

Art Terms

To assist teachers from other disciplines who are using these lessons, included is a list of general art terms used in the lesson plans. Definitions are adapted from ArtLex.com.

Background: The area of a picture that appears to be farthest away from the viewer.

Balance: The way the elements of art are arranged to create a feeling of stability in a work.

Blotted Line: A printing process developed by Andy Warhol in which a design is created with ink on paper. While the ink is still wet, the design is blotted onto another paper, transferring the design.

Collage: A picture created by adhering such basically flat elements as newspaper, wallpaper, printed text and illustrations, photographs, cloth, string, etc., to a flat surface.

Color: An element of art with three properties: 1) hue or tint, (color name), 2) intensity, (purity and strength of a color), and 3) value, (lightness or darkness of a color).

Composition: The placement or arrangement of the elements of art in a work. Compositions should either be pleasing or otherwise expressive.

Contrasting: Combining elements of art to stress the differences between those elements. (bright colors that contrast with dull colors, angular shapes that contrast with rounded shapes)

Design: The organization or composition of a work; the skilled arrangement of its parts.

Elements of Art: The basic components used by the artist when producing works of art: color, line, value, shape, form, texture and space.

Foreground: The area of a picture that appears to be closest to the viewer.

Installation: Art made for a specific space to exploit certain qualities of that space

Line: A continuous mark made on some surface by a moving point.

Portrait: A work of art that represents a specific person, a group of people or an animal, usually showing a person's features as well as personality.

Print: A shape made from a block or plate or other object covered with wet ink and then pressed onto a flat surface, such as paper or textile.

Repetition: Combining elements of art so that the same elements are used over and over again.

Shape: An enclosed space defined and determined by other art elements such as line, color, value and texture.

Silkscreen Printing: A stencil method of printmaking in which an image is imposed on a screen of silk or other fine mesh, with blank areas coated with an impermeable substance. Ink is forced through the mesh onto the printing surface.

Space: Refers to the distance or area between, around, above, below or within things. It can be described as two-dimensional or three-dimensional, as flat, shallow, or deep, open or closed, etc.

Stamp: To imprint with a mark, design or seal.

Texture: The surface quality or feel of an object: its smoothness, roughness, softness.

Underpainting: The layer or layers of color on a painting surface applied before the final coat. In Warhol's case, the silkscreened layer.

Value: The lightness or darkness of a color, important in black and white work.