

Visual Arts Vocabulary Words

Vocabulary Words

Abstract Art. An artwork that is not representational but communicates through colours, marks and other visual element

Abstract Expressionism. A prominent art movement that emerged in the mid-20th century, particularly during the 1940s and 1950s, is defined by its emphasis on spontaneous, non-representational, and emotionally charged compositions, often created through gestural brushwork and the exploration of the artist's inner emotions and experiences.

Acrylic Paint. Acrylic paint is a type of fast-drying, water-based paint composed of pigments suspended in an acrylic polymer emulsion, often used in various artistic and decorative applications.

Additive Process. An additive process is a method of creating objects or images by adding material or information in a sequential and cumulative manner, typically employed in 3D printing, computer graphics, and digital design.

Aesthetic. The idea of what is beautiful or pleasing to the eye.

Aerial Perspective. Aerial perspective is a visual phenomenon in art and perception where distant objects appear lighter, hazier, and less distinct due to the scattering of light and atmospheric conditions, creating a sense of depth and distance in a composition.

Analogous Colors. Analogous colors are a group of hues on the colors wheel that are adjacent to each other and share similar characteristics.

Analyze. The second step in art criticism; To examine an artwork carefully and systematically in order to understand its components, structure, and underlying principles.

Arabesque. An arabesque is a decorative artistic motif characterised by intricate and flowing patterns, often inspired by nature, that are typically used in architecture, design, and ornamentation.

Architecture. Architecture is the art and science of designing and constructing buildings and other physical structures that serve both functional and aesthetic purposes.

Armature. An armature is a supportive framework or structure used as a foundation or skeleton to provide stability and shape to sculptures, models, or other three-dimensional artworks.

Art Criticism. Art criticism is the thoughtful evaluation and analysis of artworks, encompassing the assessment of their aesthetic qualities, cultural significance, and the interpretation of their meanings and messages.

Art Movement. A style in art with a specific common philosophy or goal, followed by a group of artists during a specific period of time.

Arte Povera. An art movement that originated in Italy in the late 1960s and continued into the 1970s, is characterized by its use of humble and unconventional materials to challenge traditional artistic norms and explore themes of nature, society, and culture.

Artifact. An artifact is an object created by humans, often with historical or cultural significance.

Artisan. An artisan is a skilled craftsman or craftswoman who creates handmade and often unique products, emphasizing craftsmanship, attention to detail, and traditional techniques.

Artist Statement. An artist statement is a written document in which an artist describes their artistic practice, motivations, creative intentions, and the meaning behind their artwork, providing

insight into their creative process and artistic philosophy.

Art Nouveau. An artistic movement prominent from the late 19th century to the early 20th century (approximately 1890-1910), is characterised by its ornate, flowing designs inspired by natural forms, emphasizing decorative arts, architecture, and graphic design.

Assemblage. A three-dimensional artwork made by joining materials and objects together.

Asymmetry. Asymmetry is a design principle in which visual elements of different sizes, shapes, or weights are arranged harmoniously to create equilibrium without mirroring each other, resulting in a dynamic and visually interesting composition.

Atmospheric Perspective. Atmospheric perspective is a visual phenomenon in art where distant objects appear less distinct, lighter in colour, and hazier than closer objects, due to the effects of atmosphere and air particles, creating a sense of depth and distance in a composition.

Background. The part of an artwork that seems the farthest away.

Balance. The arrangement of the elements in a work of art which create a sense of equilibrium. Balance is a principle of art.

Baren. A hand tool, originally from Japan, used to gently rub the back of the paper when taking a relief print.

Baroque. An art movement that thrived from the early 17th to the late 18th century. It is known for its elaborate ornamentation, dramatic use of light and shadow, and emotional intensity in visual arts, music, and architecture.

Batik. Batik is a traditional textile art technique where patterns are created on fabric by applying wax to resist dye in specific areas, resulting in colorful and intricate designs often associated with various cultures.

Bench Hook. A piece of equipment that hooks onto the work surface used to hold pieces in place. In printing, it holds the printing plate (such as a piece of lino) in place whilst cutting.

Bird's Eye View. A point of view looking down directly from above.

Bisque. Clay that has been fired once but is not glazed.

Binder. A binder is a substance used in various materials and processes, such as paints or adhesives, that holds together or adheres different components or particles, providing cohesion and stability to the final product.

Blend. To mix more than one color/color together.

Brayer. A small, rubber roller used to ink the surface of a printing plate.

Bust. A bust is a sculptural representation of a person's head, neck, and shoulders, typically extending down to the upper chest, often created for commemorative or artistic purposes.

Byzantine. Byzantine refers to the art, culture, and history associated with the Eastern Roman Empire, which existed from the 4th to the 15th century AD, characterized by its distinctive artistic style and strong influence from Greek and Roman traditions.

