

BYU MUSEUM OF ART

January Open Studio

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

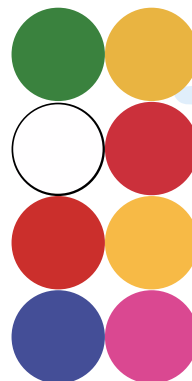
Elements of art are the basic building blocks of any work. They include **line, shape, color, texture, space, and value**. Today in *L'Affichomania*, we will be looking at how artists designing posters during the *Belle Époque* (1871-1914) used the elements of art to advertise a product and, more importantly, make their audiences want to purchase that product.



This Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen poster advertises *lait stérilisé*, sterilized milk. Both the young girl and the cats are enjoying this milk, showing the audience how delicious it is. However, Steinlen also uses the colors of the subject to help promote the product. The child's dress is red, and her hair is a warm yellow hue. Red and yellow often appear together in food advertisements like this one. This is because this combination of colors make you more hungry--red increases the heart rate and makes us more likely to act on our hunger, and yellow activates appetite by making us happy and excited to eat. This is called the Ketchup and Mustard theory. Although this theory may not have been developed by this time, artists throughout the nineteenth century were interested in the effects of color on their viewers. Here, Steinlen has made a conscious choice to communicate his advertising message and promote the sensation of hunger through the element of color.

Advertisers use color to create recognizable brand logos. Look at the color combinations to the right and see if you can guess any of the fast-food companies that use these colors in their logo.

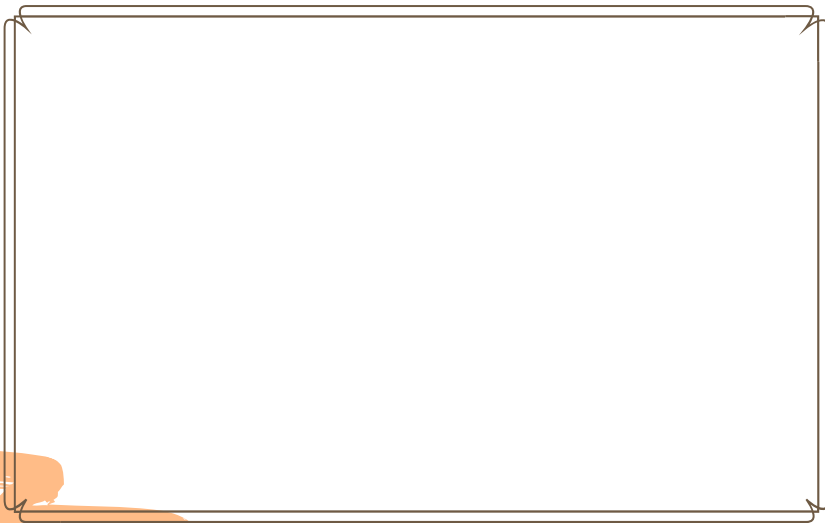
Check your answers against the key on the next page.



Line is a central element for the design of this poster by Alphonse Mucha. Look at the flowing locks of the woman's hair, the folds in the fabric of her dress, and the clean lines of the bicycle. Why does Mucha use free, undulating lines to draw her hair? This poster is an advertisement for the bicycle, which was gaining popularity by 1880 because it allowed for faster and easier travel. The bicycle also allowed for greater independence among women. The "New Woman," traveled alone, began working jobs outside the home, and directed her own life instead of relying on a husband. In Mucha's poster, the lines of her hair are unrestrained and follow a circular motion, suggesting movement in any direction she chooses, as she stares self-assuredly out at the viewer.



In the box provided, draw a line that makes you think of movement. Draw another line that feels excited or energetic. How are your lines similar or different to the lines Mucha is using in this poster?



In *Théâtrophone*, Cheret creates the appearance of product demand by using space and perspective to depict a long line of people waiting behind the central woman. Perspective is the clever use of space to imply depth. Here, for example, the line of people waiting to use the théâtrophone stretches into the distance, and the artist has depicted each person smaller than the previous as the space from the viewer increases. An advertisement like this creates a sense of popularity for the product, and a fear of missing out in the viewer who is not using this exciting new device.

