

Visual Arts Glossary

Abstract: 1. a style of art that includes various types of avant-garde art of the 20th century; 2. images that have been altered from their realistic/natural appearance; images that have been simplified to reveal only basic contours/forms; 3. an artwork that is based upon a recognizable object that has been simplified to show some purer underlying form (sometimes, any references to recognizable objects are removed).

Acrylic paint: A synthetic, quick-drying paint that can be used in thick, heavy layers or thin washes on most surfaces. Additives can be used to provide matt or gloss finishes.

Additive processes: processes that involve adding, attaching, or joining a form to, or pulling or extending a form from, a surface.

Aesthetics: 1. the study of the rules and principles of art; 2. the study of the philosophies of art; 3. the branch of philosophy that deals with the study of aesthetic values, such as beauty and the sublime; 4. an outward appearance: the way something looks, especially when considered in terms of how pleasing it is; 5. an idea of what is beautiful or artistic or a set of criteria for defining what is beautiful or artistic; 6. criteria or theories used to judge art, such as imitationalism, emotionalism, formalism, functionalism, and instrumentalism.

Alternating rhythm: a principle of design; alternating rhythm is created by repeating two or more of the elements of visual arts to produce an alternating pattern, such as red-blue, red-blue, red-blue.

Analogous: related colors; colors that appear next to each other on the color wheel and have one color in common, such as blue-green, blue, blue-violet; see *color*.

Aperture: an adjustable opening in a camera lens that allows light into the camera; see also *fstop*.

Appliqué: an embellishment made by cutting pieces of one material and applying it to the surface of another; a technique used in quilting.

Armature: a structural support for an object, particularly used in sculpture.

Art work: the outcome, product, or result of using a creative process to produce or delineate objects and/or images that are intended primarily for aesthetic purposes and to communicate ideas through visual language; any of the art forms, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, or other artistic productions.

Artist: a person who intentionally endeavors to make artworks by composing subject matter and using the elements, principles, techniques, procedures, and materials of visual arts; see *art work*.

Assemblage: a three-dimensional composition made by combining (assembling) a variety of objects, often found objects. The term was first used in the visual arts during the 1950's when artist Jean DuBuffet created a series of collages of butterfly wings, which he called *assemblages d'empreintes*. Other well known assemblage artists are Louise Nevelson, Joseph

Cornell, John Chamberlain, and Marcel Duchamp.

Asymmetrical balance (informal balance): the type of balance that results when two sides of an artwork are equally important, but one side looks different from the other.

Atmospheric perspective: the effect on the appearance of an object of the air/space between the object and the viewer: in the foreground, colors are warmer and more intense and values are darker; in the distance, the details of an object appear to decrease, colors appear cooler and less intense, and values lighten and fade.

Attributes: characteristics, traits, features, aspects, and elements that are specific and particular to someone or something, such as a lion's mane or a zebra's stripes.

Background: the area of an artwork that appears farthest away on a picture plane, usually nearest the horizon: a way of showing depth; background is the opposite of foreground; between the background and foreground is the middle ground.

Balance: a principle of design; the arrangement of elements that makes individual parts of a composition appear equally important; an arrangement of the elements to create an equal distribution of visual weight throughout the format or composition. If a composition appears top or bottom-heavy and/or anchored by weight to one side, it is not visually balanced. *Types of balance:*

Symmetrical (formal balance): the image or form is equally weighted on both sides of a center line.

Asymmetrical (informal balance): the image or form is unevenly weighted.

Radial: the weight of the image or form radiates from a center point.

Bas-relief: a sculpture in which forms are carved on a flat surface so they slightly project from the background.

Binder: the "glue" that holds pigment together and makes it stick to a surface.

Biomorphic: a shape, form, or pattern that resembles a living organism in appearance; a painted, drawn, or sculpted form or design that is suggestive of the shape of a living organism; see *organic*.