Canvas. A thick, woven material used for painting on. Often wrapped around a frame.

Calligraphy. Calligraphy is a highly skilled art form of decorative handwriting or lettering, often characterized by precise and expressive brushwork, pens, or other writing instruments, and used for

various decorative and communicative purposes

Carving. Carving is a craft or artistic technique involving the removal of material from a solid object, such as wood, stone, or metal, to create a three-dimensional sculpture or relief with intricate and detailed shapes and patterns.

Casting. Casting is a manufacturing process that involves pouring a molten material, often metal or resin, into a mold to create a three-dimensional object with a specific shape and design.

Ceramics. The art of making objects from clay and hardening them in a kiln.

Ceremonial Art. Ceremonial art refers to artistic objects, symbols, or performances created and used in religious, cultural, or formal rituals and ceremonies, often imbued with special significance and meaning.

Chalk. Chalk is a soft, white, or colored sedimentary rock composed mainly of calcium carbonate, commonly used for writing or drawing on chalkboards and sidewalks due to its ease of marking and erasing.

Charcoal. Charcoal is a drawing medium made from burned wood, commonly used for drawing and sketching.

Cityscape. An artwork that represents the physical aspects of a city or urban area.

Classical Greek Art. An art movement flourishing from the 5th to the 4th century BCE, marked by its emphasis on idealized representations of the human form, architectural harmony, and a profound influence on Western art and aesthetics.

Classicism. Classicism is an artistic and architectural style characterized by a return to the principles and aesthetics of ancient Greek and Roman art, emphasizing balance, symmetry, order, and harmony in creative works.

Clay. Clay is a malleable product from the earth made from decomposed rock. It has the ability to harden when exposed to intense heat. There are different types of clay such as earthenware, stoneware and porcelain.

Constructivism. An influential art and design movement that emerged in the early 20th century, particularly around 1915-1930, is characterized by its emphasis on the use of industrial materials and geometric forms to create functional and socially relevant artworks and designs.

Coil. A rope-like length of clay that is used to make a coil pot or sculpture.

Collage. An artwork made of paper, picture, fabric or other materials that have been glued to a surface.

Composition. The different ways elements of an artwork are arranged.

Collagraph. A type of print method where a collage has been created and a print is taken from the surface. It can be either or both an intaglio or relief print.

Color. How we see an object in terms of the way it reflects or emits light. We use color categories, with names such as red, orange, yellow, green, blue, or purple.

Color Properties. Color properties are the inherent characteristics of colors, including attributes like hue, saturation, brightness, and temperature, which determine their visual qualities and effects in art and design.

Color Scheme. A color scheme is a carefully chosen combination of colors used in design or art to create a harmonious and visually appealing composition, often based on principles such as complementary, analogous, or monochromatic color relationships.

Color Wheel. An arrangement of colors in a circle that reveals the relationship between primary, secondary and tertiary colors.

Complimentary Colors. Pairs of colors that are located opposite each other on the color wheel, creating strong visual contrast when used together.

Composition. The arrangement of visual elements within an artwork.

Computer Design. The process of creating visual or graphic content using specialized software and digital tools, often employed in various fields like graphic design, web design, and 3D modelling.

Conceptual Art. An art movement that emerged in the late 1960s and continues to influence contemporary art, is defined by its emphasis on the idea or concept behind the artwork, often prioritizing intellectual exploration over traditional aesthetic qualities.

Contemporary Art. Art of the present day.

Continuous Line Drawing. A type of line drawing where the drawing tool is not taken off the page until the drawing is complete. It is often a fast paced way of working resulting in fluid mark making.

Contour Drawing. A type of drawing where only the outlines of shapes within the subject of the drawing are drawn. (See also continuous lines drawing)

Contrast. Contrast is the degree of difference or variation in visual elements, such as color, texture, or tone, used to create emphasis, interest, or clarity in art and design.

Cool Colors. Cool colors are hues typically associated with calmness, such as blues, greens, and violets, evoking feelings of serenity and tranquility.

Critique. A process of using description, analysis, interpretation, and judgement to evaluate an artwork.

Cross Hatching. A drawing technique where sets of parallel lines are placed over each other to create different tones/values.

Cubism. An influential art movement that developed in the early 20th century, particularly around 1907-1920, is defined by its fragmentation and geometric representation of objects, challenging traditional perspectives and leading to abstracted, multifaceted compositions.

Cyanotype. A photographic printing process invented in the 19th century by Sir John Herschel and popularized by Anna Atkins in the 1840s, involves using light-sensitive chemicals to create blue and white images on paper or fabric through exposure to sunlight or UV light.

Dadaism. An avant-garde art movement that emerged in the early 20th century, particularly during the years 1916-1924, is defined by its rejection of traditional aesthetics and its embrace of absurdity, randomness, and anti-art sentiments as a response to the disillusionment of World War I.

