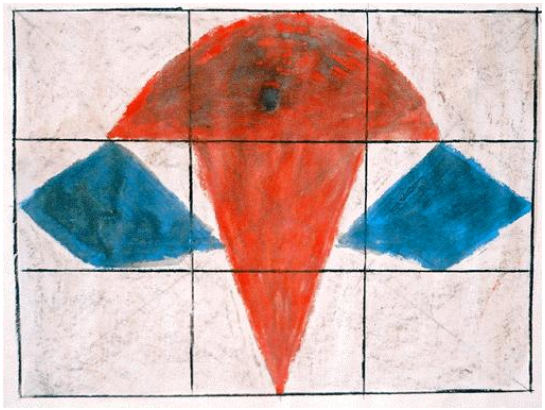
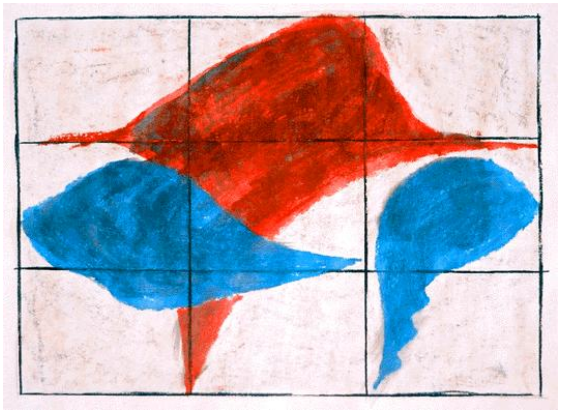
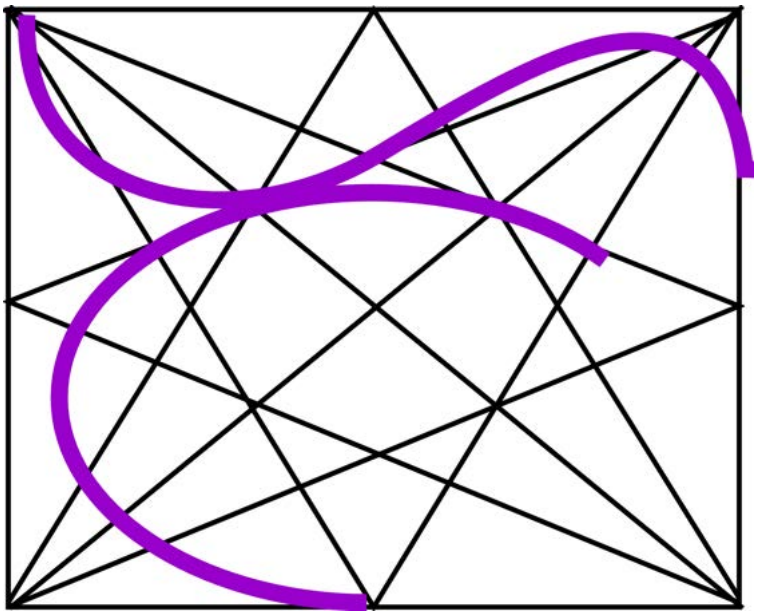
GRIDS