Bisque: unglazed pottery that has been fired at a low temperature to make handling easier during glazing and to remove all physical water from the clay body; clayware that has been fired once in preparation for a surface finish, such as paint, stain, or glaze; *unbisqued* clay has not been fired; *bisqueware* refers to pottery that has been bisque fired; *bisqueware* is also called *biscuit ware* in some areas.

Body: the main part of a pot, usually the largest part.

Burnished: leather-hard clay that has been rubbed with any smooth tool to polish and lighten the clay's surface to a fine and smooth finish.

Bust: a sculpture representing only the head and neck of a person.

Calligraphy: a sometimes elegant style of handwriting with precise flow.

Canvas: coarse cloth or heavy fabric that must be starched and primed to use for painting, particularly for oil paintings.

Camera obscura: a darkened enclosure in which an image is projected through a small aperture onto a facing surface.

Center of interest: the area of a composition that attracts the viewers' attention; also called the *focal point*.

Ceramic: pottery and any of a number of art forms made from clay products.

Chalk: soft limestone, sometimes used as a drawing material or mixed to make pastels and other crayons.

Charcoal: a drawing material made from charred wood.

Chiaroscuro: Italian word for "light-shade". The technique of creating a picture by using several shades of the same color.

Coiling: a method of forming pottery from rolls of clay.

Collage: a way of making a work of art by gluing different objects, materials, and textures to a surface.

Color: an element of visual art; the visible range of reflected light. Color has three properties: hue, value, and intensity.

Color saturation: the pure hue at its fullest intensity without white, black, or complementary color added.

Color schemes: groupings of colors that are related on the color wheel, such as complementary, analogous, warm, and cool:

Analogous: colors that appear next to each other on the color wheel and have one color in common, such as blue-green, blue, and blue-violet.

Complementary colors: contrasting colors; colors that are opposite on the color wheel, such as yellow/violet, blue/orange, and red/green.

Cool colors: a group of colors on the color wheel associated with coolness, such as blues, greens, and violets; in an artwork, cool colors appear to be farther away from the viewer.

Warm colors: a group of colors on the color wheel associated with warmth, such as red, yellow, and orange; in an artwork, warm colors appear to advance toward the viewer.

Color value: the lightness or darkness of a color.

Color wheel: colors arranged in a circle to show color relationships; there are several versions

of color wheels:

1. **Traditional color wheel:** a subtractive color diagram that typically includes 6–12 divisions and shows how colors are related to one another; it is a reference for the mixing of colors of pigment, such as paint or ink. The traditional color wheel includes red, yellow, and blue as primary colors.
2. **Printer's color wheel:** a color wheel in which the primaries include yellow, cyan, and magenta; a wheel typically used by professional designers and printers.
3. **Color disk:** a color wheel on which the colors blend together instead of being separated; used in printing, web design, video, and graphic arts (*RGB*).
4. **RGB color model:** an additive color model in which red, green, and blue light are added together in various ways to reproduce a broad array of colors; the RGB spectrum is used in web design, video, and graphic arts.

Complementary colors: colors that are opposite one another on the color wheel, such as yellow/violet, blue/orange, and red/green.

Components: the parts of a whole composition.

Composition: the use of the principles of design to arrange the elements of visual arts to create a piece of artwork; the way individual design elements are combined to express a particular idea.

Conceptual art: an art form in which the artist's intent is to convey a concept or idea rather than to create an art object.

Construction techniques: different ways to put materials together (for example, by stapling, cutting, gluing, or taping).

Contour: an outline of an object or figure; the inner and outer lines and edges of an object or form; contours describe the outermost edges of a form, as well as edges of planes within the form.

Contour line: the line that defines a form or the edge of an object's outline.

Contour-line drawing: a line drawing that follows the visible edges of a shape or form, both exterior and interior.

Contrast: a principle of design; a technique that shows differences in the elements of visual arts in an artwork, such as smooth/rough textures, light/dark colors, or thick/thin lines.

Contrast photography: the difference between light and dark tones in an image.