Damp Box. A damp box is a large plastic container with a secure lid with a plaster layer at the bottom. The plaster holds the moisture and can keep a project workable for months.

Décollage. In French means 'unstick'. In art it describes the process of making art by peeling or ripping away layers.

Describe. The first step in art criticism; Noting only what is observed in the artwork, focusing on the elements of art.

Diptych. An artwork created in two parts that are often connected or presented together.

Direct Observation. Drawing from life rather than drawing from a photograph.

Egyptian Art is an art movement spanning over three millennia from approximately 3100 BCE to 30 BCE, it is a distinctive and enduring artistic tradition characterized by a focus on hierarchical

representation, symbolism, and the preservation of cultural and religious beliefs through monumental architecture, sculptures, and intricate hieroglyphic inscriptions.

Emphasis. Refers to the techniques used to draw attention to specific areas within an artwork.

Environmental Art enhances or engages with the environment or makes a statement on environmental issues.

Etching. An intaglio printmaking technique dating back to the 16th century and still practiced today, involves incising or “etching” a design onto a metal plate with acid, allowing for the creation of detailed and expressive prints.

Expressionism. An artistic movement that emerged in the early 20th century, particularly around 1905-1920, is characterized by its focus on conveying intense emotion, often through distorted or exaggerated depictions of reality, across various art forms.

Fauvism. An avant-garde art movement that emerged in the early 20th century, particularly around 1905-1907, is known for its bold use of vivid, non-naturalistic colors and simplified forms to express emotion and artistic freedom.

Firing. The process of heating clay in a kiln to a high temperature to harden it.

Focal Point. The area within a composition that immediately captures and holds the viewer's attention.

Folk Art. Art created by ordinary people that reflects the culture, history, and beliefs of a specific community, often passed down through generations.

Foreground. The part of the artwork that seems to be closest to you.

Form. Three-dimensional and occupy space or give the illusion that they occupy space. Real Forms occupy space, such as sculptures or buildings.

Futurism. An avant-garde art movement originating in Italy in the early 20th century, primarily during the years 1909-1944, is characterized by its celebration of modern technology, speed, and dynamism, often depicted through bold, energetic compositions.

Frottage. The technique of taking a rubbing from a textured surface to create an artwork or parts of an artwork.

Genre. Genre refers to a category or type of artistic work characterized by similar subject matter, themes, or style conventions, providing a framework for classifying and understanding creative works within a particular genre.

Geometric. Precise lines or shapes that can be described using mathematical names e.g. square, triangle and circle, often evoking tension, balance, or harmony.

Gesture Drawing. Gesture drawing is a quick and expressive sketching technique used in art to capture the essential movements, poses, and rhythms of a subject, emphasizing fluidity and spontaneity over detail and precision.

Glass. A transparent or translucent material formed by melting silica, soda ash, and lime, commonly used in art for creating delicate and visually appealing objects.

Glaze. A vitreous coating applied to ceramics. Vitreous means like glass in appearance.

Gothic. Gothic refers to an architectural style prevalent in Europe from the 12th to the 16th century, characterized by pointed arches, ribbed vaults, and ornate decoration, often associated with medieval cathedrals and churches.

Gouache. Gouache is a water-based medium consisting of opaque pigments bound with a gum arabic or other binder, commonly used in painting for its vibrant colors and matte finish.

Gradate. To gradually transition from one color to another or from one shade to another.

Graphic Design. Graphic design is the art and practice of visual communication that involves creating and combining images, typography, and other elements to convey messages or information effectively and aesthetically.

Graphite. A metallic gray drawing material, primarily used in pencil form.

Grid. A grid is a systematic arrangement of intersecting horizontal and vertical lines used in design and layout to organize content, align elements, and maintain visual consistency within a composition.

Harmony. Harmony refers to the pleasing arrangement and combination of visual elements, such as color, form, and composition, that creates a sense of unity and balance in a work of art.

Hatching. Hatching is a drawing technique where parallel lines or strokes are closely spaced and used to create areas of shadow, texture, or form, adding depth and dimension to an artwork.

Horizon Line. The line in an artwork where the sky and land appear to meet.

Hue. A pure color that hasn't had any white or black added to it.

Iconography. Iconography refers to the study or interpretation of symbols, images, and motifs within art, literature, or culture, often used to convey specific meanings, themes, or cultural references.

Illusions. An art trick the viewer into believing what they think they see.

Illustrator. A person who draws or creates pictures for magazines, books, advertising, etc.

Imitationalism. Imitationalism is an artistic style or approach that aims to faithfully represent or depict the appearance of real-life subjects, often prioritizing accuracy and realism in the portrayal of objects, people, or scenes.

Impasto. Impasto is a painting technique where thick layers of paint are applied to the canvas with a brush or palette knife, creating a textured surface that adds depth, dimension, and visual interest to the artwork.