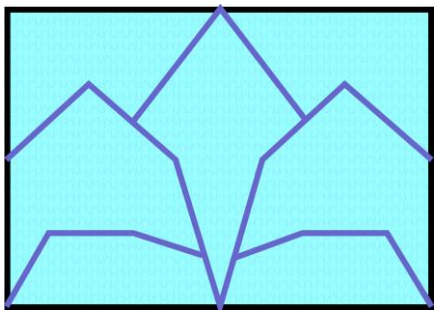


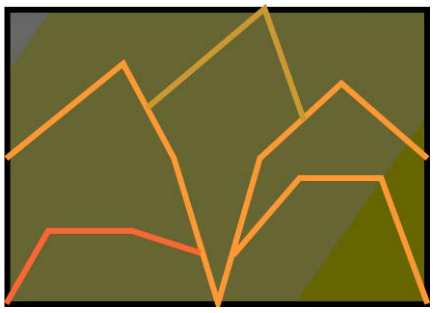


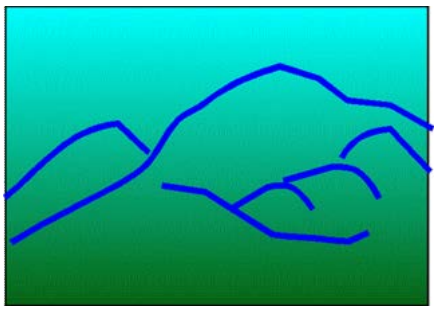
FRAMEWORKS



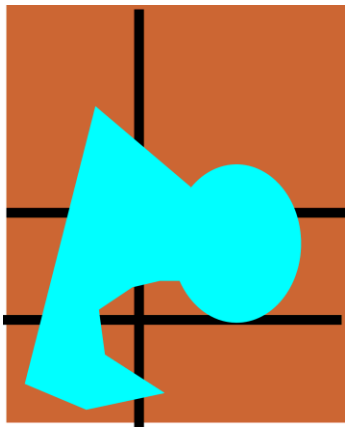
VARIATIONS IN POSITION ON A FRAMEWORK

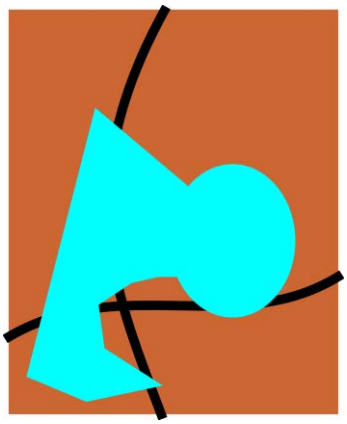






USING A FRAMEWORK TO POSITION SUBJECT



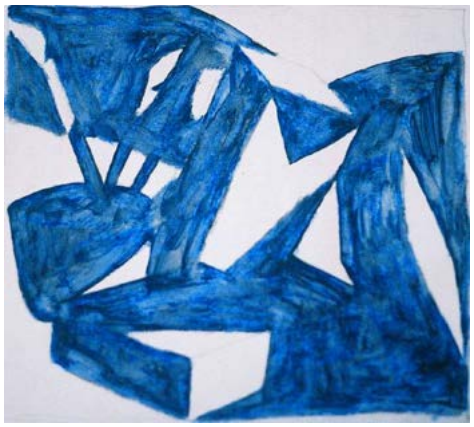


Frameworks for planning a picture

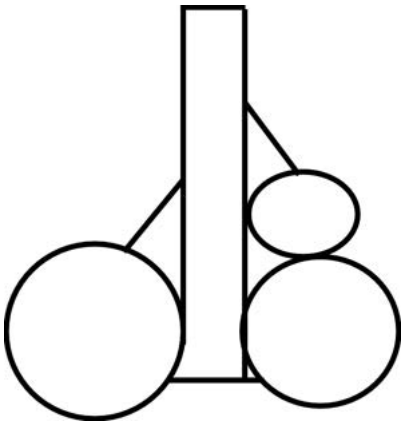
How does a **framework** help to deal with **complexity**?

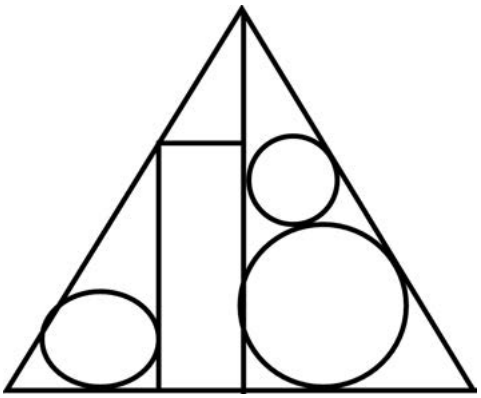
Framework samples: building a house; infrastructure of any kind; table of contents; body skeleton