Convergence lines or converging lines: also called orthogonal lines; lines that converge or come together at a vanishing point; parallel lines that appear to converge as they move away from the viewer toward a vanishing point on the horizon; see the illustration below:

Cool colors: a group of colors on the color wheel that includes blues, greens, and violets; in an artwork, cool colors appear to be farther away from the viewer.

Cornice: a decorative horizontal molding at the top of exterior walls, below the eaves.

Cubism: a style of art of the 20th century, cubism emphasizes the separation of the subject into cubes and other geometric forms, which are depicted from multiple viewpoints; a style associated with the works of artists Marcel Duchamp and Pablo Picasso.

Decorative: ornamental; aesthetically pleasing; providing enhancement.

Depth-of-field scale: a measurement (in feet or meters) on a camera that indicates what portions of the depth-of-field zone will be acceptably sharp at a given aperture.

Design: organization, plan or arrangement of a work of art.

Digital media: the images or data generated by a computer.

Diptych: a painting, especially an altarpiece, on two hinged wooden panels which may be closed like a book.

Drawing: the art of representing objects, ideas, etc. on a surface using pencil, crayon, marker, pen, or other marking material to make lines or values usually on a flat surface.

Drawing techniques: different ways of drawing, such as hatching, stippling, contour, blending, or shading:

Hatching: drawing repeating parallel lines to create a texture or value.

Cross hatching: drawing repeated crossing lines to create a texture or value.

Contour: drawing the outlines of a shape.

Blending: smudging to create a texture or value.

Shading: creating various gradations of value of a color.

Drypoint: a technique of engraving, especially on copper, in which a sharp-pointed needle is used for producing furrows having a burr that is often retained in order to produce a print characterized by soft, velvety black lines.

Easel: a freestanding upright support for a painter's canvas.

Egg tempera: paint made of powdered pigment and bound together with egg yolk or egg whites; the most prominent painting material used from the 12th century to the rise of oil painting.

Elements of photographic design: those parts (such as point, line, and plane) that are used to make a composition.

Elements of visual arts: the basic components that make up a work of art: color, form, line,

shape, space, texture, and value:

Color: the visible range of reflected light. Color has three properties: hue, value, and intensity (brightness or dullness).

Form: a three-dimensional object that has height, length, width, and depth.

Line: the one-dimensional path of a dot through space used by artists to control the viewer's eye movement; a thin mark made by a pencil, pen, or brush.

Shape: a closed space made when a line connects to itself.

Space: an element of visual arts; the area above, below, around, and within an artwork; the illusion of depth or space on a flat surface, created by means of the following techniques: rendering shapes and forms so that they overlap and using size, detail, value, color, and linear perspective.

Texture: an element of visual arts that portrays surface quality: *actual* texture is how something feels; *visual* texture is how something appears to feel.

Value: the lightness and darkness of a line, shape, or form.

Emphasis: a principle of design; the importance assigned to certain objects or areas in an artwork; color, texture, shape, space, and size can be used to create a focal point or center of interest. See also *dominance*.

Encaustic: a wax-based paint that is fixed in place with heat.

Engraving: an intaglio printmaking process of incising or scratching lines into a wood block or metal plate from which a print is made.

Environmental art: art made on a grand scale, involving the creation of a man-made environment such as architecture, sculpture, light or landscape.

Expression: showing an emotion or feeling in a work of art.

Expressionism: a style of painting of the 20th century, expressionism uses simplified designs and brilliant colors to express a definite or strong mood or feeling.

Extrude: a method of shaping moist clay by forcing it through a die.

Façade: the exterior front or side of a building or wall.

Feathering: a technique used in drawing and painting; to feather is to blend an area or edge so that it fades off or softens; blending; smudging; the overlapping of values and/or colors in the manner of the overlapping feathers of a bird.

Figurative: artwork based on the human form.

Fine art: a term used to describe work that is without any particular function; usually paintings, sculpture, drawings and prints.

Fixative: varnish sprayed or painted onto a surface to prevent smudging or smearing; usually on a charcoal or chalk pastel work.

