

Design Elements for Visual Art Curriculum

By Trish Reynoso - Elementary School Kindergarten - Fifth Grade

Design Elements	Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade
Balance	Arrangement; even or uneven, large or small. How shapes and lines exist in a picture or in a sculpture. Do they look like they might fall over, or are they stable?	Arrangement; symmetry (balance), even or uneven, large or small. Related to math = < or >	Size relationships; large, medium, small. Related to math; equal, less than, or larger than.	Size relationships; large, medium, small. Related to math; equal, less than, or larger than.	One point perspective. Diminishing size to show distance in elementary perspective. Radiating from center point for circular movement and	Two point perspective. Bi-lateral symmetry – animals and people, their structure. Asymmetry / symmetry, formal / informal.
Emphasis	Large or small, more or less important.	Large or small, more or less important.	Created through prominence in picture. Compose and arrange.	Created through contrasting hues, intensities, or values	Created by contrasts of light / dark, large / small, bright / dull, rough / smooth.	Created through focus, images blurred or clear.
Unity	Repeating, overlapping, grouping.	Repeating, overlapping, grouping.	Unity through related forms or motifs. What looks the same? How is this different from pattern?	Unity through related forms or motifs to produce a harmonious effect. What looks the same? How is this different from pattern?	Achieved through overall tone. What links a work visually?	Grouping elements for unity. Proportion; golden section ratio of three to five.
Pattern / Rhythm	Shapes or lines that appear over and over again.	Regular repetition of line, shape, or color.	Measured and grouped repetition of line, shape, or color. What is the impact of pattern, why do artists' use this?	Measured and grouped repetition of line, shape, or color. What is the impact of pattern, why do artists' use this?	Repetition and variety. Measured and grouped repetition of line, shape, or color. What is the impact of pattern, why do artists' use this?	Repetition and variety. Measured and grouped repetition of line, shape, or color. What is the impact of pattern, why do artists' use this?
Content	Realistic, Abstract, Nonobjective. Narrative; art that tells a story.	Realistic, Abstract, Nonobjective. Narrative; art that tells a story.	Realistic, Abstract, Nonobjective. Artists make choices of color and design to express feelings: restful, happy, sad, fierce, graceful.	Realistic, Abstract, Nonobjective. Artists make choices of color and design to express feelings: restful, happy, sad, fierce, graceful.	Realistic, Abstract, Nonobjective. Artists use the expressive qualities of line, form, and color to tell their story. Movement - Implied or real.	Realistic, Abstract, Nonobjective. Artists use the expressive qualities of line, form, and color to tell their story. Movement - Implied or real.