FRAMEWORKS OF LIGHT AND DARK



PARTS





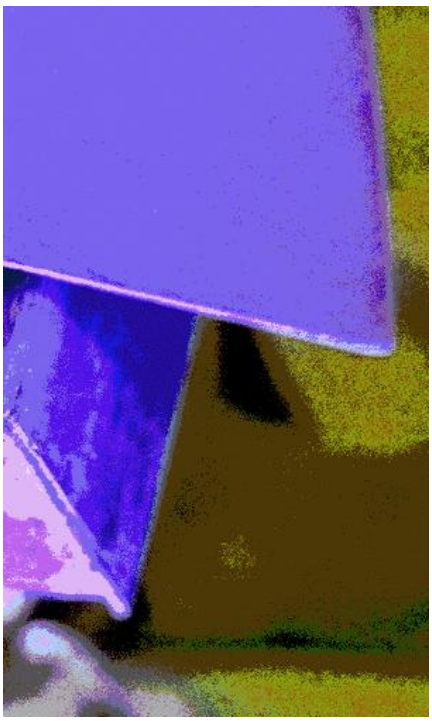
What components do you have to work with

What are **major and minor parts** of the subject?

examples:

lines, shapes, light/dark areas, motifs

SHAPES



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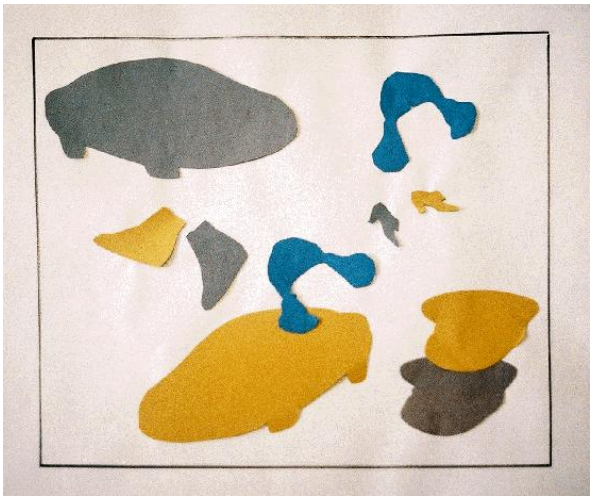
LINES

RECURRING MOTIFS

Examples from paintings

1. What are the main large areas of the composition?
2. What are the most important areas?
3. Where are they located?
4. Where is the focal area?
5. What are the sizes of the different parts of the composition?
6. What is the largest area?
7. What is the smallest area?
8. Is this a large or small difference?
9. What are the important lines in the composition?
10. Where do they touch the armature?
11. What parts of the subject do the important lines touch?
12. What is happening at the edges of the picture?
13. What is happening at the corners?
14. What is happening at the centre?
15. Can you see lines in the subject's composition that align with lines of an armature?
16. Are parts of the subject cropped at the edge of the field?