Implied Form. An artwork can have implied form if it appears to have depth. This can be created with perspective, tone/value or color.

Impressionism. An art movement that emerged in the late 19th century, primarily during the 1860s to 1880s. The movement is characterized by the portrayal of fleeting moments, atmospheric effects, and the immediate sensory "impression" of a scene, often achieved through loose brushwork and vibrant color palettes.

Ink. Ink is a liquid or paste containing pigments or dyes, used for writing, drawing, or printing, typically applied with a pen, brush, or printing press onto paper or other surfaces.

Installation Art. An art form that began to flourish in the mid-20th century and continues to evolve today, involves the creation of immersive, three-dimensional environments or experiences within a specific space, often challenging traditional notions of artistic presentation and engagement.

Intaglio Printing. A type of printing where ink is applied to a printing plate that has recessed areas. The ink is wiped away leaving ink in the recessed areas only. Ink is transferred to paper under the pressure of a printing press.

Intensity. Intensity refers to the brightness or saturation of a color, representing the degree of purity or vividness, with high intensity colors appearing more vibrant and vivid than those with lower intensity.

Interpret. The third step in art criticism; To interpret is to explain or understand the meaning, significance, or intention behind something, such as a work of art.

Judge. The fourth and final step in art criticism; Forming an opinion about an artwork based on your analysis and interpretation.

Kiln. The furnace in which clay is fired to harden it.

Land Art/Earth Art. An art movement that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, focusing on creating large-scale, site-specific artworks in natural environments using natural materials, often blurring the boundaries between art and the landscape itself.

Landscape. An artwork showing an area of land.

Leather Hard. Is the condition of clay that has been partially dried so that shrinkage is complete. It has a similar consistency to leather and can be handled without deforming.

Line. A line is a path made by an object moving across a surface.

Line Drawing. A line drawing is a drawing made of only lines. It does not include any shading.

Line Weight. How thick or thin a line is. Some lines are bold and heavy, while others are light and delicate. Using different line weights can help show depth, shadow, or importance in a drawing.

Lino* Cutter. A sharp tool used to cut away the surface of lino to create a relief surface.

Lino* Print. A type of relief print created from a piece of lino that has had parts of its surface cut away leaving a raised surface that can be printed.

***Lino.** An abbreviation for Linoleum. Linoleum was invented in the mid-1800's as a floor covering and in the 1890's artists started using it as an artistic medium.

Linear Perspective. Linear perspective is a drawing technique used in art to create the illusion of depth and three-dimensionality on a two-dimensional surface by representing parallel lines as converging toward a vanishing point on the horizon line.

Mannerism. An art movement that emerged in the late 16th century characterized by exaggerated and often distorted depictions of the human figure, as well as complex compositions, reflecting a departure from the classical ideals of the Renaissance.

Mat. A mat is a flat, often rectangular piece of material, such as paper or cardboard, used to frame and protect artwork, photographs, or documents by providing a border and separating them from the frame's glass or acrylic surface.

Media. (Medium is the singular of this term) A type of art material e.g. watercolor, charcoal, pastels.

Medieval Art. An art movement spanning from the 5th to the 15th century CE, encompassing a diverse range of artistic expressions rooted in Christian religious themes, characterized by ornate manuscripts, illuminated manuscripts, stained glass windows, and religious sculpture, often commissioned by the church or royalty.

Medium. (Media is the plural of this term) A type of art material, e.g. watercolor, charcoal, pastels. 'Watercolor is a popular painting medium'.

Metal. Metal is a solid material characterized by its luster, malleability, and conductivity, commonly used in various applications such as construction, manufacturing, and art due to its durability and versatility.

Middle Ground. The middle layer of an artwork that appears to be between the foreground and background.

Minimalism. An art movement that emerged in the mid-20th century, particularly during the 1960s, is defined by its use of simple geometric shapes, monochromatic color palettes, and a reduction of elements to their essential form, often emphasizing a sense of purity and minimal ornamentation.

Mixed Media. Mixed media refers to an artwork that is created using more than one type of media or materials. e.g an artwork made with both collage and paint.

Mobile. A mobile is a type of sculpture or decorative object consisting of suspended elements that are balanced and arranged to move freely in response to air currents or manual manipulation.

Model. A model is a three-dimensional representation or replica of an object, structure, or concept, often used for study, visualization, or demonstration purposes in fields such as architecture, engineering, and design.

Modernism. Modernism is an artistic and cultural movement that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, characterized by a departure from traditional forms and conventions, and an emphasis on innovation, experimentation, and self-expression in art, literature, and design.

Monochromatic. Monochromatic refers to a color scheme composed of variations of a single hue, typically including different shades, tints, and tones, resulting in a harmonious and unified visual effect.

Monoprinting. A type of printmaking where the image can only be made once.

