

Part One

Learning About the Elements of Art

Overview of Part One

The activities in Part One introduce the seven basic elements of art. Each section begins with a definition of the element. Each section also provides a series of art experiences that allow young artists to experiment with the element.

The Art Experiences

Experiences are labelled as large-group, small-group, partner and individual activities. Introduce each element with a large-group experience and then extend pupils' understanding with small-group and independent projects. All of the experiences are designed to encourage pupils to explore materials and techniques, rather than to simply complete projects.

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How to Use Part One

Preview the Element

Before you begin teaching about an art element, read the definition on the introductory page at the beginning of each section. Think about the element in terms of the following questions:

- Is the element part of your everyday perception?
- How would your world be different without the element?
- Have you ever used the element to express yourself?

Gather the Materials

Use the resource lists to find literature and art that are noted for the use of the art element. Your school library, local museums, online galleries and art catalogues are important sources to check.

In addition to art reference books you will find in your library, The National Gallery offers a selection of mini prints and posters to use as fine art examples. Visit their website for more information (<https://www.nationalgallery.co.uk>).

Share Literature and Fine Art Examples

Read several books to your pupils as part of your daily read-aloud time. Then during your art instruction time, look at the books again. Ask the pupils to notice the illustrations.

- What things make the illustrations particularly noteworthy?
- How do the illustrations enhance the story?
- Would a different style of illustration change the feeling of the story?



Show fine art examples. Ask pupils to look thoughtfully at the art and name the things they think contribute to its overall impression. You may want to ask questions such as:

- What is this art showing?
- Is it a happy picture or an unhappy picture?
- What story do you think the artist is trying to tell?
- Does something in the picture make it seem real?

Share the Definition of the Art Element

Hopefully your pupils will have pointed out the art element during the previous discussions. Use their language and refer to their observations as you present the definition of the art element. After giving the definition, look at the literature illustrations and art examples again, specifically searching for use of the element.

Choose Appropriate Experiences

Next, give pupils the opportunity to experience the art element in their own lives by doing several of the art activities suggested. Consider your classroom situation and your pupils when choosing the experiences that you will present. Choose experiences that you and your pupils will enjoy doing.

Describe the Experiences

Describe the step-by-step procedures for completing an activity, but do not make samples and expect pupil work to look like the sample. This is a time to encourage creativity.

Display the Pupil Art

Displaying pupil art validates the efforts and creativity of your pupils. As the class views the display, talk again about the art element and the evidence of its use in the completed projects.