GROUPING



Some useful composition principles

Grouping

Rhythmic arrangements

Light/dark contrast design

RHYTHM

LIGHG & DARK

POSITIVE & NEGATIVE

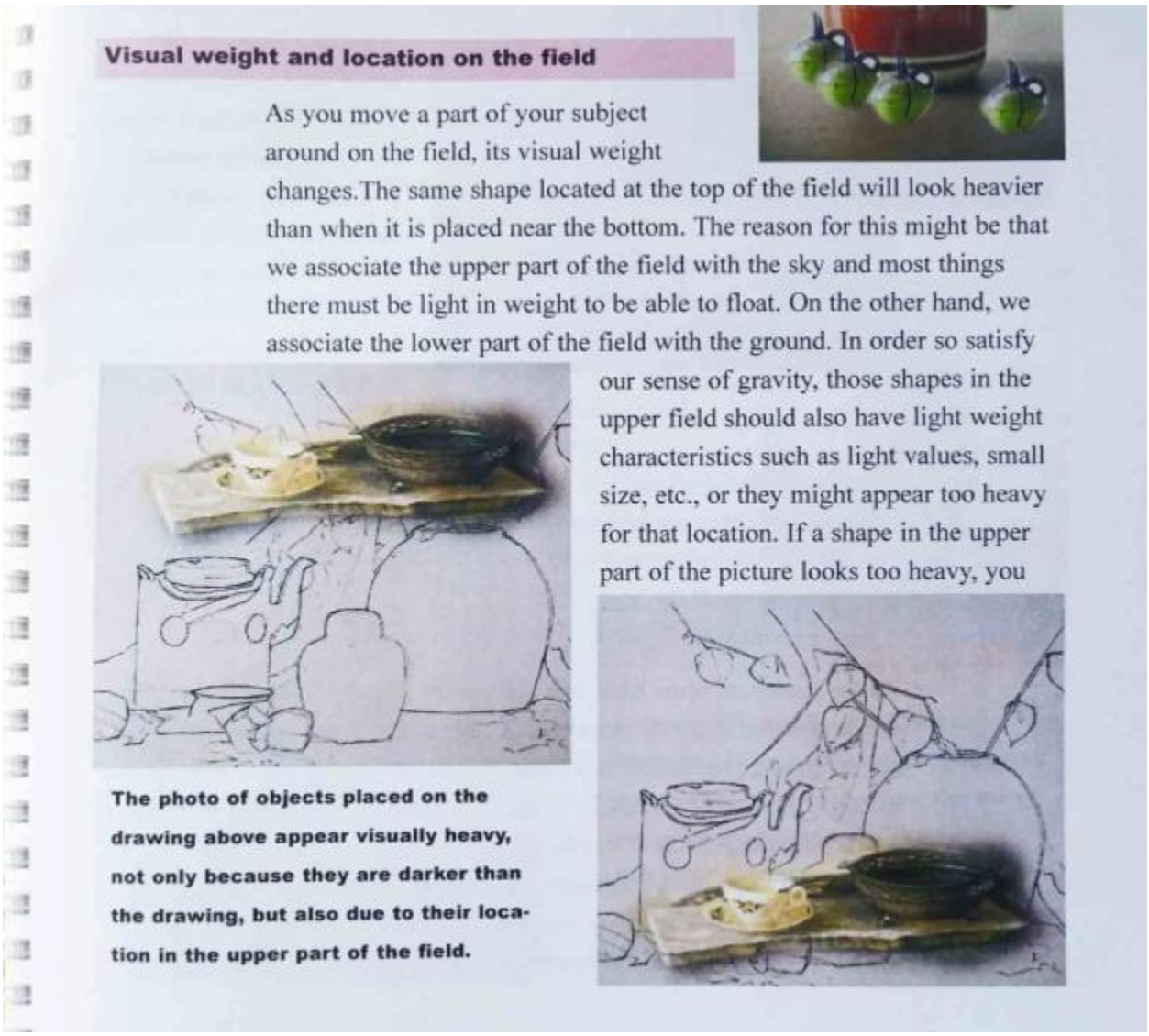
TEXTURE

LESSON PROPS AND QUESTIONS

1. Identify common characteristics within a groups of shapes.
2. How many variations of similar shapes can you see?
3. Where are the contours?
4. Where are the contours interrupted?
5. Are there important contours that travel over the entire composition?
6. What are their directions?
7. Are their edges firm or soft?
8. Are there strong contrasts or gradual changes?
9. How would you describe the tones: light, middle or dark?
10. What are the different ways that contrast has been created?
11. For each of these contrasts, how would you create a gradual change?
12. What happens when you omit steps in the series of gradual changes?
13. How would you create both harmony and contrast with one technique?

14. What is the expression of this picture?
15. What are the main shapes?
16. Where are they located?
17. Do they contribute to the expression? How?
18. What are the main values?
19. How much is there of each one?
20. Do they contribute to the expression? How?
21. How are they used together with the shapes?

