

## Graphic Design: Introduction to Typography

What is Design?  
What is Graphic Design?  
How is Graphic Design different from Fine Art?

### LESSON OVERVIEW/OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about design and graphic design through presentation, discussion, and hands on experience. They will review the elements and principles of graphic design as well as ideas that make a design distinctive. Through the lesson plan, students will work with a single Roman letter as an introduction to new ways of visualizing, thinking, and talking about art and design. Students will transform the letter and its negative spaces into an image of a word.

### KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO VISUAL ARTS CORE CURRICULUM: Based on Utah State Visual Arts Core Curriculum Requirements (3rd Grade)

**Standard 1 (Making): The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes.**

**Objective 1: Explore a variety of art materials while learning new techniques and processes.**

- b. Use simplified forms, such as cones, spheres, and cubes, to begin drawing more complex forms.

**Objective 3: Handle art materials in a safe and responsible manner.**

- b. Dispose and/or recycle waste art materials properly.
- c. Clean and put back to order art making areas after projects.
- d. Respect other students' artworks as well as one's own.

**Standard 2 (Perceiving): The student will analyze, reflect on, and apply the structures of art.**

**Objective 1: Analyze and reflect on works of art by their elements and principles**

- a. Determine how artists create dominance in their work; e.g., size, repetition, and contrast.

**Objective 2: Create works of art using the elements and principles.**

- c. Discover how an artist has thoughtfully used all of the space within an artwork.
- d. Create a work of art that uses all of the space on paper.
- e. Create a work of art that uses contrast to create a focal point. Use that to convey the most important idea or part of the work

**Standard 3 (Expressing): The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.**

**Objective 1: Explore possible content and purposes in significant works of art**

- d. Describe the difference between crafts and arts; e.g., some crafts have more art in them than other crafts; some crafts are for display and not for practical use. For example, you wouldn't want to cook in some precious ceramic vessels.

## INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Understand the elements and principles of graphic design.
- Understand design and graphic design and be able to discuss the two ideas.
- Be able to discuss different types of design.
- Be able to discuss different types of graphic design.
- Brainstorm word meanings and change a letter in design to reflect a specific word.

## SUPPLIES

- Included pdf files for slideshows
- Preprinted example sheets of ABCing differently
- White Paper
- Pencils and Markers

## VOCABULARY

**Graphic Design** - a creative process that combines art and technology to communicate ideas. The designer works with a variety of communication tools in order to convey a message from a client to a particular audience. The main tools are image and typography.

**Elements/Principles of Design:** visual tools to use to communicate a message.

### Elements of Design:

**Lines** - The distance between two points. Look closely at the great variety of lines, straight, curved, thick, thin, solid and not-solid.

**Shapes** - Squares (and rectangles), triangles, and circles are the three basic shapes.

**Size** - How big or small is it? Look at mass or visual weight of graphic and text elements.

**Texture** - In addition to the actual texture of the paper we print on, look at the textures we create through techniques such as embossing and the visual texture created with certain graphics techniques.

**Color** - Ask questions such as what is the meaning of red? What colors go well together? This concept builds on the conversation of the color wheel and determining what colors go well together.

### The Principles of Design:

**Balance** - This refers to the ways one can achieve visual balance in a design using ways such as symmetrical, radial, formal, and informal methods. There is also the rule of “thirds” on a visual platform that one can use to achieve balance.

**Proximity/Unity** - Keeping like items together and creating unity by how close or far apart elements are from each other.

**Alignment** - While centered text has its place, it is often the mark of a novice designer. Learn how to align text and graphics to create more interesting, dynamic, or appropriate layouts.

**Repetition** - Get an understanding of the importance of consistency for the reader and ways to create a consistent and balanced look through different types of repetition.

**Contrast** - Big vs. small, black vs. white. These are some ways to create contrast and visual interest.

**White Space** - The art of nothing is another description for this principle. View examples of the use of white space in design to determine what does and doesn't work.

# INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

## Introduction/Discussion

Introduce your students to concepts of design and graphic design (\*show Class1posters pdf slideshow presentation). First show the students the slideshow of poster visuals of what graphic designers think graphic design is. Discuss the images, typography and meaning of the posters. Encourage comparisons and contrasting statements as well as descriptions of what they see.

Use these prompts:

- What is design?
- What is graphic design?

Invite responses and then offer explanations and introductions below.

