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Seeing Through Graphic Design

Sarah Doughty
sdought@bgsu.edu

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OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

4-H 000

SEEING THROUGH GRAPHIC DESIGN

Name ____________________________

Age (As of January 1 of current year) ____________________________

Club Name ___________________________________________________

Club Advisor ________________________________________________

County ______________________________________________________

THE Ohio State University
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
Notes to the Project Helper

Member Project Guide

PROJECT AREA: Color Theory

 Activity 1: Capturing Color
 Talking It Over

PROJECT AREA: Typography

 Activity 2: Make your Own Letter
 Talking It Over

PROJECT AREA: Elements of Design

 Activity 3: Seeing Through Different Eyes
 Activity 4: Simplicity in Complexity
 Activity 5: Breaking Down Structure
 Activity 6: Serving Up Hierarchy
 Talking It Over

PROJECT AREA: Visual Symbols

 Activity 7: Creating Identities
 Activity 8: More Than Brands
 Activity 9: Portfolio
 Talking It Over

Glossary

Summary of Learning Outcomes
NOTES TO PROJECT HELPER

CONGRATULATIONS! A 4-H member has asked you to serve as a project helper. You may be a parent, relative, project leader, friend, club advisor, or another person important in the 4-H member’s life. Your duties begin with helping the youth create and carry out a project plan, as outlined in the Member Project Guide. This is followed by helping the youth focus on each activity, providing support and feedback, and determining what was done well, what could have been done differently, and where to go next.

As a project helper, it is up to you to encourage, guide, and assist the 4-H member. How you choose to be involved helps to shape the 4-H member’s life skills and knowledge of the importance of graphic design.

YOUR ROLE AS PROJECT HELPER

Your contributions are critical to the delivery of the 4-H program, which is committed to providing experiences that strengthen a young person’s sense of belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery. Your interactions should support positive youth development within the framework of the Eight Essential Elements (also known as the Eight Key Elements):

1. Positive relationship with a caring adult
2. An inclusive environment
3. A safe emotional and physical environment
4. Opportunity for mastery
5. Engagement in learning
6. Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future
7. Opportunity for self-determination
8. Opportunity to value and practice service to others

For more information on the Eight Essential Elements, please refer to the Ohio 4-H Volunteer Handbook available online at ohio4h.org. On a practical level, your role as a project helper means you will …

- Guide the youth and provide support in setting goals and completing this project.
- Encourage the youth to apply knowledge from this project book.
- Serve as a resource person.
- Encourage the youth to go beyond the scope of this 4-H project book to learn more about graphic design.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The information and activities in this book are arranged in a unique, experiential fashion (see model). In this way, a youth is introduced to a particular practice, idea, or piece of information through an opening (1) experience. The results of the activity are recorded on the accompanying pages. The member then (2) shares what he or she did with the project helper and (3) processes the experience through a series of questions that allow him or her to (4) generalize and (5) apply the new knowledge and skill.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Review the Learning Outcomes (project skill, life skill, educational standard, and success indicator) for each activity to understand the learning taking place. See the inside back cover for the Summary of Learning Outcomes.
- Become familiar with each activity and the related background information. Stay ahead of the learner by trying out activities beforehand.
- Begin the project by helping the learner establish a plan. This is accomplished by reviewing the Member Project Guide.
- After each project area is completed, conduct a debriefing session that allows the learner to answer the review questions and share results. This important step improves understanding from an experiential learning perspective.
- Help the learner celebrate what was done well and see what could be done differently. Allow the learner to become better at assessing his or her own work.
- In the Member Project Guide, date and initial the activities that have been completed.

Welcome to Seeing Through Graphic Design! Learn how graphic design can help a 4-H member discover and develop knowledge about themselves and how they perceive their environment by decoding the world of visual communication. This project teaches concepts of graphic design and the design thinking process, such as intention and unique perspectives that form individuals and influence their work. The project takes a creative approach to helping the 4-H member understand not only fundamentals of design, but also skills that lead to great design, including content awareness, self-identity or expression, challenging the status quo, and learning to see differently.

This workbook is designed at the intermediate level for youth artists who want to know more about the graphic design discipline as applied to daily processes.

Check your county’s project guidelines (if any) for completion requirements in addition to the ones below, especially if you plan to prepare an exhibit for the fair.

