

# Elements and Principles Unit

Two Lessons that integrate the Elements of Art, the Principles of Design, Painting, and Clay

## Elements and Principles Paintings ● Clay Tiles

The elements of art can be defined as the basic visual components of all natural and human-made objects. Shape, space, form, color, line, and texture are all art elements. Principles of design are defined as relationships created by art elements working together in a composition. Examples of design principles are contrast, balance, rhythm, movement, pattern, emphasis, and unity. Art elements and design principles are art's visual language used to understand, produce, and evaluate art. In this unit, students will learn about the different elements of art and principles of design and their different functions in art. Students will first exhibit their new knowledge by creating watercolor and gouache paintings that portray examples of each element and principle. Students will then demonstrate their knowledge of the elements and principles even further by creating clay tiles that represent a relationship between one element and one principle. This unit will allow students to work towards an understanding of the elements of art and principles of design while simultaneously working towards an understanding of the watercolor, gouache, and clay media.

### Elements and Principles Paintings:

In the first lesson, *Elements and Principles Paintings*, students will first learn about the elements of art and principles of design and then create paintings, using watercolors and gouaches, that display artistic representations of the different elements and principles.

### Clay Tiles:

In the second lesson, *Clay Tiles*, students will demonstrate their knowledge of the elements and principles by creating clay tiles that use pottery techniques to portray specific elements of art and principles of design.

# Elements and Principles Paintings

**Grade Level:** 7<sup>th</sup>

**Project Description:** Students will create paintings, using watercolors and gouaches, that display artistic representations of the elements of art and principles of design.



## **Rationale:**

The elements of art can be defined as the basic visual components of all natural and human-made objects. It is important for student to learn about the art elements and design principles because they are art's visual language used to understand, produce, and evaluate art. Because the elements and principles are complex, it is a topic that students need to practice many times in order to truly gain an understanding.

In this lesson, students will use watercolors and gouaches to compose their paintings. Watercolor painting is unpredictable and difficult to control. The medium provides the opportunity to meander somewhere between mastery and complete lack of control during the course of a painting. In these experiences where students don't have total control over their artwork, it allows them to take risks and have some fun with their artwork. Gouache paints on the other hand are different from watercolors; they are heavier and more opaque, with greater reflective qualities. Gouache will allow students to paint on top of the watercolor base and provide the detail needed to represent the elements and principles. Watercolor and gouache paints will allow students to display their knowledge of the art elements and principles of design in a unique and creative way.

**Enduring Understanding:** Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches.

## **Essential Questions:**

Why are the elements and principles important in art?

## **Goals:** *Students will:*

- Work towards an understanding of the elements of art
- Work towards an understanding of the principles of design
- Work towards an understanding of the watercolor and gouache media

## **Objectives:** *Students will:*

- Create artistic representations of the seven elements of art in order to demonstrate knowledge of the content area.
- Create artistic representations of seven of the principles of design in order to demonstrate knowledge of the content area.

-Create a watercolor and gouache painting that displays elements and principles in order to demonstrate knowledge of the watercolor and gouache media.

**Procedure:**

1. Students will watch and participate in presentation on the elements of art.
2. Students will use a ruler and pencil to create 14 different shapes on a piece of 10x10" watercolor paper.
3. Students will paint a base layer of watercolors on their watercolor paper.
4. Students will use the gouache paints to paint representations of the elements of art.
5. Students will watch and participate in presentation on the principles of design.
6. Students will use the gouache paints to paint representations of the principles of design.
7. Students will use a sharpie to identify each element and principle on their painting.

**Motivations:**

Presentation on the Elements of Art  
Presentation on the Principles of Design  
Demonstration on how to properly paint with watercolors  
Demonstration on how to properly paint with gouaches  
Example of project

**Vocabulary:** Elements of art, principles of design, line, color, shape, form, space, texture, value, contrast, balance, emphasis, movement, rhythm, pattern, unity, watercolor paints, gouache paints

**Materials:** 10x10" Watercolor paper, rulers, pencils, watercolor paints, gouache paints

**Assessment:**

**Formative:** *Observing and Interviewing:* Students will be observed and interviewed throughout their artistic processes in order to check for learning.

**Summative:** *Final Assessment Checklist:* Students will identify and be assessed on each of their element and principle representations on their paintings.

**National Core Arts Standards:**

Creating: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work by applying visual organization to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that clearly communicates information or ideas.