**\*\*Show Class 1 pdf presentation - some of the content is reproduced below but the images are on the slideshow.**

**Design** is all around you, everything man-made has been designed, whether consciously or not.

The question therefore isn't so much **'what is design & why does it matter?'** but **'how can I use good design to make the world around me better?'**

## What is Graphic Design?

Suppose you want to announce or sell something, amuse or persuade someone, explain a complicated system or demonstrate a process. In other words, you have a message you want to communicate. How do you "send" it? You could tell people one on one in person or broadcast it by radio or loudspeaker. That's verbal communication. But if you use any visual medium at all - **if you make a poster; type a letter; create a business logo, a magazine ad, or an album cover, even make a computer printout - you are using a form of visual communication called graphic design.**

Graphic designers work with drawn, painted, photographed, or computer-generated images (pictures), but they also design the letterforms that make up various typefaces found in movie credits and TV ads; in books, magazines, and menus, and even on computer screens. **Designers create, choose, and organize these elements-typography, images and the so-called "white space" around them - to communicate a message.** Graphic design is a part of your daily life. From humble things like gum wrappers to huge things like billboards to the T-shirt you are wearing, graphic design informs, persuades, organizes, stimulates, locates, identifies, attracts attention and provides pleasure.

Graphic design is a creative process that combines art and technology to communicate ideas. The designer works with a variety of communication tools in order to convey a message from a client to a particular audience. The main tools are image and typography.

How is graphic design different from fine art? Graphic design is often confused with fine art, and the two are very different. The single most important factor that differentiates graphic design from fine art is the intent of the communication.

Graphic designers, like interpreters, create communication on behalf of someone else—a resource. That resource could be a big corporation or a small local business. Fine artists, on the other hand are beholden to no one but themselves.

## How many types of design are there?

- Graphic Design
- Brand Design
- Packaging Design
- Product Design
- Building Design
- Furniture Design
- Interior Design
- Fashion & Textile Design
- Interaction Design

## How many types of graphic design are there?

- Identity Design
- Print Design
- Package Design
- Illustration Design
- Digital Design
- Animation Design
- Identity Design / logos

**Principles & Elements of Graphic Design** - These are the visual tools to use to communicate a message.

**Using these elements and principles in design is the first step in creating successful visual compositions.**

These principles are used in all visual design fields, including graphic design, industrial design, architecture and fine art.

Design is the organized arrangement of one or more elements and principles (e.g. line color or texture) for a purpose.

### Elements of Design

- line
- shape
- size
- texture
- color

### Principles of Design

- balance
- proximity
- alignment
- repetition
- contrast
- white space

## Lesson Plan Project

This lesson plan is based on the book ABCing: Seeing the Alphabet Differently and its accompanying website ABseeing.com. The book shows how you can use a single Roman letter to introduce new ways of visualizing, thinking and talking about art and design.

“Each letter can be transformed to create a narrative. The narrative is made using only the negative shapes of a given letter. It is not the actual letterforms from which these new perspectives take shape, but the spaces around the letterforms. The shapes can be rotated and resized; they are not duplicated, mirrored or otherwise altered. Therefore the illustrations maintain their visual connection to the original letterform. The shapes are then composed as a visual translation of a given word’s meaning, creating visual and conceptual connections between the letter, the word and the surrounding space. The result is a mixture of philosophy, poetry and art.

The intent is to spur new and alternative approaches to how viewers look at an image, shifting the focus from the subject - the letter - to the surrounding space. This lesson encourages the participant to see and consider the “white space” as much as they see and consider the letter within it. It suggests how context can define or distort a subject, and that is one looks beyond a letter, or any form for that matter, one will find another story.”

### Brainstorm the word meanings of:

abstract / balance / contrast / dynamic / figure / scale / variety

### Show samples of how a letter can be rearranged to include positive and negative spaces to produce an image that reflects a word (ABseeing.com).

Hand out worksheets (ABSeeing\_Worksheets.pdf) and see what solutions the students create. They will each receive a packet of seven worksheets that you print off for them. Ideally use color copies, but black and white work as well.

### Reflect

Have students respond to one of the following prompts•

- The best thing about this activity was \_\_\_\_\_.
- It was hard for me when I had to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Next I would like to experiment with \_\_\_\_\_.

### Lesson Extensions

#### Visual Arts and Writing

- Ask students to choose more letters and make up their words and images to go along with the chosen letters. • Encourage students to continue working with one of the media techniques on an additional sheet of paper.
- Have students write a poem, lyric, or short piece based on something they created in this lesson.

### Supplemental Materials

<http://www.ABseeing.com>

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