PROJECT GUIDELINES

STEP 1: Complete all ten activities and all of the Talking It Over questions.

STEP 2: Take part in at least two learning experiences.

STEP 3: Become involved in at least two leadership/citizenship activities.

STEP 4: Complete a project review.
Chip Kidd, a famous graphic designer, explains how to demonstrate the use of color in unexpected ways. This can catch your audience off guard and lead them to see things in a different way. Designer’s purposefully draw their audience in by showing the world through visuals such as color.

**WHAT TO DO?**

For this activity you will construct a color wheel using the process of creating a stop motion video. [Must have access to camera]

**STEP 1:** Pick a material such as yarn, colored pencils, paint, colored paper, or any material that you have access to that includes primary and secondary color values.

**STEP 2:** Find a well-lit area to produce your work in, then stabilize your camera over your workspace with a tri-pod or stack of books.

**STEP 3:** When constructing your color wheel, first show the primary colors leaving space for the secondary colors to fit. Each time you make an addition to your work, take a photograph. Depending on the medium, you may have to take more photographs to document the color wheel’s progression. The more photos you take of each little change to your wheel, the more movie-like your stop motion will seem.

**BACKGROUND**

Color wheels are the foundation for choosing and understanding colors. Seasons and moods have color associations. Think about Fall and how we as a Western culture choose maroons and oranges because it correlates with the colors of falling trees. However, orange means love and good health in Eastern cultures.

Color has intention, designers’ pick color based on what they are trying to communicate. Color is so important to understand as a designer because you need to choose your colors for projects with intention rather than based off of personal likes. Since color wheels are used so often, thinking like a designer, you can always re-interpret how to present the color. In this activity, by using a stop motion to show your color wheel, you not only demonstrate an understanding of color theory, but also how to work with additional mediums such as photography.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Project skill: Demonstrates color knowledge and use of digital media.

Life skill: Mastering Technology

Educational standard: _____

Success indicator: Creates a stopmotion of color wheel.
More Challenges

If a lemon was purple we might not easily identify it. You can change people’s perspectives by choosing an object from your house or outside and modifying its color with paint. Is the image still recognizable as its original object or did the modification change the way others identify it?

Did You Know?

Graphic design helps teach us that our perspectives can change and that people can perceive the same environment differently. Just because somebody sees something different does not mean they are wrong it just means they have a different view point.

Resources

You can find color swatches and suggested colors in painting and home improvement stores or online at: https://www.pantone.com

RGB:
Magnifying glasses and light prisms that show how rays of light are separated into a color spectrum, are a great example of reductive color. These reflections are made from overlapping rays of RGB (Red, Green, Blue) light. This is how color is shown digitally on screens because the colors are an absence of certain rays of light. To get white, all the light colors are combined together. Seeing black means we aren’t seeing any light rays.

CMYK:
Print methods use additive color because the ink is layered on top of itself as an opaque substance. To get black all three colors (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow) are layered over one another.

SOURCES
Graphic Design: The New Basics, by Ellen Lupton and Jennifer Cole Phillips
GO: A Kidd’s Guide To Graphic Design, by Chip Kidd

SHARE
How did making a stop motion help you turn your knowledge of color into something bigger?

REFLECT
Did you learn anything about yourself regarding how you see color now?

GENERALIZE
How might the process of documenting step by step, like with your color wheel, translate into your everyday life?

APPLY
When else is it important to think about cultural norms in yours or someone’s life?
Just as there are verbal languages that each have a unique sound and style to them, there are visual languages that differ in how imagery and information are presented in a visual way. Each font that you read on a screen or piece of paper has its own visual style which makes it unique. This font was intentionally chosen because the visual language is best for body copy since the letterforms are not stylized like a script font.

**What to do?**

**Step 1:** Type out the alphabet on the computer in a Word Document or on InDesign. Use an interesting font you like that is a serif or sans serif. Avoid writing in handwriting because that is not a consistent visual system. Debbie Millman hand draws sans serif type in a playful manner, but with great precision.

**Step 2:** Observe each letter’s anatomy of the terminals, ascenders, descenders, etc. Identify if the font is a serif or sans serif and how each letterform fits within the same visual system of that typeface.

**Step 3:** Next, trace or free-hand draw a combination of two letters from that font to create an imaginary new letter that looks like it belongs within that visual language.

