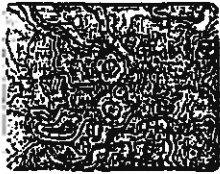


## Elements and Principles of Design

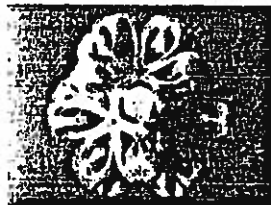
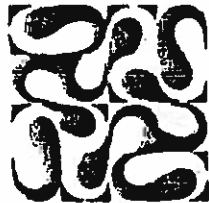
A design is an arrangement, a way of organizing something. In arts and crafts, even though we use many different materials, the visual appearance (that is what our eye sees and our brain decodes) can be reduced to six elements of design. They are line, shape, form, space, color, and texture.

They are what we organize. They are the tools.

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



**Shape** is a closed line. Shapes can be geometric, like squares and circles; or organic, like free formed shapes or natural shapes. Shapes are flat and can express length and width.



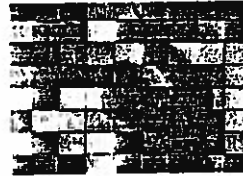
**Forms** are three-dimensional shapes, expressing length, width, and depth. Balls, cylinders, boxes and triangles are forms.



**Space** is the area between and around objects. The space around objects is often called negative space; negative space has shape. Space can also refer to the feeling of depth. Real space is three-dimensional: in visual art when we can create the feeling or illusion of depth we call it space.



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



**Texture** is the surface quality that can be seen and felt. Textures can be rough or smooth, soft or hard. Textures do not always feel the way they look; for example, a drawing of a porcupine may look prickly, but if you touch the drawing, the paper is still smooth.

### Principles of Design

The principles of design are how we organize or use the tools. The principles of design are balance, emphasis, movement, pattern, proportion, repetition, rhythm, variety, and unity.

**Balance** is the distribution of the visual weight of objects, colors, texture, and space. If the design was a scale these elements should be balanced to make a design feel stable. In symmetrical balance, the elements used on one side of the design are similar to those on the other side; in asymmetrical balance, the sides are different but still look balanced. In radial

balance, the elements are arranged around a central point and may be similar.



**Emphasis** is the part of the design that catches the viewer's attention. Usually the artist will make one area stand out, contrasting it with other areas. The area will be different in size, color, texture, shape, etc.



**Movement** is the path the viewer's eye takes through the artwork, often to focal areas. Such movement can be directed along line edges, shape and color within the artwork.



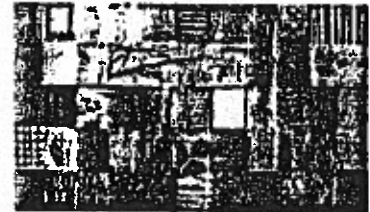
**Pattern** is the repeating of an object or symbol all over the artwork. The repetition of certain elements creates a pattern.



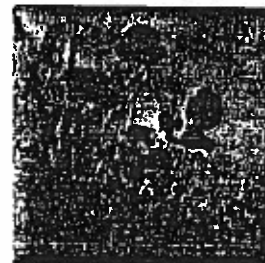
**Repetition** works with pattern to make the artwork seem active. As in music, the same thing repeated creates a harmony. The repetition of elements of design creates unity within the artwork.



**Variety** is the use of several elements of design to hold the viewer's attention and to guide the viewer's eye through the artwork.



**Contrast** is the arrangement of opposite elements (light vs. dark colors, rough vs. smooth textures, large vs. small shapes, etc.) in a piece so as to create visual interest, excitement and drama.



**Unity** is the feeling of harmony between all parts of the artwork creating a sense of completeness.



**Proportion** is the feeling of unity created when all parts (sized, amounts, or number) relate well with each other. When drawing the human figure, proportion can refer to the size of the head compared to the rest of the body.



**Rhythm** is created when one or more elements of design are used repeatedly to create a feeling of organized movement. Variety is essential to keep rhythm exciting and active, and moving the viewer around the artwork. Rhythm creates mood like music or dancing.



**Value** is the contrast in the intensity of light. By slowly changing the shading in a drawing of an object we can make it appear more or less solid, rounder, or flatter. Value is what changes a line drawing from contour lines, to realism. It is the degrees of lightness and darkness achieved by shading.



# Elements and Principles of Design

## Worksheet

1. In your own words, define the elements of design. Draw a picture as an example.

**LINE:**

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**SHAPE:**

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**VALUE:**

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**TEXTURE:**

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**COLOUR:**

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2. In your own words, define the principles of design. Draw a picture as an example.

**BALANCE:**

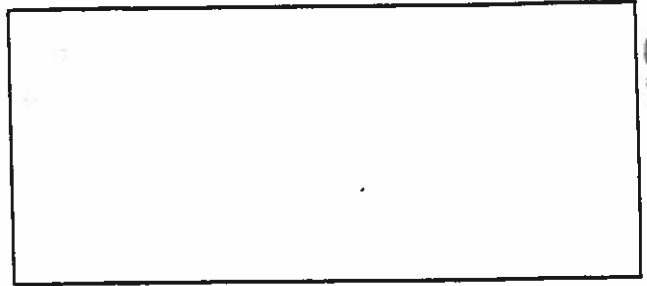
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**UNITY:**

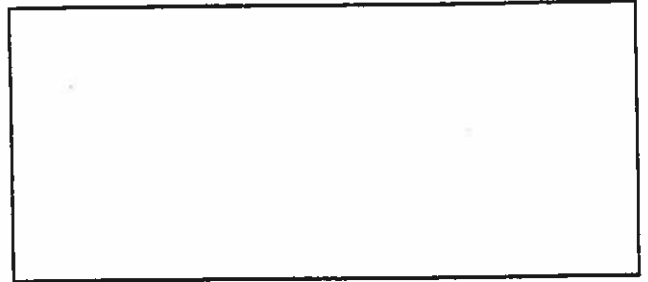
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**CONTRAST:**

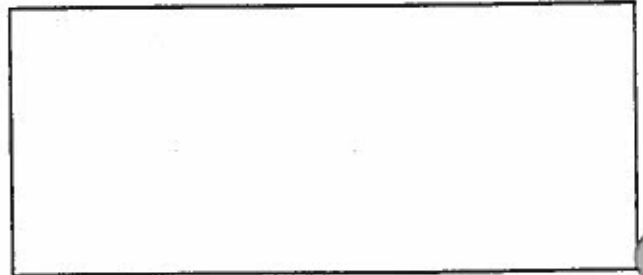
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**EMPHASIS:**

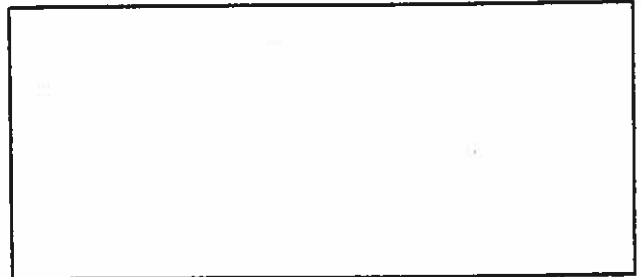
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**PATTERN:**

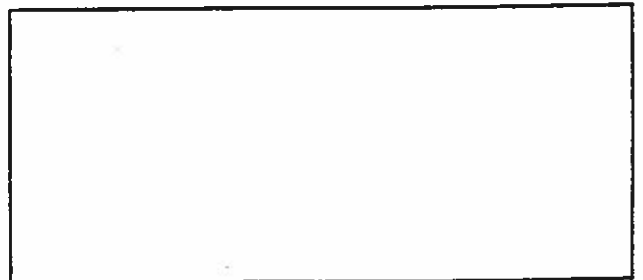
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**MOVEMENT:**

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