Arts
4th Grade

Lesson 6: Visual Arts | 20 minutes over 2-3 days

Activity 1–Design a Stamp

Summary

Students will understand and identify the difference between the elements of art and principles of design that are used for designing a stamp. Students will understand that designing for a stamp is very different from designing for a poster or a large-scale work. Students will understand that elements and principles help subjects convey a special message through visual art.

Key Discoveries:

- *Students will identify elements of art and principles of design used in the stamp.*
- *Students will identify how the artist scaled the design to a stamp size.*

Standards	• Primary: VA.1.CR1.4 (1), VA.1.CR1.4 (2), VA.1.CR1.4 (3), VA.2.CR2.4 (3), VA.3.CR3.4 (1), VA.3.CR3.4 (3), VA.4.PR1.4 (3), ,VA.10.CO1.4 (3), VA.10.CO1.4 (1)., VA.10.CO1.4 (2), VA.11.CO2.4 (2)
Materials	• Smithsonian Design a Stamp Activity • Design a Stamp Journal • Blank Stamp
Vocabulary	• **Typography:** Words added to an image to give additional information to the viewer. • **Color:** The visual cue that defines a space or line in the design. • **Line:** A mark that creates direction and structure in an image. Lines can be thin, thick, curvy, straight, or broken. • **Shape:** A form that creates a distinguishable image in a space. Shapes can be circles, squares, triangles, or organic shapes (natural, non-geometric). • **Value:** The light and dark shades of a color. The values for blue can be robin blue, royal blue, teal, cornflower blue, or turquoise.

Background for Teachers:

Review the attached Smithsonian National Postal Museum Design a Stamp Activity.



Class Flow:

Activity 1: Design a Stamp

Step 1: Introduction-This activity should be used in conjunction any other activity about Oregon or U.S. Indian Tribes.

- Ask students to select a Tribe to Research for their stamp design.
    - An Oregon Tribe or other Tribe of Interest
- Complete the first part of the Journal Worksheet

Step 2: Introduction to Stamp Design.

- Review and Share Smithsonian Design a Stamp Activity Sheet.
- Share actual stamps or pictures of stamps and Discuss

Step 3: Complete the Worksheet Activities in the Design A Stamp

- This can be done individually, in pairs or groups or as a whole class.

Step 4: Complete the Stamp Design Project.

Step 5: Journal Activity

- Invite students to write a brief description of their stamp design.
- Complete the second part of the Journal activity.

Step 6: Discussion and Share

- Discussion on what students learned about color and design.
- Invite students to share their stamp designs.
- Optional: Display stamp designs in the classroom or hallway.



3 Design It: Designing a Stamp



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INTRODUCTION TO LESSON 3

Essential Questions

What are elements of art and principles of design? How are they used in designing stamps? What qualities should a designer consider when designing for a small-scale work versus a large-scale work?

Desired Outcomes

Students will understand and identify the difference between the elements of art and principles of design that are used for designing a stamp. Students will understand that designing for a stamp is very different from designing for a poster or a large-scale work. Students will understand that elements and principles help subjects convey a specific message.

In This Lesson

By examining specific samples of stamps, students will identify elements of art and principles of design used in the stamp. Students will identify how the artist scaled the design to fit a stamp.

National Standards of Learning

- NA-VA.5-8.1 Understanding and Applying Media, Techniques, and Processes
- NA-VA.5-8.2 Using Knowledge of Structures and Functions
- NA-VA.5-8.3 Choosing and Evaluating a Range of Subject Matter, Symbols, and Ideas
- NA-VA.5-8.4 Understanding the Visual Arts in Relation to History and Cultures
- NA-VA.5-8.6 Making Connections Between Visual Arts and Other Disciplines

LESSON 3: INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Use this lesson to facilitate a discussion with your students about the elements of art and principles of design. Handouts of stamps can be used to observe subject selection and how the elements and principles are used to convey messages. Each image was selected to illustrate a component of the lesson and provoke discussion. Sample questions you can ask your students include:

— Why does each Olympic ring have its own color?
— How do you show a figure is moving?
— How does typography reveal the personality of the figure?
— How does typography convey a message about the stamp to the viewer?