Flowing rhythm: a principle of design; the repetition of wavy lines or curved shapes to suggest movement or motion.

Focal point: the part of an artwork that is emphasized in some way and attracts the eye and attention of the viewer; also called the *center of interest*.

Focus: the maximum clarity or sharpness of an image.

Folk art: paintings and decorative object made by untrained practitioners and is usually lively, colorful artwork in a “naïve” style.

Foot: the base of a pot upon which the pot can stand.

Foreground: the area of an artwork or field of vision, often at the bottom of a picture plane, which appears closest to the viewer; also used to give priority to one aspect of a composition.

Foreshortening: the illusion that an object that is closer to the viewer is larger than one that is farther away.

Form: an element of visual arts; a three-dimensional object that has height, length, width, and depth.

Frame or photographic framing: the visible area that makes up an image: typically, the view in the viewfinder or camera’s monitor; the shape of a picture as determined by a digital sensor, typically rectangular; also called *format*.

Free form: a shape or form that has an asymmetrical or irregular contour, often with a curvilinear, flowing outline; sometimes referred to as *organic* or *biomorphic*.

Freestanding: able to stand on its own.

Frieze: an architectural ornament or decoration consisting of a horizontal band around a room, mantel, window, cornice, etc.

F-stop: the setting or delineation of the opening in a camera’s lens that allows light into the camera; the f-stop number is the ratio of the focal length of the lens to the diameter of the aperture; see also *aperture*.

Functional: useful; practical; well-designed; efficient; serviceable.

Gallery: a room, series of rooms, or building where works of art are exhibited.

Geometric: any shapes and/or forms based on math principles, such as a square/cube, circle/sphere, triangle/cone, pyramid, etc.

Gesso: a surface preparation or primer made of chalk or gypsum for tempera or oil paintings that are painted on the picture surface.

Gesture line: an energetic type of line that captures the movement or pose of a figure.

Glaze: a transparent or semitransparent coating of a color or stain used over oil paintings, plaster sculpture or ceramics.

Gouache: a watercolor paint mixed with white pigments making it more opaque and giving it more weight and body.

Gradation: (of value) a range of values between light and dark.

Graffiti art: art inspired by urban graffiti; interest in graffiti art as a movement emerged in the 1970s in New York City with artists such as Keith Haring.

Greenware: bone-dry, unfired pottery; pottery that is ready for bisque firing.

Ground line: a line that defines the plane on which the subject in an artwork sits.

Hand-building: making clay forms by a non-mechanical process, such as pinching, coiling, and slab-building.

Harmony: a principle of design; the creation of unity by stressing the similarities of separate, but related parts of the artwork.

High key: an image having tones that fall mostly between white and gray, with very few dark tones.

Highlight: the brightest area of an image that is illuminated by a light source.

Homage: an artwork that reflects intentional imitation and acknowledgement of or respect for a particular artist, artwork, body of work, or style; originally, such works were created by artists to honor the “masters” who trained them.

Horizon line: based on an artist’s eye level, an invisible plane that cuts through everything that exists at eye level; a line at which sky appears to meet earth.

Horizontal line: a line that is parallel to the horizon; a horizontal line, surface, or position.

Hue: color.

Illustration: a picture that is specifically designed to communicate commercial ideas, such as an image created for the cover of a CD or book.

Illustrator: a person who draws or creates pictures for magazines, books, or advertising.

Implied line: lines that are suggested by the placement of other lines, shapes, edges, and colors, but that are not actually seen in the artwork.

Impressionism: a style of painting, popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s, that featured everyday subjects and showed the changing effects of color and light.

Incise: to remove (subtract) clay by cutting into the surface.

Incised line: a line that was created by cutting into the surface.

Informal balance (asymmetrical balance): the type of balance that results when two sides of an artwork are equally important, but one side looks different from the other.

Intensity: the brightness or dullness of a color.