# Clay Tiles

**Grade Level:** 7<sup>th</sup>

**Project Description:** Students will create clay tiles using pottery techniques to portray specific elements of art and principles of design.



## **Rationale:**

The elements of art can be defined as the basic visual components of all natural and human-made objects. It is important for student to learn about the art elements and design principles because they are art's visual language used to understand, produce, and evaluate art. Because the elements and principles are complex, it is a topic that students need to practice many times in order to truly gain an understanding.

Pottery has been an essential component of societies' technology throughout history. From transporting water to containing past loved ones, humans have relied on potters for thousands of years. Pottery, however, is not only functional, but often a work of art in its own right. By dealing with a medium in a way uncommon from its traditional use, students gain a new perspective on the possibilities of that media. Clay, used as a hand-building medium, allows for creative exploration and growth in originality and imagination. This project will allow students to work towards an understanding of the elements and principles as well as the clay medium, while simultaneously creating unique and elaborate art.

**Enduring Understanding:** Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches.

## **Essential Questions:**

- Why are the elements and principles important in art?
- How can the elements and principles be portrayed through clay?

## **Goals:** *Students will:*

- Work towards an understanding of the elements of art
- Work towards an understanding of the principles of design
- Work towards an understanding of the properties and techniques of the clay medium

## **Objectives:** *Students will:*

- Portrays at least one artistic representation of an element of art on their clay tile in order to demonstrate understanding of the elements of art.
- Portrays at least one artistic representation of a principle of design on their clay tile in order to demonstrate understanding of the principles of design.
- Create a clay tile using different pottery techniques in order to demonstrate understanding of the clay medium.



**Procedure:**

1. Students will watch and participate in a presentation on clay tiles to test their knowledge and identify elements and principles throughout the artwork shown.
2. Students will choose one element and one principle (chosen blindly by picking from a hat) to use to create their clay tile designs.
3. Students will use clay tile design sheet to create at least four designs.
4. Students will pick their best design to use for their clay tile.
5. Students will watch demonstration that teaches students about the properties of clay and proper pottery techniques (including using rolling pins, needle tools, texture tools and trimming tools, as well as the techniques slab-making, coil-building, scoring and slipping, etc.).
6. Students will use demonstrated pottery techniques to create their clay tiles.
7. Optional: Students will create a second tile where they can choose their own element and principle.
8. When students are finished with their clay tiles they will fill out an assessment rubric and explain how they represented their elements and principles.

**Motivations:**

PowerPoint presentation of clay tile examples  
Example of project  
Demonstration on pottery tools and techniques

**Vocabulary:** Elements of art, principles of design, line, color, shape, form, space, texture, value, contrast, balance, emphasis, movement, rhythm, pattern, unity, clay, tile, slab, slip, score, leather hard, bone dry, bisque, coil, pinch, fire, bisque fire, glaze firing, kiln, score, needle tool, Design sheets, pencils, clay, canvas, needle tools, wire tools, ribs, loop tools, ribbon tools, wooden modeling tools, sponges, brushes.

**Materials:** Design sheets, pencils, clay, canvas, needle tools, wire tools, ribs, loop tools, ribbon tools, wooden modeling tools, sponges, brushes.

**Assessment:**

**Formative:** *Observing and Interviewing:* Students will be observed and interviewed throughout their artistic processes in order to check for learning.

**Summative:** *Assessment Rubric:* Students will fill out an assessment rubric that checks for lesson requirements (use of pottery techniques and depiction of elements and principles) as well as checks for learning.

**National Core Arts Standards:**

Creating: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work by applying visual organization to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that clearly communicates information or ideas.

# Unit Accommodations:

**Gifted Students:** *Accommodations include but are not limited to:*

- Escalating the objectives.
- The choice of incorporating as many elements and principles as the student(s) desires.
- The opportunity to create more than one clay tile.
- Providing any reasonable accommodation(s) that a student needs that does not fit under the existing options.

**Special Needs Students:** *Accommodations include but are not limited to:*

- Using open-ended questions.
- Presenting information visually.
- Allowing for "wait" time before thinking before they work or participate in discussion(s).
- Providing independent work in segments.
- Having student(s) do a few simple exercises such as pushing hands together, and squeezing and relaxing fists before drawing or cutting.
- Providing a space with minimal distractions.
- Extra time for student(s) to complete their work.
- Simplifying project expectations for student(s).
- Providing any reasonable accommodation(s) that a student needs that does not fit under the existing options.