This unit will prepare students for their stamp design activity as they consider which elements and principles to use to communicate a message about their subject.

Materials and Resources

- Thinking Routines
- Colors, Shapes, Lines: A Routine for Exploring the Formal Qualities of Art
- Supporting Materials for Teachers
- Handouts: Elements of Art and Principles of Design
- Handout: Compare and Contrast Poster vs. Stamp (You can also use a poster and a stamp of your own choosing to illustrate this as well.)
- Handout: Art Vocabulary
- Worksheet: Designing a Stamp
- Appendices: Samples of Enlarged Stamps (images from Lesson 3 Supporting Materials)

SUGGESTED THINKING ROUTINES AND ACTIVITIES[5]:

#1: Before starting the lesson, students can look at stamps, posters, and other works of art in the classroom.

Potential questions to ask:

- What do they know about designing a picture?
- What do they want to know?
- What are the basics of designing an image?
- How would you design an image that will be small? How would that differ from designing a large image?
- How does a design help convey a message, opinion, or impression?

#2: Gather several images with a noticeable design element and have students identify a primary design element used to convey meaning. Suggested images are included in the lesson. You can also use www.arago.si.edu to view other stamps for more examples. "Colors, Shapes, Lines" worksheet would make a great thinking routine.[6]

#3: Have students act out Josh White's frozen image (Figure 3 in Supporting Materials). Ask them what they think Josh White is going to do next. Play a sample of Josh White's music. This will help them understand the concept of emotion and rhythm in an image.

#4: Throughout the following examples of art elements found on stamps, have your students identify the stamp subject and how it relates to the criteria listed in "Selecting a Subject."

#5: For an intensive analysis of an artwork, choose a stamp with historical significance that students may have studied in a previous social studies unit. "Colors, Shapes, Lines" thinking routine would make a great visual thinking strategy.

Potential questions to ask:

- What is the subject?
- What is the message of the stamp?
- When was the stamp designed?
- Why was the stamp designed at the time?
- What is the historical significance?

5. "Thinking Routines." Visible Thinking. Project Zero at Harvard Graduate School of Education. 13 October 2009. http://www.pz.harvard.edu/vt/VisibleThinking_html_files/03_ThinkingRoutines/03a_ThinkingRoutines.html.

COLORS, SHAPES, LINES[6]

A Routine for Exploring the Formal Qualities of Art

1. Take a minute to look at the artwork. Let your eyes wander over it freely. What do you see? Take a few observations from students and then move on to the next step.

2. Observe and describe the colors, shapes, and lines in detail. Make 3 columns. (See example below.)

3. Choose a kind of color, shape, or line that you listed. How does it contribute to the artwork overall? (How does it help the artwork "work?") Consider:

- How does it contribute to how the artwork feels?
- How does it contribute to the mood of the artwork?
- How does it contribute to how the artwork looks?
- How does it contribute to the story the artwork tells?
- How does it contribute to the ideas in the artwork?

4. What new ideas do you have about the artwork? What do you see now that you didn't see before?

6. "Color, Shapes, Lines." Artful Thinking. Traverse City Area Public Schools and Project Zero at Harvard Graduate School of Education. 13 October 2009. http://pzweb.harvard.edu/tc/colors_shapes_lines cfm. © Harvard Project Zero

LESSON 3: SUPPORTING MATERIALS FOR TEACHERS

Designing a stamp requires serious thought and planning because of its size or scale. A designer has to consider how to best portray the subject without losing its significance when it is scaled into a smaller size. Designers use elements of art and principles of design to create a composition of a subject. Elements of art are basic design methods such as color, line, and shape. Principles of design are repetitions or combinations of elements used to create a visual effect. Such an example is using a repetition of lines to create a sense of movement seen in Figure 1. Elements and principles create unique characteristics within a design.

The most important part of a stamp design is choosing the subject. As discussed in lesson two, the subject has to represent national identity or significance. Creating a design of the subject allows the stamp to relay a message and minimize the use of text. After picking a subject, the designer would first consider elements of art: color, line, shape, and value.