Monotype. A type of printmaking where a non-absorbent surface is drawn onto, usually with printing ink, and then one print is taken by transferring the image onto paper.

Montage. A collage of images that combine to create an artwork.

Mosaic. A mosaic is a type of artwork made by arranging small pieces of material, such as glass, or stone, onto a surface to create a pattern or image.

Motif. A motif is a recurring design element, pattern, or theme used in art, literature, or decoration, serving to convey symbolic meaning or aesthetic coherence within a composition.

Movement. The use of the elements of art to guide the viewer's eye throughout an artwork.

Mural. A mural is a large-scale artwork or painting created directly on a wall, ceiling, or other permanent surface, often depicting scenes, images, or messages intended for public viewing or decoration.

Narrative Artwork. Narrative artwork is visual storytelling that communicates a sequence of events, emotions, or ideas through images, symbols, and composition, often presenting a cohesive narrative arc or message to the viewer.

Naturalism. Naturalism is an artistic style or approach that aims to depict subjects or scenes from the natural world with a high degree of realism and accuracy, often emphasizing detail, texture, and the effects of light and shadow.

Natural Form. An object found in nature that has not been changed or altered.

Negative Space. The space around and in between the object of the image.

Neoclassicism. A prominent artistic movement from the mid-18th to the early 19th century. The movement is marked by a revival of classical Greek and Roman aesthetics, emphasizing simplicity, symmetry, and a return to rationality in art, architecture, and literature.

Neo-Expressionism. An art movement that gained prominence in the late 20th century, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s, is characterized by a revival of expressive and emotionally charged artistic styles, often featuring bold brushwork, intense color, and a return to figurative representation.

Neo-Impressionism. An art movement that arose in the late 19th century, particularly in the 1880s and 1890s, is distinguished by its use of small, individual dots or strokes of pure color applied in a systematic manner to create harmonious and optically vibrant compositions.

Neutral Colors. Neutral colors are hues that lack strong chromatic intensity or saturation, such as white, black, gray, and beige, often used as a base or background in design and art, and complementing a wide range of other colors.

Observational Drawing. Drawing what you see, not what you think you see.

Oil Paint. Oil paint is a type of slow-drying paint consisting of pigments suspended in a drying oil, typically linseed oil, often used by artists for its rich colors, smooth texture, and blending capabilities.

Oil Pastels. Oil pastels are drawing tools made of pigment, wax, and a non-drying oil binder, allowing for vibrant and blend able colors to be applied to various surfaces with a smooth and creamy texture.

One Point Perspective. A type of linear perspective in which all objects in a scene converge towards a single vanishing point on the horizon, creating an illusion of depth and spatial organization.

Op Art. Op Art is an artistic style that uses optical illusions and geometric patterns to create visual effects that confuse or deceive the viewer's perception of depth, movement, and space.

Organic. Irregular or uneven lines or shapes, evoking fluidity. These can often be found in nature.

Overlapping. Overlapping is a technique in art and design where one object or element is positioned in front of another, creating a sense of depth and spatial relationships within a composition.

Paint. Paint is a liquid mixture consisting of pigments, binders, and solvents, applied to surfaces with a brush, roller, or spray gun to add color, protection, or decoration.

Painterly. A descriptive term used in art from the 16th century to the present day, refers to a technique characterized by visible brushwork, texture, and a loose, expressive style that emphasizes the act of painting itself.

Painting. Painting is the artistic practice of applying pigments or other coloring agents to a surface, such as canvas or paper, using brushes, knives, or other tools to create images, compositions, or expressions of creativity.

Palette. A palette is a flat surface or board used by artists to hold and mix colors during painting, typically made of wood, plastic, or other materials, and featuring compartments or wells for organizing and storing paint.

Paper. Paper is a thin material made from cellulose fibers derived from wood pulp, used for writing, printing, drawing, packaging, and various other applications due to its versatility, affordability, and ease of production.

Papier-mâché. Papier-mâché is a crafting technique where strips of paper or paper pulp are soaked in a paste, typically consisting of water and glue, and then molded or layered to create three-dimensional objects or sculptures.

Pastels. Pastels are dry drawing sticks made from powdered pigment and a binder, typically used in a wide range of colors for drawing and coloring on paper, providing a soft and blend able texture.

Pattern. A pattern is a design in which shapes, lines, colors or forms are repeated. The part that is repeated is called a motif. Patterns can be regular or irregular.

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Performance Art. An art form that emerged in the mid-20th century and continues to evolve today, involves live presentations by artists that often incorporate actions, gestures, or spoken words to convey artistic expression and engage with the audience in a direct and experiential manner.

Perspective. The representation of objects in three-dimensional space on the two-dimensional surface of a picture.

Persuasive. An approach or communication intended to influence or convince others of a particular idea, belief, or course of action through reasoning, argumentation, or emotional appeal.

