

VISUAL ELEMENTS WORKSHEET

When you look at an artwork you can ask yourself the following questions to help you understand how the artist has used the visual elements to compose the work:

LINE

Does the artist use line to suggest movement, create interesting shapes or a certain mood?
What kind of lines are used: vertical, horizontal, curved, diagonal or zigzag; freehand or mechanical; controlled or scribbled; thick or thin; continuous or broken?

SHAPE

Does the artist use shape to create a sense of order, space, rhythm or pattern?
What kind of shapes are used: flat (2-dimensional) or solid (3-dimensional); geometric or organic; abstract or representational; positive or negative; transparent or opaque?

-tone

Does the artist use tone to create a dramatic atmosphere, the illusion of solidity or a sense of distance and depth?
What kind of tones are used: dark or light; strong or weak; harmonic or contrasting; dramatic or muted?

COLOR

Does the artist use color to create a mood, suggest distance or depth or create a pattern across the work?
What kind of colors are used: primary, secondary, tertiary or complementary; bright or dull; warm or cool; noisy or calm?

PATTERN

Does the artist create pattern by repeating lines, shapes, tones, colours, etc. across the work?
What kind of patterns are used: natural or man-made; regular or irregular; symmetrical or asymmetrical; functional or decorative?

TEXTURE

Does the artist create the optical illusion of texture by realistic painting or tactile texture with expressive brushstrokes or collage techniques?
What kind of textures are used: soft, smooth, silky, flat, fluid, smeared, coarse, jagged, bumpy, crinkled or crusty?

FORM

Does the artist create the illusion of form in 2-dimensions or real form in 3-dimensions?
What kind of form is used: natural or man-made; representational or abstract; organic or geometric; functional or decorative; solid or transparent, sculpted, moulded, constructed, carved or cast?

VISUAL ELEMENTS WORD BANK

This word bank is a list of appropriate words associated with the visual elements that has been compiled to help you express your ideas when writing a critical evaluation of any artwork.

LINE

linear - curved - diagonal - horizontal - vertical - straight - jagged - freehand - scribbled - sketched - dense - hatched - mechanical - structural - controlled - accurate - continuous - broken - thick - thin - delicate - sensitive - expressive - energetic - wavy - undulating

SHAPE

natural - man-made - regular - irregular - flat - 2-dimensional - solid - 3-dimensional - representational - abstract - geometric - organic - transparent - reflective - opaque - positive - negative, decorative - symbolic - stylized - perspective - square - rectangular - circular - elliptical - triangular - interlocking - constructed - balanced - simple - complex - freeform - twisted

-tone

tonal - tonality - halftone - light - dark - positive - negative - counterchange - monochrome - shade - dramatic - contrast - chiaroscuro - luminosity - radiant - hazy - silhouette - sombre - soft - pastel - subdued - subtle - muted - density - value - cast - accent - emphasis - distribution - effect

COLOR

primary - secondary - tertiary - complementary - opposite - neutral - local - low key - high key - spectrum - hue - tint - shade - gloss - matt - warm - cool - hot - cold - bright - dull - brilliant - vibrant - joyful - noisy - cheerful - calm - soothing - tranquil - depressing - dreary - gloomy - moody

PATTERN

natural - organic - abstract - geometric - man-made - regular - irregular - functional - structural - decorative - ornamental - symmetrical - asymmetrical - repeating - rich - varied - random - positive - negative

TEXTURE

optical (sight) - tactile (touch) - feel - soft - smooth - silky - flat - fluid - wet - oily - smeared - smoky - steamy - frothy - dry - rough - sandy - coarse - jagged - bumpy - crinkled - scaly - crusty - rusted - rotted - decayed

FORM

volume - space - mass - surface - representational - abstract - sculptural - architectural - structural - 3D - 2D - shaped - modelled - carved - cast - constructed - welded - eroded - painted - illustrated - human - male - female - natural - mechanical - kinetic - light - expressive - interlocking - classical - primitive - cubist - constructivist - reclining - undulating - fluid - turbulent - ephemeral - freestanding - dynamic - monumental