Intermediate color: a color created by mixing a primary color with the secondary color next to it; also called a *tertiary* color; intermediate colors include red-orange, yellow-orange, yellow-green, blue-green, blue-violet, and red-violet.

Juxtapose: to place side-by-side.

Kiln: a large “oven” used for firing clay work.

Kinetic: relating to motion or movement.

Landscape: a painting, drawing, photograph, or other work of art, which shows natural or outdoor scenes, such as rivers, lakes, mountains, or trees.

Line: an element of visual arts; the flat path of a dot through space used by artists to control the viewer’s eye movement; a long narrow mark or stroke made on or in a surface; a thin mark made by a pencil, pen, or brush. The repetition of lines (and/or shapes) is used to create texture, pattern, and gradations of value.

Line of sight: a type of implied line that directs the attention of the viewer from one part of a composition to another.

Line personality: the general characteristic of a line: its weight, direction, movement, and/or other qualities.

Line quality: the width or appearance of any line, such as thick or thin, smooth or rough, continuous or broken.

Line types: the variety of directions and shapes that a line may have: vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved, zigzag.

Linear perspective: creating the illusion of depth on a picture plane with the use of lines and a vanishing point.

Lip: in pottery, the rim of a pot.

Low key: an image that consists of dark tones with little contrast.

Maquette: a small-scale two-dimensional sketch or three-dimensional model or plan of a proposed work, such as a sculpture or architectural form; used by architects and sculptors to design large-scale works.

Medium (plural: media): the material chosen by the artist to create a work of art, such as paint,

pencil, or clay. May also refer to the liquid mixed with pigment to make paint.

Middle ground: the area between the foreground and background of a landscape.

Mixed media: work that is creating by combining more than one medium or technique

Modeling: a sculptural technique that involves manipulating a soft material into a three dimensional form.

Modern art: styles often associated with revolutionary ideas and styles in art, architecture, and literature. The art that developed in the early 20th century as a reaction to traditional forms.

Monochromatic: having or appearing to have only one color, which may include variations on the value of that color; a one-color plus black-and-white color scheme.

Mosaic: images created using small pieces of stone, ceramic, shell, or glass arranged and set into plaster or cement to create a design or composition. Mosaics date back to the Ancient Greeks and Romans, mostly used to decorate walls and floors.

Motif: a repeated shape or design in a work of art; a design unit that may be repeated in a visual rhythm.

Movement: a principle of design; the use of the elements of visual arts to draw a viewer's eye from one point to another in an artwork.

Mural: a painting, generally drawn or painted directly onto an interior or exterior wall; for example, Michelangelo's frescos at the Sistine Chapel and Rick Sinnett's mural *Red-Tailed Hawk* downtown Norman on Main Street.

Negative space: the empty space surrounding a shape, figure, or form in a two- or three-dimensional artwork.

Neutral color: color that has no chromatic qualities: black, white, grays, and browns.

Non-representational: an artwork with no recognizable subject; artwork that uses forms that make no direct reference to external or perceived reality.

Novelty: original; innovative; fresh; a new idea or new purpose; a whimsical item.

Oil paint: paint made by mixing ground pigment with oil (usually linseed oil) as a binder.

Organic: shapes and/or forms, often curvilinear in appearance, that are similar to those found in nature, such as plants, animals, and rocks.

Original: artwork not copied or imitated from the work of someone else.

Originality: a unique personal expression of arts knowledge and skills.

Orthogonal lines: lines that converge or come together at a vanishing point; orthogonal lines are parallel lines that appear to converge as they move away from the viewer toward a vanishing point on the horizon; also called *convergence lines* or *converging lines*; see illustration below:

Outline: a line that is defined by the outside edge or contours of an object or figure.

Overlap: to position things in such a way that the edge of one thing appears to be or is on top of and extending past the edge of another; used as a spatial device or perspective technique in perspective drawing.

Palette: the surface used to dispense and mix paint on.

Paper Maché: art made with newspaper strips that have been moistened with liquid paste, wallpaper paste or laundry starch.