Elements of Art

Color

Color helps the viewer to identify the subject because color combinations can communicate an idea. Such an example is the American flag. The colors red, white, and blue would help the American public recognize their country's flag. If the flag was black, yellow, and green, people would immediately know that it is not an American flag. Another example of color representation in Figure 1 is the Olympic rings. Each Olympic ring has its own color to represent a continent participating in the Olympics.

Example

COLORS What colors do you see? Describe them.	SHAPES What kinds of shapes do you see? Describe them.	LINES What kinds of lines do you see? Describe them.

Line

Lines help create structure in an image. Without lines, a design would be indistinguishable without any identifiable or recognizable images or shapes. There are several types of lines: straight, curvy, horizontal, vertical, diagonal, zigzag, and more. Look at Figure 1. The flag is made of a rectangle of curvy lines. These lines create stripes that are familiar to the American Flag. In addition, the curvy lines create a sensation that the flag is waving in the air.

Shape

Shapes create a construction of an object. For example, looking at Figure 2, you would see that the swans meet together to make a heart. There are two types of shapes: geometric and organic. Geometric shapes are basic and familiar shapes such as a circle, square, rectangle, and triangle and are often man-made. Organic shapes are mostly complex and unstructured shapes and often found in nature. Look at Figure 3 for an example. Josh White and his guitar are composed of organic shapes.

Value

Value is the range of light and dark in colors. Value creates contrast and often draws your eyes to the central focus of the image—the subject. It also creates depth on a flat surface. Look at Figure 2. The values of red, orange, and yellow create depth in the swans' background. The values give a sense of warmth and love. Another example is Figure 3. Notice Josh White's clothes. You can see the light and dark values of the color white. The background is also composed of several values of colors, creating a sense of depth and bringing Josh White to the forefront.

Principles of Design

To create more complexity, stamp designers combine basic elements to create powerful images. The combined or repeated elements of color, line, shape, and value work together to convey rhythm, unity, and proportion in a stamp design.

Rhythm

Rhythm is a principle that creates a sense of motion within a static image or an emotional setting in an image. This can be done through a repetition of elements such as lines and shapes. Through the creation of motion, the image can look more exciting and dynamic. For example, if you were to look at Figure 5, you would know that the figure is running. This is reflected through two repeated figures in the background. The shapes of the figures are geometric with one arm and leg up in the air, and the other arm and leg down. In addition, the figure is not upright, but rather slanted forward, creating a sense of movement.

Rhythm also helps to express energy, which shows the emotional context of the image. Look at Figure 6. The use of value and repeated squares create a sense of rhythm in the image. A sense of pulsating rhythm brings your eyes to the center of the red square. Through the overlapping squares, your eyes follow the constructed rhythm. Jagged and abrupt sense of rhythm can be created by a repetition of shapes or lines that are separate, forcing your eyes to jump around the page.

Unity

Unity reflects the careful arrangement of elements and the quality of work. Designers want their image to be complete and done in the highest quality possible because it will be distributed to the public. The message in a stamp must be clearly understood. Encourage students to consider how colors should not go outside of borders or shapes and lines should be carefully composed together. See Figures 7 and 8 for a contrast between a work of unity and a work without unity. Figure 7 shows consideration of elements—the color palette and the arrangement of shapes. Figure 8, however, shows a contrasting image of scribbled lines, messy shapes, and careless coloring.

Proportion

When an artist begins to design for a stamp, the artist has to consider the end result—what the image would look like when it is reduced to scale. This principle of design is called proportion. Stamp designers are careful with how they put the elements into a composition. Designing for a stamp is very different from designing for a larger work of art. When reducing an image, the picture may come out looking less sharp than the original image or it may look overcrowded. There may be a burst of color that is hard to look at if the original image used lots of color and values. When designing for a stamp, one must consider several keys to designing "small":

Figure 9 serves as an excellent example of proportion. The designer created a central subject with the selection of three colors (red, black, and blue), and three words. People looking at the stamp are immediately drawn to the central character, which in itself is a very active character. Should the designer add any other objects, the image may be hard to look at.