COMPOSITION STRATEGIES: VISUAL WEIGHT



Visual weight and location on the field

As you move a part of your subject around on the field, its visual weight changes.The same shape located at the top of the field will look heavier than when it is placed near the bottom. The reason for this might be that we associate the upper part of the field with the sky and most things there must be light in weight to be able to float. On the other hand, we associate the lower part of the field with the ground. In order so satisfy our sense of gravity, those shapes in the upper field should also have light weight characteristics such as light values, small size, etc., or they might appear too heavy for that location. If a shape in the upper part of the picture looks too heavy, you

The photo of objects placed on the drawing above appear visually heavy, not only because they are darker than the drawing, but also due to their location in the upper part of the field.

Unify, Integrate, Synthesize, Coordinate

Eye movement

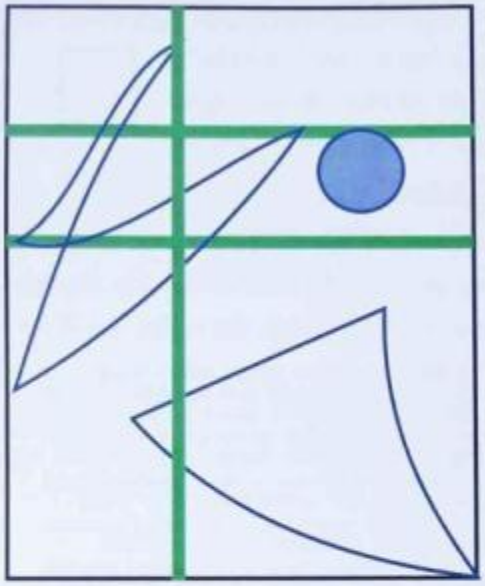
Rhythmic arrangements

Establish a focus

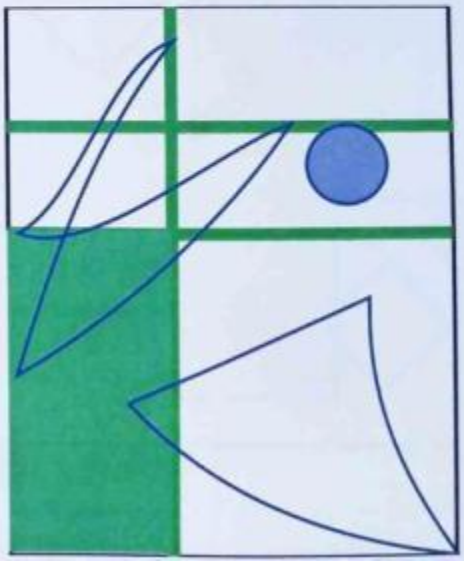
Coordinate elements

COMPOSITION STRATEGIES: BALANCE BETWEEN SUBJECT AND PICTURE FIELD

Balancing shapes with field areas



The different areas of the field may be balanced as well. Those created by the rabattement of the square balance each other with their complementary shapes. One is square while the other is long and rectangular. When you partition the field using an armature, you create large or small areas that may also balance each other. These areas may be linked with the subject shapes for overall balance.



In the example above, the negative field areas are not as important to the balance as is the blue circle. However, to the right, the green field area is an important element and competes with the circle for control over the balance of the composition.

TEACHER'S NOTES

We understand the connection between gravity and falling objects. Gravity gives weight to everything that exists on the earth. It affects our entire lives as we lift and move light and heavy objects. Because of this daily contact, we transfer our experiences with gravity to objects even as we look at them. Something large and dark will look heavy because it might remind us of a large rock. On the other hand, something large and colourful might remind us of a balloon and therefore appear light. If a lightly coloured object were located near the top of a picture, the association between it and a balloon might be stronger because it would now also appear to be floating. These feelings are important in pictures because our sense of weight, which we develop from interactions with the real world, affects how we appreciate balance in a composition.

Balancing similarities and differences

Simple shapes are visually heavier than complex ones and dark shapes are heavier than light.

By their shape, objects will also appear heavier or lighter. Look at a circle and triangle that are approximately the same size. Which one seems heavier? In general, simple shapes appear heavier than complex ones if their sizes are similar. A possible explanation for this might be that complex things are often delicate, and therefore we think of them as being light-weight.