Pattern: a principle of design; the repetition of the elements of visual arts in an organized way; pattern and rhythm are both created through repetition; see *rhythm* for examples of regular, alternating, random, and progressive rhythmic patterns.

Perspective: a way to create the appearance of depth and three dimensions on a two-dimensional surface; types of perspective include one-point linear perspective, two-point linear perspective, and atmospheric perspective.

Picture plane: the surface of a painting

Pigment: a substance used in coloring; usually, an insoluble powder mixed with a base of water, acrylic, or oil to produce paint or other similar products.

Pinching: a method of manipulating clay by pinching with the fingers to sculpt, hollow out, and/or form clay into new forms.

Photography: the process of forming and fixing an image of an object by the chemical action of light and other forms of radiant energy on photosensitive surfaces; the art and business of producing and printing photographs.

Point of view: the angle from which a viewer sees an object.

Pointillism: a technique that involves the use of dots to create an artwork.

Portfolio: a flat, portable envelope or binder that is used to carry artwork or a collection of work.

Positive space: the actual space taken up by the line, shape, or form.

Primary colors: the basic colors from which all other colors are mixed: traditionally, red, yellow, and blue; no other colors can be mixed to make primary colors.

Principles of design of visual arts: a means of organizing the elements in a work of art: balance, contrast, emphasis/dominance, harmony, movement, pattern, proportion, repetition, rhythm, unity, and variety.

Print: the process of making art from an incised surface that has been inked and pressed on an appropriate surface such as paper

Proportion: a principle of design; the relationship of parts to a whole or parts to one another in regards to size and placement.

Prototype: the first of its kind; a sample; an example; a trial product; an original design for a product.

Radial balance: a type of balance that is equally symmetrical from the center point throughout.

Random rhythm: a type of visual rhythm in which the same elements are repeated, but without a recognizable order, such as stars in the sky.

Realism: a style of art that portrays objects or scenes as they might appear in everyday life. A recognizable subject is portrayed using lifelike colors, textures, and proportions.

Reflected light: light that is bounced back from a source.

Regular rhythm: a visual rhythm that is created by repeating the same elements again and again.

Relief: a type of sculpture in which forms project from a flat background; areas of relief may be concave or convex.

Bas-relief: a low relief.

High relief: a sculptural relief that is viewed only from the sides and front.

Additive relief: a type of relief in which elements are added to and protrude from a surface.

Subtractive relief: a type of relief in which elements are carved, etched, or inscribed on a surface.

Repetition: the repeated use of particular elements of visual arts to create a pattern, movement, rhythm, or unity.

Resist: in art, a process that uses two or more materials that do not mix, such as crayon and watercolor or wax and ceramic glaze.

Rhythm (visual): a principle of design; the repetition of elements of visual arts to create movement in an artwork; the following are types of visual rhythms:

Alternating rhythm: created by repeating an element of visual arts at least twice, such as red-blue, red-blue, red-blue.

Angular rhythm: created by repeating two or more lines that have straight angles and edges.

Flowing rhythm: created by repeating wavy lines or curved shapes to suggest

movement or motion.

Progressive rhythm: created by changing the shape or size of a motif incrementally so that the shape is altered every time it repeats.

Random rhythm: created by repeating the same elements, but without a recognizable order, such as stars in the sky.

Regular rhythm: created by repeating the same elements again and again.

Rubber cement: a clean, fast drying latex type of adhesive that is excellent for paper projects.

Rule of thirds: a rule that dictates placing the center of interest in an image on one of the cross-points of a grid

Scoring: scratching the edges of clay before joining them together.

Scruffito: a method of producing patterns from contrast by scratching through a slip or glaze (layers).

Sculptural techniques: different ways to create three-dimensional (3-D) forms; for example, cutting, folding, rolling, twisting, curling, scoring, bending, additive and subtractive processes, attaching, joining, and carving.

Sculpture: a three-dimensional work of art.

Secondary color: a color that is created by mixing two primary colors together in equal parts: green, violet, and orange.