Also to be considered:

Typography

Typography (the way words are printed) is also an important component that needs to be considered in any stamp design. Typography communicates information that helps emphasize a subject's message and contributes to the design aesthetic. In addition, typography is used to communicate stamp value and country of origin.

Typography can be simple, cursive, thin, or thick. If the name of a famous person is included in a stamp design, one should consider how the words look. In Figure 4, the designer included Judy Garland's autograph. Her signature gives personality to the overall stamp design and tells us her full name. Compare Judy Garland's cursive signature to Josh White's simple block letters. Two very different types of typography are used in the stamps.

When designing for a stamp, one must consider several keys to designing "small".

a) A central image is used—usually at the very center of the design
b) Keep intricate details to a minimum
c) Use shape and line to direct the eye
d) Simple use of color and value simply to help make a sharp image
e) Limit the use of typography

The elements of art and principles of design referenced in this section may not be compatible with every state's standards of learning but teachers are encouraged to connect stamp design examples with the mandatory concepts outlined in the state curricula.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3


Figure 4



Figure 5

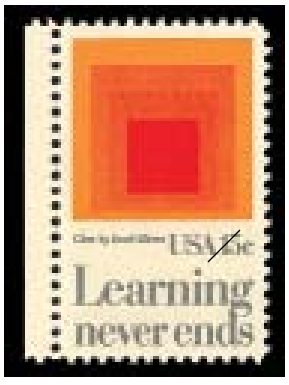

Figure 6


Figure 7


Figure 8



Figure 9

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Lesson 3

Elements of Art



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Printable Versions are available on-line at http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/educators/4b_DesignIt_Materials.html

Lesson 3

Principles of Design

Unity
Careful selection
of colors and shapes

Rhythm



Typography

Proportion
Central object

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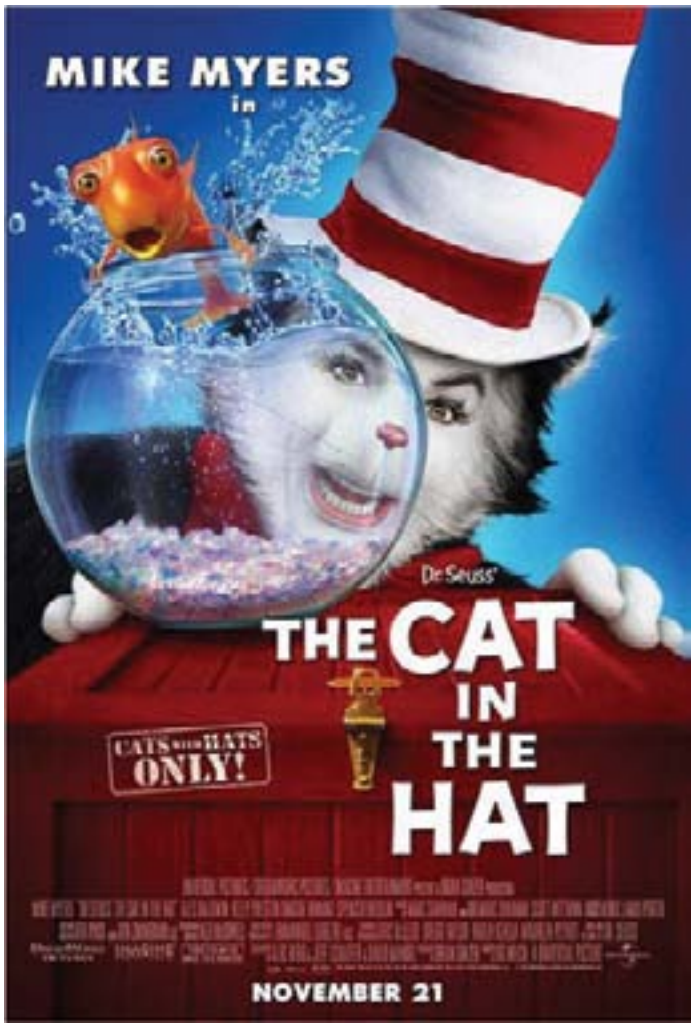
Printable Versions are available on-line at http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/educators/4b_DesignIt_Materials.html