**Step 4:** Printout the alphabet of the font you chose and place your new letter alongside it. Does it look like it could be a real letter?

**More Challenges**

Look up great examples in a magazine and identify which letters are serif and which are sans serifs. What situations is each used in? How many different styles of the same letter can you find?

**Did You Know?**

The term “leading” refers to when type setters would physically place down a block of led on their printing presses to separate each line of print.

**Resources**

To see more visuals of the anatomy of type visit: [https://typedecon.com](https://typedecon.com) or check out Lettering & Type, by Bruce Willen and Nolen Strals, or Type On Screen by Ellen Lupton.

You can play a fun kerning game and test your skills by visiting: [http://type.method.ac](http://type.method.ac)

**Learning Outcomes**

- Project skill: Understanding typography as a visual language
- Life skill: Communicating
- Educational standard: 
- Success indicator: 27th letter fits within the chosen font which is clearly defined as a serif or san serif.

**Sources**

- [Thinking With Type, Ellen Lupton](https://www.ellenlupton.com)
SHARE
Which font is your favorite and why? Did you know that you had a preference before now?

REFLECT
How might noticing the difference between typefaces help you distinguish headers and information better in the future?

GENERALIZE
What other structures in your life have an “anatomy” to them? Think about architecture, biology, or objects with pieces and parts like typography.

APPLY
As a conscientious communicator, why is it important to choose an appropriate typeface for your content?

PROJECT AREA: TYPOGRAPHY

ACTIVITY 2: MAKE YOUR OWN LETTER

PROJECT AREA: ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

ACTIVITY 3: SEEING THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES

Learning to see different sides to the same story is important as a designer because you will be curating information and communicating to an audience that may not share the same viewpoints as you. To gain a better understanding of perception, in this activity you will be working with positive and negative space which helps show how the lack of content does not always mean a lack of importance.

WHAT TO DO?

STEP 1. Pick two colored pieces of paper. One should be a greater intensity than the other. Like a black piece and a colored piece, or a light color and a dark color.

STEP 2: Cut one of your pieces of paper into a perfect square.

STEP 3: Using only that square, cut into your paper a design that hides the original square shape of the paper. Whatever image you cut out, must be able to flip-out on an axis.

STEP 4: Your square will turn into an organic or geometric form that you will glue down each “flipped axis” onto the other less-intense paper color.

Did You Know?

The Gestalt Principal is a optical effect that designers use to communicate visually because they know the viewer will decode negative space as a grouping and subliminally interpret closure to open spaces, or see implied images.

Photo provided by Google
ACTIVITY 3: SEEING THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES

BACKGROUND

Our eye is always trying to interpret what we see or “decode” it in a sense. Graphic design is a means of communication, so whatever images a designer chooses to portray to an audience should be intentional and meaningful. To challenge what our eye expects, designers are creative with figure/ground relationships so that it makes the viewer intrigued to pay more attention to a designed visual rather than skipping over it because it is predictable and boring.

More Challenges

Often what we think of as negative space can actually become positive space.

STEP 1: Cut out stenciled letters from a piece of paper.

STEP 2: Take your stencils and lay them over colors, textures, nature, or objects and see how the negative space of the stencil fills up with what’s behind it, and therefore becomes the positive space or focus of the composition.

STEP 3: Be intentional about what textures or imagery you put behind the stencils. If you have the letter “B” maybe you frame the color blue or put it over bubbles, because those communicate the need for the letter “B.”

STEP 4: Take a photo of the compositions you created and keep it in your portfolio.*

Resources

Patterns incorporate positive and negative shapes with repetition. To learn how to draw edges, flip, and then copy a design into a pattern that repeats, visit: https://www.craftsy.com/art/article/how-to-draw-a-repeating-pattern/

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Project skill: Seeing figure/ground relationships
Life skill: Resolving Conflicts

Success indicator: Equal positive and negative space is present in a creative composition.

*You will design it for Activity 9: Portfolio.
I PLEDGE

MY HEAD TO CLEARER THINKING,
MY HEART TO GREATER LOYALTY,
MY HANDS TO LARGER SERVICE,
AND MY HEALTH TO BETTER LIVING,
FOR MY CLUB, MY COMMUNITY,
MY COUNTRY, AND MY WORLD.