors directly across each other on color wheel)

Creates a lot of contrast O+B; Y+V; G+R

Analogous - (set of colors next to each other on the color wheel) Creates

unity YGB; GBV; BVR; VRO; ROY; OYG

Warm - ROY (also happy, angry)

Cool - BVG (also sad, content)

Monochromatic - tints and shades of one color

tint = color + white

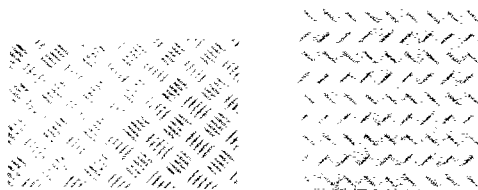
shade = color + black

5. Texture

Texture is the surface of something - rough, bumpy, smooth, etc. It helps us understand the differences of objects.

Tactile - texture you can see and feel - sculpture, carvings, masks, etc.

Visual - texture you can see - paintings, photographs, drawings, etc.



Examples of Visual Texture

6. Value

Value is the overall lightness or darkness of a color or entire work of art. Value can help convey a mood, emotion, the time of day, or season.