Shade: a value that is created by adding black to a color.

Shadow: the dark areas adjacent to the illuminated (highlighted) side of an object.

Shape: an element of visual arts; a two-dimensional (flat) area enclosed by a line:

Geometric: shapes and/or forms that are based on mathematical principles, such as a square/cube, circle/sphere, triangle/cone, or pyramid.

Organic: shapes and/or forms that are irregular, often curving or rounded, and more informal than geometric shapes.

Sketch: a drawing without much detail, usually completed in a short amount of time, and sometimes used as a rough draft for later work; a drawing that catches the general appearance or impression of an object or place; a drawing that blocks in a quick plan for a composition.

Slab-building: using flat rolled-out pieces of clay to build an artwork or object.

Slip: a fluid suspension of clay in water that is used to join clay pieces and for surface decoration.

Space: an element of visual arts; the area above, below, around, and within an artwork; the

illusion of depth or space on a flat surface, created by means of the following techniques: rendering shapes and forms so that they overlap and using size, detail, value, color, and linear perspective.

Spatial devices: methods used to create the appearance of space in an artwork: foreground, middle ground, and background; overlap, placement, size, detail, color, and value:

Foreground: the area of an artwork that appears closest to the viewer.

Middle ground: the area between the foreground and the background.

Background: the area of an artwork that appears farthest away: a way of showing space.

Color value: the lightness or darkness of a color.

Horizon line: based on the artist's eye level, the line at which the sky appears to meet the earth.

Overlap: one part partly covers another part.

Still life: a piece of artwork that features a collection of nonmoving subject matter.

Structural line: lines that visually hold a composition or design together.

Style: the distinctive use of the elements and principles of visual arts to form characteristics or techniques that are unique to an individual artist, group, or period.

Subtractive process: the process of taking away; carving or cutting away from a surface.

Surreal: the use of fantastic imagery to combine the dreamlike with the realistic.

Symbol: an image that represents something else.

Symmetrical/formal balance: having balance; exact appearance on opposite sides of a dividing line or plane.

Tactile: perceived by touch or related to the sense of touch.

Technique: a method of working with art materials to create artworks.

Tempera: an opaque, water soluble paint available in liquid or powdered form.

Tertiary color: see *intermediate color*.

Texture: an element of visual arts; the portrayal of the quality of a surface by using drawing techniques to create texture and patterns, such as stippling, hatching, cross hatching, scribbling, broken lines, and repeating lines and shapes; *actual* texture is how something feels when touched; *visual* texture (also called *simulated* texture) is how something appears to feel.

Theme: the central idea that is revealed in an artwork; focused subject matter; a topic.

Three-dimensional or 3-D: having actual height, width, and depth and existing in three dimensional spaces; or having the illusion of existing in three dimensions.

Throwing: to use the potter's wheel to form pieces from a plastic clay body.

Tint: a value created by adding white to a color.

Tone: a color that is created by adding gray.

Typography: the use of text or individual words in a visual design or presentation.

Unity: a principle of art; a successful combination of the elements of visual arts to create a sense of wholeness and visual completion in an artwork.

Utilitarian: useful; functional; efficient; serviceable; usable in everyday life.

Value: an element of visual arts; the lightness and darkness of a line, shape, or form; a measure of relative lightness and darkness.

Vanishing point: a spatial device in which two or more parallel lines appear to come together at one point.

Variety: the use of the elements of visual arts to create differences in an artwork for visual interest.

Vertical: the up-and-down orientation of a line, shape, or form.

Vessel: a container, such as bowl, urn, or other item that holds something.

Visual arts: creative expressions that use imagery to satisfy the human need to communicate thoughts, ideas, feelings, and beliefs.

Visual arts elements: see *elements of visual arts*.

Warm colors: a group of colors on the color wheel that are associated with warmth, such as red, yellow, and orange. In an artwork, warm colors appear to advance toward the viewer.

Watercolors: pigment with a water soluble binder that is available in semi-moist cakes or tubes.