You can balance things of different weight in your pictures by considering their value - how light or dark they are - along with their size and shape. Because dark things

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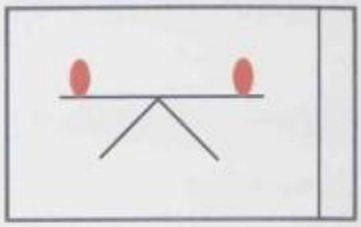
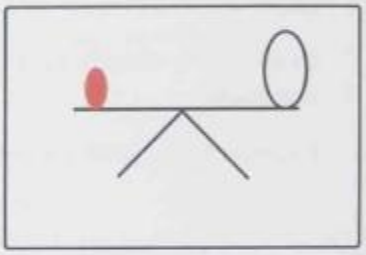
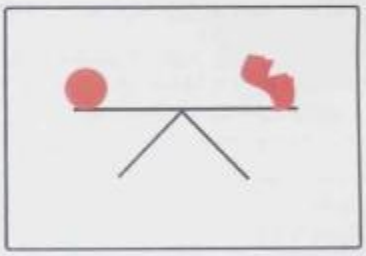
TEACHER'S NOTES

When placing things in a picture, we usually try to balance their arrangement. To help us do this, we might regard the field as a visual scale where the shapes and parts of the subject are weighed. Balance in a picture is easily changed whenever you do something to any of its parts. Visual weight is very closely linked to balance because shapes appear light or heavy. For example, small, dark areas can balance larger, light ones.





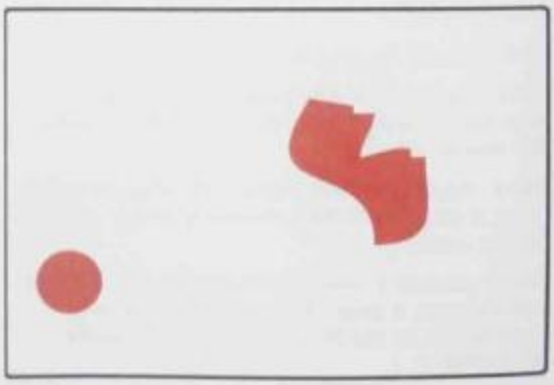


Balance and visual weight

Balance in the picture involves every aspect of the subject, especially the size, shape, value and location of its different parts. When these characteristics are considered together, you can judge their various weights.

As you change the characteristics of a shape, it becomes heavier or lighter in the composition. The larger white oval is easily balanced by the darker orange one in the example above. To the left, the simple orange circle appears slightly heavier than the complex shape, even though the two are about the same size and value.

Below, the smaller circle balances the much larger shape, in part because it is the simpler of the two, but more importantly, because it is so close to the edge of the field.



