

abstract

art in which the artist changes
the way something looks so
that it doesn't look like the real
object it represents.

artifact

an object made or used by human beings, especially an object made during a specific period of the past.

background

when you look at a landscape, the part that seems farthest away; often it is at the top of the picture.

balance

the way an artist uses
elements of art to make you
look at all parts
of the work.

calligraphy

pretty handwriting made
with a quill, reed pen,
or brush.

ceramics

artworks made out of clay and
then heated or “fired” at
high temperatures.

ceremonial art

art made to honor a person or event or to be used as part of a ritual or celebration.

clay

earth mixed with water

collage

artwork made by attaching
pieces of paper or other
material to a flat surface.

color

one of the elements of art;
what we see when light
waves are broken apart in
certain ways; also called hue.

color wheel

a circle diagram that
shows how colors
are related.

complementary colors

colors that are directly
across from each other on
the color wheel; they have
a lot of contrast.

contrast

when there is a lot of difference between elements of art; for example, the colors red and green, the textures smooth and rough.

cool colors

colors that remind you of cool things like water or the forest; green, blue, and purple; artists use them to create moods.

drawing

a two-dimensional artwork
made with a pencil or
crayon.

elements of art

line, color, form, shape,
space, texture, and value;
artists plan how to use
these in their artworks to
get the results they want.

emphasis

what you notice first in
an artwork.

expressive art

art created to show a
feeling or emotion.

foreground

when you look at a landscape, the part that seems the closest to you; often it is at the bottom of the picture.

form

an element of art; forms have three dimensions—length, width, and depth.

functional art

art that is made to
be used.

hue

another word for color.

landscape

a work of art that shows
an outdoor scene.

line

an element of art; a mark with length, direction, and qualities (such as thick or thin, zigzag).

medium

a material used to produce art; for example, paint, clay, fiber. The plural of medium is media.

narrative art

art that tells a story or
shares information.

pattern

a line, shape, or color
repeated again and again.

portrait

a work of art that shows a
specific person or group of
people.

primary colors

colors that
cannot be made from
other colors—red,
yellow, and blue.

principles of design

pattern, emphasis, balance, contrast, movement, repetition, rhythm, proportion, transition, variety, unity; artists arrange the elements of art using these principles to get the results they want in their artwork.

proportion

the size or amount of one
thing compared to that of
another thing.

realistic

art that shows things the
way they really look.

rhythm

visual tempo or beat; the way an artist arranges the elements of art to cause you to move your eyes across an artwork.

secondary colors

colors made by mixing two
primary colors; for
example, blue and yellow
make green.

self-portrait

a work of art in which the
artist portrays himself or
herself.

shade

a color mixed with black to
make it dark.

shape

an element of art; an enclosed space created when lines meet or by color or texture.

space

an element of art; the area between, around, above, below, or within things in an artwork.

still life

a work of art that shows
nonliving objects arranged
in an interesting way.

symmetrical

when the parts of an image or object are organized so that one side is a mirror image of the other.

tertiary colors

colors made by mixing a primary and secondary color; for example, bluegreen.

texture

an element of art; the way something feels when you touch it; also, the way something in an artwork looks like it would feel.

tint

a color mixed with white to
make it lighter.

three- dimensional

artwork that is not flat, but has length, width, and depth; sculptures and ceramics are examples of three-dimensional artworks.

two- dimensional

artwork that is flat; having length and width; most paintings and drawings are two-dimensional artworks.

unity

the feeling that the elements used in an artwork fit each other and work together to achieve the result the artist wanted.

variety

when an artist uses
different elements of art,
such as many different
kinds of lines, colors,
or textures.

value

an element of art; the
lightness or darkness.

warm colors

colors that remind you of
warm things like sun or fire;
red, yellow, and orange;
artists use them to
create moods.