Lesson 3

Compare and Contrast: Poster vs. Stamp



© www.impawards.com/2003/posters/cat_in_the_hat_verdvd.jpg

- Many colors and values
- Several focal points
- Layered images
- Many words
- Scale is large

- Scale is small
- One central subject
- Minimal words
- Limited focal points
- Minimal colors



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Printable Versions are available on-line at http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/educators/4b_DesignIt_Materials.html

Lesson 3

Art Vocabulary

Elements of Art Vocabulary

1. Color: The visual cue that defines a space or line in the design. Colors can be red, blue, yellow, green, purple, orange, brown, black, white.

2. Line: A mark that creates direction and structure in an image. Lines can be thin, thick, curvy, straight, or broken.

3. Shape: A form that creates a distinguishable image in a space. Shapes can be circles, squares, triangles, or organic shapes (shapes that are natural and non-geometric).

4. Value: The light and dark shades of a color.
   The values of blue can be robin blue, royal blue, teal, cornflower, or turquoise.

Principles of Design Vocabulary

1. Rhythm: Showing a figure or object has energy or motion. This can be done using a repetition of colors, lines, shapes, or values.

2. Unity: The combination of elements to create a composition of a design that reflects the quality of a work. Elements must be carefully chosen to reinforce the main subject message.

3. Proportion: How a composition should look when reduced or enlarged in scale. Each design must use careful selection of elements when thinking about how big or small the final product will be.

Other Important Vocabulary

Typography: Words added to an image to give additional information to the viewer. Fonts can be printed, cursive, neat, crazy, embedded in an image or distinct from an image.

Lesson 3 Worksheet

Designing a Stamp

Name: _____

Date: _____

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate vocabulary for each image.

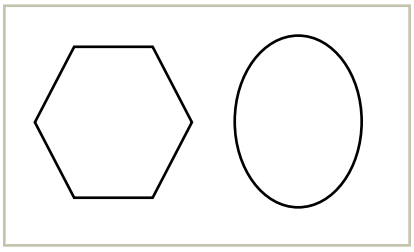
AMERICA





_____ _____ _____







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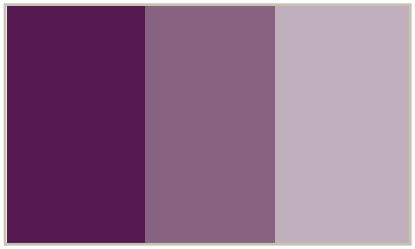

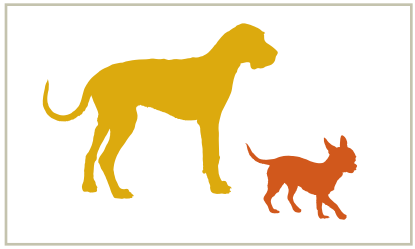

_____ _____

Printable Versions are available on-line at http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/educators/4b_DesignIt_Materials.html

DESIGN A POSTAGE STAMP:



Using information that you have learned through your research, design a postage stamp that represents your chosen Tribe.

The art can be in any medium (pencil, ink, colored pencil, watercolor, chalk) of your choosing. The format can be traditional, modern or futuristic.

The stamp can represent historical information (housing, clothing, transportation, culture) or current information (land area, culture, business development).

The stamp can also represent the Tribe by drawing or designing an historical figure that you have learned about from that Tribe.

The Tribe I chose is:

_____

I chose this Tribe because:

_____

_____

_____

This Tibe is located (State):

_____

Some interesting facts about the Tribe (colors, animals, Tribal Flag):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Elements that I want to incorporate into my stamp design (colors, style, wording):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Design a Stamp: Reflection

What did you learn about design, color and porportion when drawing your stamp?
What difficulties did you face?

Write an Artist Statement about your stamp design:

