

## Terms Used in Visual Arts K-12 Grade Level Expectations

Abstract - Art that exaggerates, is simplified or distorted

Actual Texture – The existing surface quality of an object as communicated primarily the sense of touch

Additive Sculpture - Technique of adding to or building up clay, plaster, metal or other pliable materials into three-dimensional forms. Also called Modeling

Aesthetics - The branch of philosophy that deals with the nature and value of art

Analogous - Colors next to each other on the color wheel that have a common hue

Architectural Style - Type of design used frequently during a certain time in history

Architecture - Art form of planning and constructing buildings to meet a variety of human needs

Arbitrary Color – Colors chosen by the artist independent of what is observed

Art Criticism Process – Organized approach to the observation and evaluation of a work of art using description, analysis, interpretation and judgment

Assemblage – An artwork created by combining three-dimensional objects

Asymmetrical Balance - Two sides of a composition are different, but have the same visual weight. Also called Informal Balance

Atmospheric Perspective – A method of creating the illusion of depth by representing objects further away with less clarity of contour and diminished color and contrast. Also called Aerial Perspective

Background - The part of an artwork farthest away from the viewer and closest to the horizon line

Balance – Principle of design that deals with arranging visual elements so that a composition has equal visual weight on each side of an imaginary middle line

Batik - Method of dyeing cloth that involves the use of resist materials to prevent dye from coloring certain areas of the cloth

Center of Interest - The focal point or area of emphasis

Ceramics - Sculpture or pottery made from clay

Cityscape - A picture of the outside, with the city or buildings being the most important part

Clay, Natural A moist earth of decomposed rock used to create pottery

Coil – Long roll of clay or fiber joined into a circle or spiral

Collage - From the French word 'coller' that means 'to paste.' A collage is a composition made by attaching a variety of materials to a flat surface.

Collagraph – A print made from a specifically constructed plate that has been produced in a collage manner, resulting in high and low surfaces which hold ink differently during printing

Color – Element of art derived from reflected light. Color has three properties: hue, value and intensity

Color Schemes Purposely selected group of colors chosen for their unique relationship to one another. Types of color schemes include: monochromatic, analogous, complementary, triad, split-complementary

Color Wheel – A predetermined arrangement of the primary, secondary and intermediate colors on a circular wheel used to define color relationships

Complementary Colors Any two colors opposite each other on the color wheel. Ex. Red-green, blue-orange, yellow-violet

Composition - The arrangement of the elements and/or objects in an artwork. The way principles of art are used to organize elements

Contour Line - An outline drawing of a form or object. Defines edges and surface ridges

Contrast – A Principle of design that refers to a difference between elements in an artwork

Cool Colors - Colors around blue on the color wheel: green, blue, violet

Crosshatching - Shading technique which uses layering of repeated, parallel lines in different directions to create the appearance of volume

Depth - Distance between foreground, middleground and background

Design - A visual plan, organization or arrangements of elements in a work of art

Diagonal – Lines that slant

Drawing - Using lines to show forms or figures

Dry Brush - Lightly touching the surface with a brush coated in ink, paint or other medium to create a scratchy, textured effect

Edition – Set of prints made from the same plate

Elements of Art – The language of art of the basic elements used when producing works of art:  
Line, Shape, Form, Texture, Color, Value, Space

Emphasis - The principle of design that stresses one element or area of a work of art to make it attract the viewer's attention

Etching – Intaglio technique in which acid is used to incise lines in a metal plate. Includes aquatint, soft grounds and hard ground

Fiber Arts -

Figure Drawing - Drawing the whole body of a person

Focal Point – Area of an artwork that attracts the attention first

Foreground - The part of an artwork closest to the viewer and usually positioned at the bottom of the artwork

Form - An Element of art that has three dimensions (height, width and depth) and encloses space

Formal Balance - Two sides of a composition are identical. Also called Symmetrical Balance

Free Form Shape - Unique shapes without given names

Function - The purpose for which an object is to be used

Geometric - Shapes or forms with mathematical names that can be defined using mathematical formulas: circle, triangle, square, sphere, cube, prism, pyramid

Hatching - Shading technique that uses layering of repeated, parallel lines to create the appearance of volume

Hard Edge – In 2-dimensional artwork, shapes with clearly define outlines

Horizon Line - Line where the sky and ground appear to meet

Horizontal - A line that is parallel to the top and bottom edges of the surface plane

Hue - Another name for color. Hue is related to the wavelength of the reflected light

Illusion of Depth - Feeling or appearance of distance created by color, value, line, placement and size on a flat surface

Impressed Texture -

Informal Balance - Two sides of a composition have the same visual weight, but the lines, shapes and colors are not the same. Also called Asymmetrical Balance

Intensity - The brightness or dullness of a color

Intermediate Colors - Colors created by the combination of a primary and a secondary color that are next to each other on the color wheel: yellow-orange, red-orange, red-violet, blue-violet, blue-green, yellow-green. Also called tertiary colors

Invented Texture - A type of invented texture that does not represent a real texture but creates the sensation of one by repeating lines and shapes in a two-dimensional pattern. Fabricated texture from the imagination in contrast to one produced by nature. Texture derived by observation and simplification of actual texture

Landscape - A picture of the outside, with the landforms being the most important part

Line - The path of a moving dot

Linear Perspective - A system of drawing or painting to give the illusion of depth on a flat surface. All parallel lines receding into the distance are drawn to one or more imaginary vanishing points on the horizon in such a work

Medium - Material, such as pencil, pen, watercolors, oil paint, pastel, acrylic paint, clay, wood, stone, found objects, etc., used to create art. Plural is Media

Middleground - Area in an artwork between the foreground and background

Modeling - Technique of adding to or building up clay, plaster, metal or other pliable materials into three-dimensional forms. Also called Additive

Monochromatic - A color scheme using tints and shades of one color

Mono-print - A print made in an edition of one, often from a painting made on a non-absorbent surface

Negative Shape - Flat area that is not the subject matter

Negative Space - Empty spaces surrounding shapes and forms

Neutral Colors - Color category that encompasses whites, grays, blacks and browns

Non-Objective - Style of art in which there is no recognizable subject matter

Opaque - Quality of a material that does not let any light pass through. Opposite of transparent

Organic Shapes - A fluid shape having none of the angularity associated with geometric shapes. Organic shapes are often associated with objects in nature

Original - One of a kind

Overlapping - Placing one object in front of another to show depth

Paint – Pigment mixed with oil or water

Painting - To make an artwork using wet media such as tempera or watercolor paints

Palette - Tray used by painters for mixing colors of paint

Parallel – Lines that move in the same direction and always stay the same distance apart

Perpendicular -

Pattern – A choice of lines, colors and/or shapes repeated over and over in a planned way

Perspective - A way of creating the illusion of depth on a two-dimensional surface

Pigment – Any coloring matter mixed with a liquid or binder to make paint, ink, crayons, etc.

Pinch – A method of hand-building pottery or sculpture by pressing, pulling, and pinching clay or other soft materials

Point of View – Angle from which the viewer sees an object

Portrait - An artwork that shows a specific person or animal. Often shows only the face

Positive Space - Shapes or forms.

Primary Colors - The first colors from which all other spectrum are mixed: red, yellow, blue.

Principles of Design - The rules by which an artist organizes the Elements of Art to create a work of art: Balance, Emphasis, Contrast/Variety, Rhythm/Repetition, Unity, Proportion

Printmaking - The design and production of prints by an artist

Proportion - The size relationships of parts to a whole and to each other

Radial Balance – Type of balance in which lines, shapes or elements branch out from a central point in a circular pattern

Realistic - Art that shows life as it is. Art that aims to reproduce things as they appear

Relief Printmaking – Technique in which the image is printed from a raised surface, usually by cutting away non-image area. Includes linocut, woodcut, collagraph and etching.

Relief Sculpture – Type of sculpture in which forms project from a flat background.

Rhythm – Principle of Design that shows the regular repetition of any of the elements of design, with or without periodic alteration

Scale - The relative size of an object as compared to other objects, to the environment or the human figure

Sculpture - Three-dimensional artwork

Sculpture in the Round - Freestanding sculpture that is complete on all sides

Seascape - A picture of the outside, with the body of water being the most important part

Secondary Colors - Color made by mixing two primary colors: orange, violet, green

Serigraph – Technique that uses a squeegee to force ink through selected parts of stretched mesh containing the image. The process is also called silkscreen.

Shade - The dark value of a color made by mixing black with a color. The opposite of tint

Shading - The use of a range of values to define form

Shape – An element of art. Shape is enclosed space having only two dimensions (height x width)

Simulated Texture –Texture that is created through careful and methodical imitation of actual and natural textures.

Slab - Hand building ceramic method in which flat pieces of moist clay are joined together with slip

Soft Edge -

Space – An element of art that refers to the emptiness between, around, above, below, or within objects. The distance around and between things. An area that can be filled with an art element

Still Life – An arrangement of inanimate objects

Stippling – A shading technique which uses layering of repeated dots to create the appearance of volume

Subject – The image that viewers can easily recognize in a work of art

Subtractive – A sculpture technique in which material is removed by carved or cutting

Symbol – An image that stands for an idea or has a meaning other than its outward appearance

Symmetrical Balance – Two sides of a composition are identical. Also called Formal Balance

Texture – Element of art that refers to how things feel or how they might look on the surface

Theme – The most important idea or subject in a composition; the subject of a work of art, sometimes with a number of phrases or variations

Three-Dimensional – Artwork that has height, width and depth

Tint – Light value of a color made by mixing white with a color

Translucent – Quality of a material that allows light to pass through it, but one cannot see through it

Transparent – Quality of a material that allows light to pass through it

Two-Dimensional – Artwork that is flat or measured in only two ways (height and width)

Unity – Principle of design that relates to the sense of wholeness in an artwork. A coherent relationship among the elements in a work of art

Value – Element of art that refers to lightness or darkness of gray or a color

Vanishing Point – Point on the horizon where receding parallel lines seem to meet

Variety – Principle of design concerned with difference or contrast

Warm Colors – Colors around orange on the color wheel: red, orange, yellow

Warp – In weaving, lengthwise threads held in place on the loom and crossed by the weft threads

Wash – A thin, transparent layer of paint

Weaving – Interlacing two sets of parallel threads. Decorative art made by interlocking one material into other materials

Weft – In weaving, the filling threads, running horizontally in weaving