Photography. A visual medium that originated in the early 19th century, particularly with the invention of the daguerreotype in 1839 and the calotype in the 1840s, is the art and science of capturing and preserving images using light-sensitive materials, resulting in a wide range of visual documentation and artistic expression.

Photojournalism. A practice that gained prominence in the early to mid-20th century and continues today, involves the use of photographs to convey news stories, events, and social issues, providing a visual documentation of current events and journalism.

Photomontage. A technique that originated in the early 20th century, particularly in the Dada and Surrealist movements of the 1910s and 1920s, involves the combination of multiple photographic images or fragments to create a new composite image with often surreal or juxtaposed elements.

Photorealism. An art movement that gained prominence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, is characterized by its meticulous attention to detail and the creation of paintings or drawings that closely resemble high-resolution photographs.

Picture Plane. The picture plane is the imaginary flat surface in a painting or drawing where the artist creates a representation of three-dimensional space, serving as the interface between the viewer and the depicted scene or subject.

Pigment. Pigment is a colored substance, typically in powder form, used to add color to paints, inks, dyes, and other materials by absorbing or reflecting certain wavelengths of light.

Plaster. Plaster is a building material composed of gypsum, lime, or cement mixed with water to form a paste, used for coating walls, ceilings, and creating decorative or sculptural elements in architecture and art.

Plein Air. A term dating back to the mid-19th century and still in use today, refers to the practice of creating art outdoors, particularly painting, to capture the immediate visual and atmospheric qualities of the natural world.

Point of View. Point of view refers to the perspective or viewpoint from which a story, narrative, or artwork is presented, shaping the interpretation, emotions, and understanding of the audience or viewer.

Pop Art. An art movement that gained prominence in the mid-20th century, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, is characterized by its use of everyday objects, popular culture, and commercial imagery to create art that often comments on consumerism and mass media.

Portrait. A genre of art dating back to ancient times and enduring to the present day, is a visual representation of a specific person, typically focusing on their likeness and often conveying aspects of their personality or status.

Positive Space. Positive space refers to the area within a composition that is occupied by the main subject or objects, contrasting with negative space, which is the empty or background areas surrounding the subject.

Post-Impressionism. An art movement that followed Impressionism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is characterized by artists' exploration of personal expression, vibrant color, and a

departure from strict realism, often incorporating distinctive styles and techniques.

Pottery. Pottery is the art and craft of making ceramic objects, such as bowls, vases, and containers, by shaping clay and then firing it in a kiln to harden and solidify, often decorated or glazed for aesthetic appeal and functionality.

Primary Colors. A set of colors that are used to mix a wide set of hues.

Printing Plate. The flat surface to which ink is applied to transfer an image to paper. They can be made of metal, card or plastic depending on the type of printing process.

Proportion. The relative size and scale of elements within a composition and how they relate to each other and the whole.

Quality of Line. How a line or brush stroke changes as you make it. For example, it might start thick and end thin or be smooth in one place and scratchy in another. Artists use quality of line to make their artworks more interesting and expressive.

Radial Symmetry. Symmetry around a central point of similar shapes that create a star-like arrangement.

Rayograph. A technique developed by artist Man Ray in the early 20th century, particularly in the 1920s, involves creating photographic images without a camera by placing objects directly on photosensitive paper and exposing them to light, resulting in abstract, photogram-like compositions.

Realism. An artistic movement that gained prominence in the mid-19th century and continued into the early 20th century, is defined by its commitment to depicting everyday life, often in a straightforward and unembellished manner, emphasizing accuracy and truthfulness in art.

Relief Printing. A type of printing where a printing block or plate has ink applied to its surface and not its recessed areas, and a print is taken from the inked surface.

Relief Sculpture. An artwork where elements project out from a base surface.

Renaissance Art. An art movement which emerged in the 14th century and continued into the 17th century. Represents a cultural rebirth in Europe, marked by a renewed focus on classical ideals, naturalistic representation, and innovations in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

Repetition. The act of repeated an element throughout an artwork such as line, color, or shape.

Rhythm. The repetition of elements of art to create the visual equivalent of a music beat or movement.

Rococo. An art movement that emerged in the early 18th century and prevailed into the late 18th century, it's characterized by its ornate, playful, and light-hearted aesthetic, featuring asymmetry, pastel colors, and intricate decorative motifs in art and interior design.

Romanticism. An artistic movement that flourished from the late 18th to the mid-19th century. The movement is characterized by its emphasis on emotion, individualism, imagination, and a fascination with nature, often expressed through literature, music, and visual arts.

Rule of Thirds. A method for creating compositions that divides an image into 9 sections with two equally spaced horizontal and vertical lines. The most important aspects of the composition should be placed along these lines and/or at their intersections.

Saturation. The intensity or purity of a color.

