# Art Vocabulary

In this handout you will find some visual and written examples of important Art Terminology that will further assist you with

Elements of Art:

The Elements of Art are line, colour, texture, tone, form, shape, sound, time and light – and are the basic units of the visual language of art (the ingredients that make up a composition or artwork). Here are some example below. Remember to refer to the Art Elements Glossary to extend your description of the art elements.
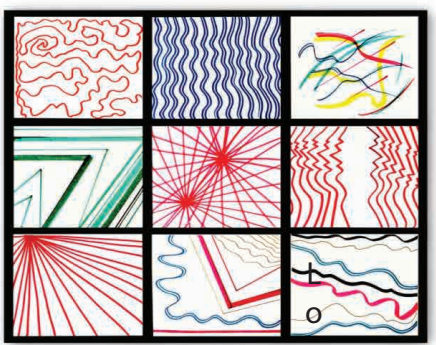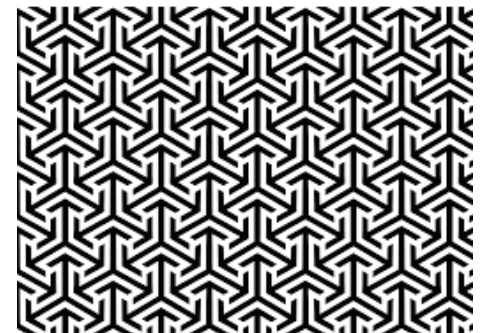

Line

Tone

Shape

Principles of Art:

The Principles of Art are the means by which the art elements are successfully organised into a composition and include such things as emphasis (focal point), movement, rhythm, unity, variety, space, repetition (pattern), balance, contrast, proportion, space and scale. Here are some examples below.

Emphasis

Movement

Repetition (pattern)

Subject Matter:

Subject Matter: the arrangement and placement of the objects or figures within an artwork. What do you actually see in the artwork? Let's look at the subject matter in Van Goghs: Starry Night

Abstract stars in the night sky

Rhythmic starry sky

Tree like structure known to be the "Cypress Tree"

Lorem ipsum
Large star- may be the sun

Houses in the village

Cultural Context:

Cultural context refers to how an artist is influenced by their life experiences and background, beliefs, ideas and values.
You should consider the artist's ethnicity, nationality, political beliefs and personal values when analysing artwork.

The artwork to the right created by Jean Michel Basquiat titled "Origin of Cotton" addresses his cultural context. As a man of colour, Basquiat often included cultural/ political concepts in his work.
It is said that cotton might stand literally for slavery but also for fixed hierarchies of meaning and the way people get caged inside them.

ORIGIN OF COTTON ,
1984
Medium:
oil, acrylic, silkscreen ink and masking tape on canvas

Jean-Michel Basquiat

Historical Context:

Historical context refers to how an artwork is influenced by time and place to make artworks that reflect a particular time in their history. What was happening in the world at the time the artist created the artwork? Has this had an effect on what was created?

The artwork to the right was created during World War Two. This historical event had a great influence on some of the artwork produced.

The description of the artwork below addresses the historical context further:

As women were encouraged to take wartime jobs in defence industries, they became a celebrated symbol of female patriotism. But when the war ended, many industries forced women to relinquish their skilled jobs to returning veterans.

"We Can Do It"
1942

Miller, J. Howard

Artists Influences/ Inspiration

Artists are influenced by personal experiences, people, things and events in the world around them. Every time we even scribble- we are influenced to do so by something.

Everyone has probably seen Pepe in a Meme somewhere on the internet. A meme is a unit of cultural information. It can be any phrase, idea, symbol, image or sound that is communicated from person to person.

Memes have a personalized content character, but are influenced by the way someone was feeling at that moment.

How do you think the artist who created Pepe the Frog was feeling to influence this?

Materials:

Materials refer to what the artist used to make the work. For example, acrylic paint, watercolour paint, oil paint, spray paint, enamel, ink, markers, chalk pastel, oil pastel, 2b pencils, 6b pencils, fine-liners, etc.
This also includes what they have applied the material onto- a canvas, plywood, paper, etc.
Materials can also refer to digital art: photography, Photoshop, Illustrator and other programs

Annie Leibovitz- Photography and editing programs


Edgar Degas- Oil on canvas

Techniques:

Techniques in art refer to how the artist has used the material to create an effect.
Referring to drawing or line work: cross hatching, outlining, smudging, stippling, using certain types of erasers.
Referring to painting: does the artwork show: short brush strokes, long brush-strokes, small flat brush, the use of a large round brush, drip painting, wet brush, dry brush, wet on wet, impasto painting
Other techniques include: use of perspectives (1 point, 2 point, 3 point,), scratching, cutting, ripping, tearing.
(There are plenty more not listed here)
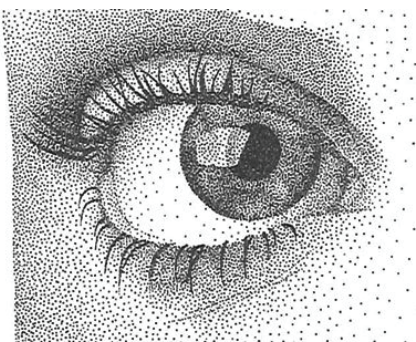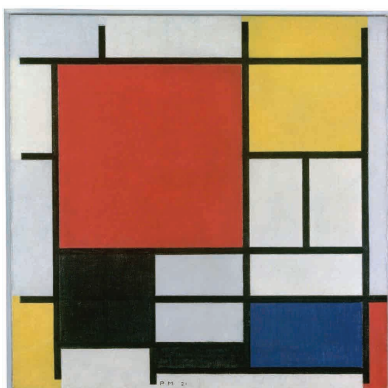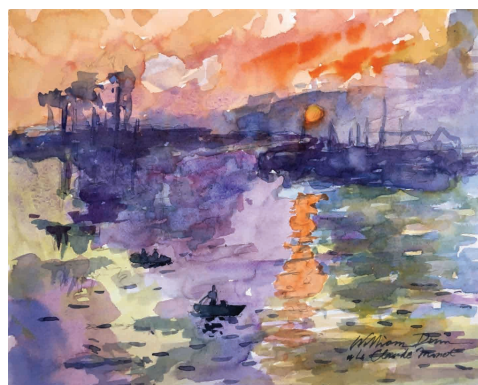

Stippling

Two point perspective

Short brush strokes

Long brush strokes with flat brush

Wet brush on wet paper with round brush

Crosshatching