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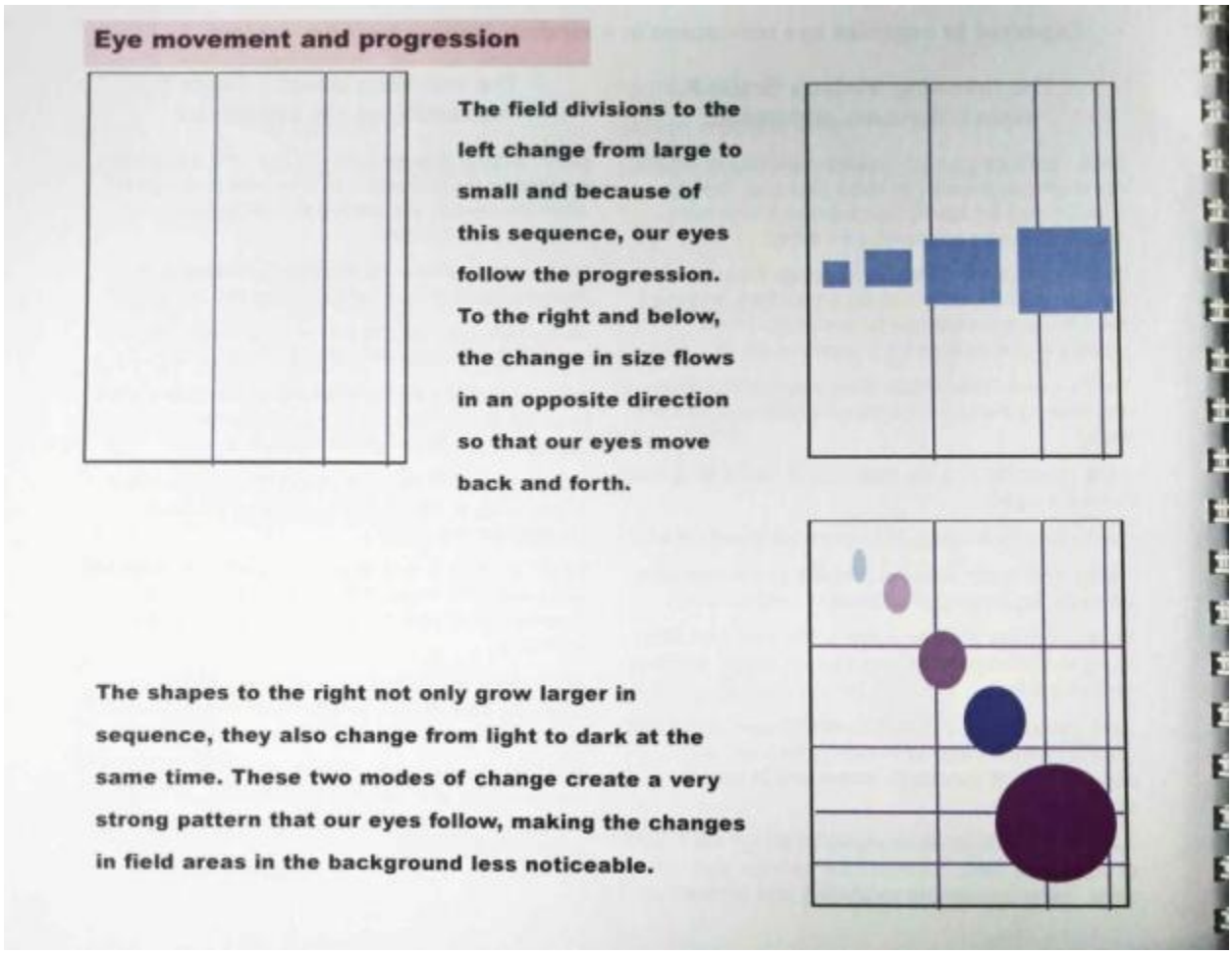
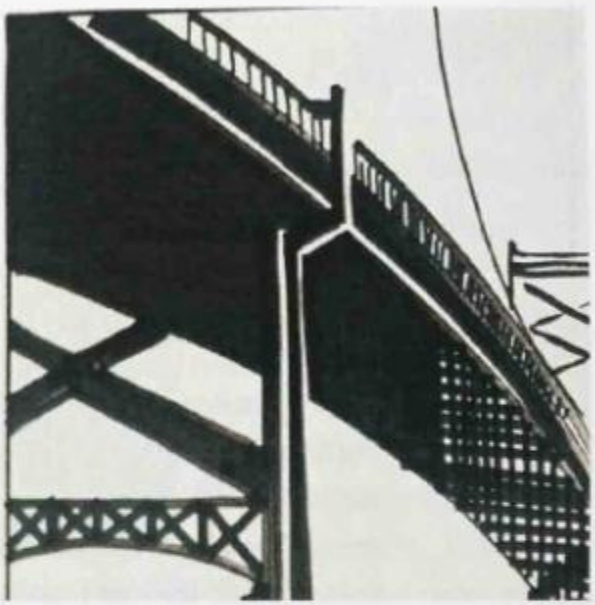
EYE MOVEMENT



EYE MOVEMENT OFF THE PICTURE

Movement and eye movement

Movement in a picture can be a powerful force that, if not channeled, will lead the eye away from the subject and off the field area. Imagine the pine trees bent by a strong wind and leaning heavily toward one side of the field.