Scale. Refers to the actual size of an artwork or the size of the objects in an artwork.

Score. To score a piece of clay means to scratch a pattern into it as part of the joining process. (Usually slip is also added, see below)

Screenprint. A printmaking technique that became popular in the mid-20th century, particularly in the 1960s, involves using a stencil or screen to transfer ink onto a surface, allowing for the reproduction of images and designs with precise color and detail.

Sculpture. An art form dating back to prehistoric times and persisting to the present day, involves the creation of three-dimensional forms and shapes, typically through carving, modeling, or assembling various materials, to convey artistic expression or representational content.

Secondary Colors. Secondary colors are hues resulting from the mixture of two primary colors in equal amounts, namely orange, green, and purple.

Secondary Source. A secondary source (in art) is something produced by others. For example, reproductions of drawings and artefacts, photographs, film, video or images from the internet.

Self-Portrait. A self-portrait is a visual representation or depiction created by an artist that portrays themselves, typically through painting, drawing, or photography.

Shade. Any color to which black has been added.

Shape. An area enclosed by a line.

Slab. A method of making ceramic from flat slabs of clay.

Slip. A creamy mixture of clay and water used, with scoring, to join two pieces of clay.

Space. The area between or around objects in an image.

Still Life. A painting or drawing that shows an arrangement of objects.

Stippling. The art of making a drawing out of numerous, tiny dots.

Stone. A hard solid nonmetallic mineral of which rock is made, a sculptural material.

Stoneware. Stoneware refers to a broad class of pottery fired at a relatively high temperature.

Style. Style is the distinctive manner in which something is presented, expressed, or performed, reflecting unique characteristics or preferences.

Subject Matter. Subject matter refers to the main theme, topic, or focus of a piece of art, literature, or discussion.

Subtractive Process. Subtractive process is a method of creating art or design by removing material, such as carving away from a block of wood or stone, to reveal the desired form.

Suprematism. An abstract art movement that emerged in the early 20th century, particularly around 1915-1930, is defined by its use of geometric shapes, primarily squares and rectangles, arranged in a non-objective, non-representational manner, emphasizing purity and spirituality in art.

Surrealism. An art movement that developed in the early 20th century, primarily during the 1920s and 1930s, is characterized by its exploration of the irrational and subconscious mind through dreamlike and fantastical imagery in painting, literature, and other creative forms.

Symbolism. Symbolism refers to the use of symbols or objects to represent abstract ideas, concepts, or meanings.

Symmetry. Symmetry is the balanced arrangement of parts or elements on opposite sides of a central axis, resulting in a harmonious and visually pleasing composition.

Tempera Paint. Tempera paint is a water-based artistic medium consisting of pigment mixed with a water-soluble binder such as egg yolk, typically used for creating vibrant and opaque colors on various surfaces.

Tertiary Colors. Hues formed by mixing a primary color with an adjacent secondary color on the color wheel, resulting in a wide range of nuanced shades.

Tessellation. A tessellation is an arrangement of shapes that fit together in a pattern without any gaps.

Texture is the surface quality of an object. It can be real or implied.

Real Texture is a texture you can touch. For example, a surface that feels rough.

Implied Texture is not actually real. It looks like texture but if you felt it, it would feel smooth.

Three-Dimensional (3D). 3D refers to objects or images that have length, width, and height, enabling them to be perceived as having depth and volume, often created using techniques that mimic the way humans perceive depth in the physical world.

Tint. Any color to which white has been added.

Tone. How light or dark a color is. It can also mean a color created by mixing a pure hue with grey.

Transition. Transition refers to the process of changing from one state, condition, or form to another, often involving a gradual shift or progression between distinct stages or aspects.

Triadic. Triadic refers to a color scheme in art and design where three colors equidistant from each other on the color wheel are used together, creating a balanced and harmonious visual composition.

Triptych. A work of art consisting of three sections or panels, allowing for a cohesive narrative or theme to be presented across the three sections.

Two-Dimensional (2D). 2D refers to objects or images that have only length and width, lacking depth, typically represented on a flat surface such as paper or a screen.

Two Point Perspective. A type of linear perspective that uses two vanishing points on the horizon to create an illusion of depth and spatial organization in a two-dimensional image.

Unity. Unity refers to the cohesive and harmonious arrangement of elements within a composition, creating a sense of completeness and coherence.

Value. How light or dark a drawing, photograph, or artwork is.

Value Scale. A value scale is a systematic arrangement of grayscale tones ranging from light to dark, used to depict variations in lightness and darkness within a work of art or design.

Vanishing Point. A vanishing point is a point on the horizon line in a perspective drawing where parallel lines appear to converge, creating the illusion of depth and distance in two-dimensional representations of three-dimensional space.

Volume. Volume refers to the amount of space occupied by an object or substance, measured in cubic units, indicating its three-dimensional extent.

