

color: can be used to convey a certain mood or to draw viewers' eyes to critical details; warm colors such as red and orange can suggest energy or excitement, while cool colors like blue and green can evoke calm; black, brown, and gray are considered more serious or sophisticated than primary colors red, yellow, and blue, which are often associated with children

composition: arrangement of elements within an image

line: stroke or mark; can be vertical, horizontal, jagged, curved, diagonal, and so on; can help focus viewers' attention

perspective: technique of representing three-dimensional space on a flat surface; objects that are closer appear larger, while distant objects appear smaller; vanishing point on the horizon creates illusion of space

shape: outline of an object or image; can be definite and sharp or blurred and merely suggestive, depending on the type of work

size: physical dimensions or magnitude of an object; the size of an object in relation to other objects can create perspective, or the illusion of three-dimensional space; larger objects command more attention and draw the viewer's eye

texture: surface quality or appearance of an object in an image; what it would feel like if viewers could touch it; can be described as rough, smooth, gritty, slippery, and so on.

Artists and photographers use design elements to convey messages and meanings in their works. Use these strategies to analyze any image you encounter, whether it's a painting, a drawing, a photograph, or an advertisement. Analyzing images will help you better understand the reactions they evoke in you.

HERE'S HOW

Strategy 1: note your first impressions. It is important to do a quick read of any visual before you analyze the elements. Ask yourself:

- Who or what is being depicted? Notice details about the setting, people, or objects.
- What is visually striking about this image? What immediately draws my eye?
- Does the image have a title or caption? How does it help me understand what I'm seeing?

Strategy 2: Analyze the design elements. Looking closely at such elements as texture, line, shape, and color in any image will help you better interpret its meaning. Ask yourself:

- How would I describe the **lines** in this image? Vertical? Horizontal? Diagonal? Jagged? Do the lines draw my eye to something or someone?
- How would I describe the **textures** in the image? Rough? Slippery? Gritty? Smooth?
- What do I notice about the **size** of objects? What do I notice about the **shapes**?
- What are the predominant **colors**? What associations do I have with these colors?

Strategy 3: Interpret the meaning. Once you have analyzed the design elements, use them to consider the message, meaning, or purpose of the work. Ask yourself:

- What might the artist be trying to emphasize or communicate through the choice of design elements?
- What might be the artist's purpose in creating the work? What is the message?
- How do the design elements help support the purpose or message?

Analyzing Visuals in Print

Directions: Images tell stories and have meaning. Study the image below, and answer the following questions.



1. Who or what is being depicted? What details do you notice about the setting, people, or objects? _____

2. What is visually striking about the image? What draws your eye? _____

3. How would you describe the lines? What is the effect of the lines? _____

4. How would you describe the textures and shapes in the image? _____

5. Consider the design elements of line, texture, and shape. What might the artist be trying to emphasize or communicate through them? _____

LESSON
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PRACTICE WORKSHEET B

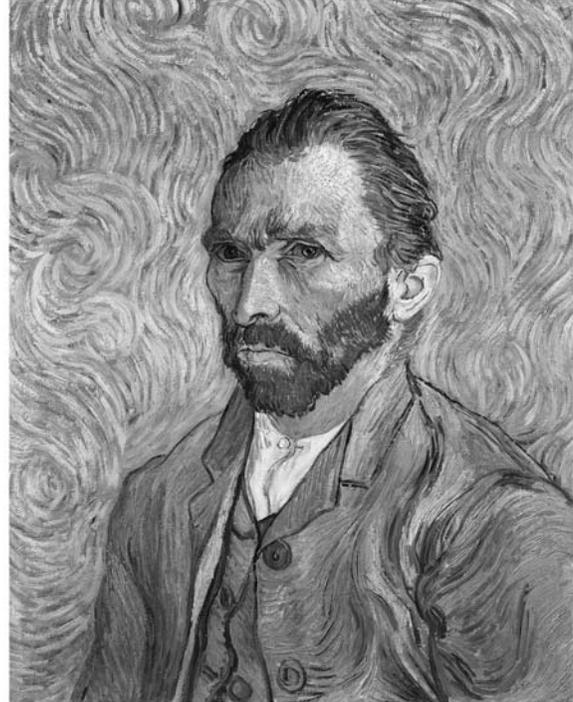
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Analyzing Visuals in Print

Directions: Although the paintings below look extremely different, they are both portraits. Study the paintings carefully. Then complete the questions that follow.



Harlequin with a Guitar (1917), Juan Gris. Oil on canvas, 100 cm x 65 cm. Private collection. © Bridgeman Art Library



Self-Portrait (1889), Vincent van Gogh. © Gianni Dagli Orti/Corbis

Juan Gris, *Harlequin with a Guitar*

Vincent van Gogh, *Self-Portrait*

1. For *Harlequin with a Guitar*, describe the design elements of lines, shapes, and textures. What mood do they help to create?

2. For *Self-Portrait*, describe the design elements of lines, shapes, and textures. What mood do they help to create?

3. In what ways are the paintings similar? In what ways are they different?