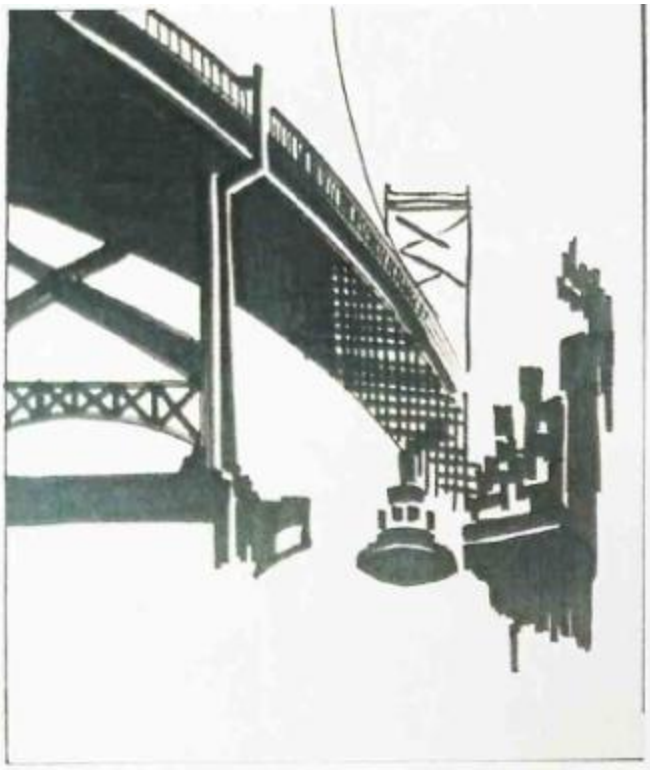
Counter-movement

A way to guard against this happening is to create another movement that checks the pull of strong directional shapes and lines. This second movement should be less noticeable so as not to compete with the main movement. It is called a counter-movement. It is an effective way to control movement without leading our eye too far from the subject.

The powerful curved shape in the picture to the right takes our eyes off the field as we follow its lines from one corner to the opposite. The movement is made stronger by the great contrast between the subject and background.

A counter-movement can also accentuate the main movement through contrast in direction. For example, you can strengthen the appearance of the action in a figure by adding something else that has vertical lines.

COUNTER-EYE MOVEMENT



The movement of the bridge has been harnessed and now leads our eyes toward the focus in the picture, the boats. The vertical lines in this area repeat those of the bridge's support structure. These lines now provide a counter-movement to the sweeping lines that dominated the previous picture.

Movement and counter-movement do not have to run in opposite directions, but may also follow directions that are similar. A long diagonal line can be checked by another one that runs in a slightly different direction.

Counter-movement and stability

Shapes themselves will take on movement if they have enough lines sharing a similar direction. A boat has movement in its shape because the repeated diagonal lines that meet at the prow point to the direction the craft will go. The actions of trees blowing in the wind are magnified by repetitive lines of branches and leaves that move in similar directions.

The curved lines of positive and negative shapes create movement in the picture opposite, although the figure is sitting still. The smaller patterns of diagonal lines in the blouse, cushion and plant provide counter-movement that steadies them.

LESSON PROPS AND QUESTIONS

Examples of paintings

1. Where is the focus or focal area?
2. How big is the focal area compared to the other parts of the picture?
3. How bright is the focal area compared to other areas.
4. What is the route used by large to small shapes that lead your eye to the focus?
5. What progression do values take from dark to light?
6. How are lines used to lead the eye to the focal area?
7. How do broken contours lead the eye?
8. Are the shapes concentrated or widely spaced?
9. How does our eye move from foreground to background
10. Are there any lost and found edges?

Examples of posters/advertising/book covers

1. What do you notice first?
2. Which characteristics are repeated?
3. How are they alike?
4. How do they differ?
5. Does anything stand out from the rest of the composition?
6. What are some of the aspects that make something stand out as different?