Warm Colors. Warm colors are hues typically associated with warmth, such as reds, oranges, and yellows, evoking feelings of energy, passion, and coziness.

Wash. A wash is a thin, transparent layer of diluted paint or ink applied to a surface, often used in watercolor painting to create subtle tonal variations or to establish an initial background tone.

Watercolor. Watercolor is a painting technique that uses pigments suspended in a water-based solution to create translucent and vibrant images on paper or other porous surfaces.

Weaving. Weaving is the process of interlacing threads or fibers systematically to create fabric, textiles, or other woven structures, typically using a loom or similar device.

Wood. Wood is a natural material derived from the stems and branches of trees, characterized by its strength, versatility, and suitability for various construction, crafting, and artistic purposes.

Yarn. Yarn is a long, continuous strand of fibres, often made from wool, cotton, or synthetic materials, used for knitting, weaving, crocheting, or other textile crafts.

Zentangle. Zentangle is a structured and meditative art form that involves creating intricate patterns or designs within defined spaces using repetitive strokes, fostering relaxation and mindfulness.

Theater Vocabulary List



Vocabulary Words	Grade Level	Other Words	High Value Words
accent	M		
act (n)	M		
ad-lib	M		
amphitheater	M		
analysis	M		analysis
animation	M	animator	
antagonist	M	antagonize	
anticlimax	H		
apron	H		
arena stage	H		
artistic discipline	M	art, arts, fine arts	
aside	M		
audition	M		
backdrop	M		
backstage	M		
balcony	M	design, architecture	
baton	H		
beat	M		
bevel cut	H		
black box	H	design, architecture	

blackout	H		
blood pack	H		
boomerang	H		boomerang
brace	M		
bravo	M		
Bunraku	H		
burlesque	M		
callbacks	M		
center stage	M		
choreography	M		
climax	M		
clowning	M		
comedy	M		
comic relief	M		
commedia del arte	H		
conclusion	M	finale, resolution	conclusion
conflict	M		
copyright	M	ASCAP	
costume plot	M		
crew	M		
cue	M		cue
curtain	M		
curtain call	M		
cyclorama	M		

designer	M		
development	M		
diaphragm	M	breath support	
double cast	M		
downstage	M		
downstage center	M		
downstage left	M		
downstage right	M		
encore	M		
ensemble	M		
exposition	M		exposition
flat	M		
flexible staging	H		
fly	H		
flyspace	H		
focus	M		focus
foundation	M		foundation
fourth wall	M		
freeze (v.)	M		
front elevation	M		
gel	H		gel
genre	M	style	
gesture	M	gesticulate	

gobo	H		
grand drape	H		
green room	M		
grip	M		
ground plan	M		
ground row	M		
groundlings	M		
house	M	auditorium, theater, venue	
house manager	M		
humanities	M		
illusion	M		illusion
improvisation	M		improvisation
incongruity	M		incongruity
inflection	M		inflection
innanmorati -a	H		
intermission	M		
irony	M		
Kabuki	M		
lamp	M	illuminate, illumination	
lead	M		
legs	H		
lens	H		
lobby	M		lobby
mask	M		

masking	M		
melodrama	M		
mezzanine	M		
microphone	M	mic,amplify	
mime	M		
miracle play	M		
mitar cut	H		
motivation	M	intrensic, extrinsic	
movement	M		
musical theater	M		
narrator	M	monologue, soliloquy	narrator
nemesis	M		nemesis
neo-classical	M		
off book	M		
opera	M	opretta, musical	
operator	M		
oral interpretation	M		
orchestra	M		
overture	M		overture
pantomime	M		
parody	M		parody
pit	M		
playwright	M		
point of view	M	perspective	

poise	M		
posture	M		
procenium	H	arch	
produce	M		
producer	M		
projection	M		
prompt	M		
prompt book	M		
protagonist	M		
radio drama	M		
rake	M		rake
reader's theater	H		
rhythm	M	tempo	
royalties	M		royalties
run through	M		
satire	M		satire
scale	M		scale
scenery	M		
screenplay	M		
scrim	H		
soliloquy	M	monologue	
spike	M		
spot light	M		

stage direction	M		
stage jack	M		
stage left	M		
stage manager	M		
stage right	M		
stereotype	M		stereotype
story board	M		
storytelling	M	yarn, tale	
strike	M		
swag	M		
swing	M		
teasers	H		
technical rehearsal	H		
thespian	M		
thrust stage	H		
timing	M		
tormentors	M		
tower	M		
tragedy	M		
transition	M		transition
trust	M		
type cast	M	stereotype	
understudy	M	protégé	
upstage (n)	M		

upstage (v)	M		upstage (v)
upstage center	M		
upstage left	M		
upstage right	M		
voice quality	M	timbre	
wings	H		wings