

ART · GRADES 2–6

Elements of Art

Seven building blocks of every picture

What are the elements of art?

Every picture, painting, sculpture or design uses these seven elements. They're the basic building blocks artists use, the same way writers use words. Once you can see them, you can use them — and you can talk about art with confidence.

The seven elements

<p>1. LINE</p> <p>A mark from one point to another. Lines can be straight, curved, thick, thin, fast, slow, jagged or smooth. They show movement, direction and emotion. Try: draw five lines that look ANGRY, then five that look CALM.</p>	<p>2. SHAPE</p> <p>A flat, enclosed area. Shapes can be GEOMETRIC (square, circle, triangle) or ORGANIC (leaf, cloud, blob). Shapes help us recognise things. Try: draw three things using only circles and triangles.</p>
<p>3. FORM</p> <p>A 3D shape — has length, width AND depth. A circle is a shape, a sphere is a form. A square is a shape, a cube is a form. Try: shade a circle so it looks like a 3D ball.</p>	<p>4. SPACE</p> <p>The area around, between and within things. POSITIVE space is the object. NEGATIVE space is the empty area around it. Both matter. Try: look at any object and notice the space AROUND it.</p>
<p>5. VALUE</p> <p>How light or dark something is. Value gives pictures depth and mood. Try: draw a circle with very dark on one side, very light on the other — it becomes a sphere.</p>	<p>6. COLOUR</p> <p>Has three parts: HUE (which colour), VALUE (how light/dark) and SATURATION (how bright/dull). Colour shows mood — warm colours feel energetic, cool colours feel calm.</p>



7. TEXTURE

How something feels — or LOOKS like it would feel. Real texture (rough sandpaper). Visual texture (a painting that LOOKS like fur). Try: rub paper over a coin — that's instant texture.

Using the elements

Display these posters around the art classroom. When children look at any artwork, ask: 'Which elements can you see?' This builds visual vocabulary — they can talk about art instead of just saying 'I like it' or 'I don't'.