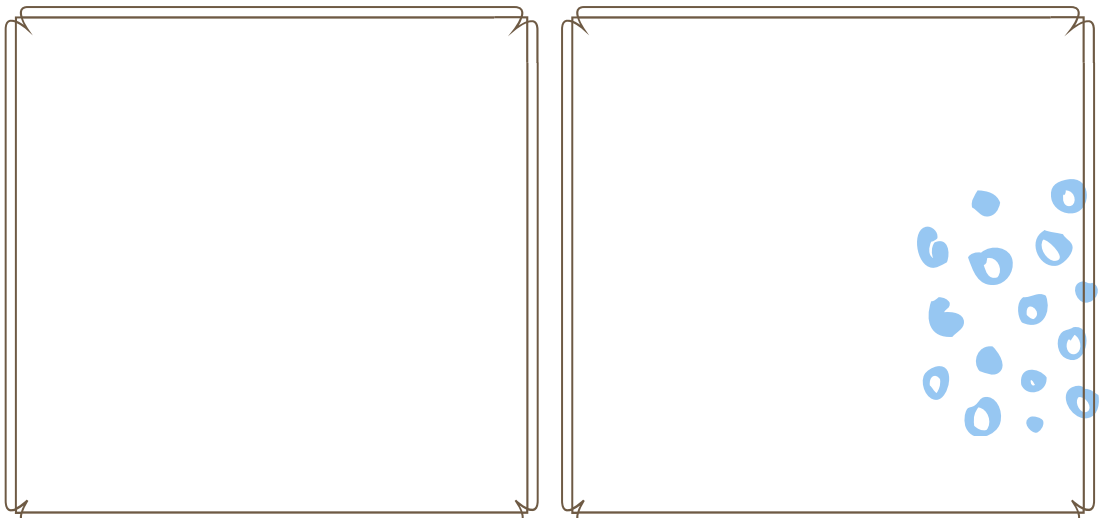


Confetti by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec is a nice comparison to Cheret's *Théâtrophone*. How have these two artists used space differently in their respective posters? Where Cheret implies a busy night out listening to the theater or the opera from a new invention, Toulouse-Lautrec does not give us any indication of time or place. His use of negative space in this advertisement for confetti instead creates a sense of immediacy and surprise. Rather than relying on a specific setting to demonstrate the product, any moment or location could be a celebration!



Use the first box on the right to organize shapes so that there is a sense of depth.

Use the second box to create an object surrounded by negative space.



Advertisers today still use the elements of art to help promote their products. In the US, the average person sees as many as 10,000 advertisements a day! Think about one of the advertisements you have seen already today: How did that advertisement use color, line, or space to attract your attention or influence your emotions?

Recognizing the elements artists use in their advertisements to convince you to buy a product, or to choose one product over another is an important realization.

Now head upstairs to the art studio to get started on an art activity!

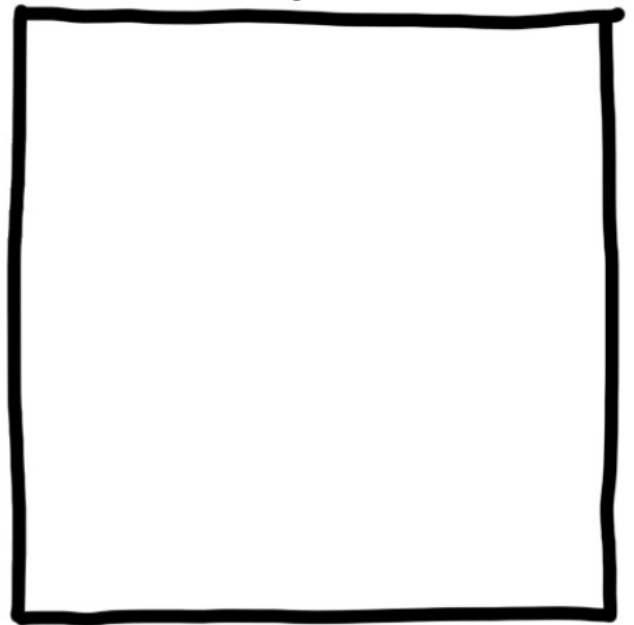
Elements of Art

Line

Lines are the building blocks of all shapes and forms. Artists use different types of lines, thicknesses, or directions to communicate an emotion or a message.



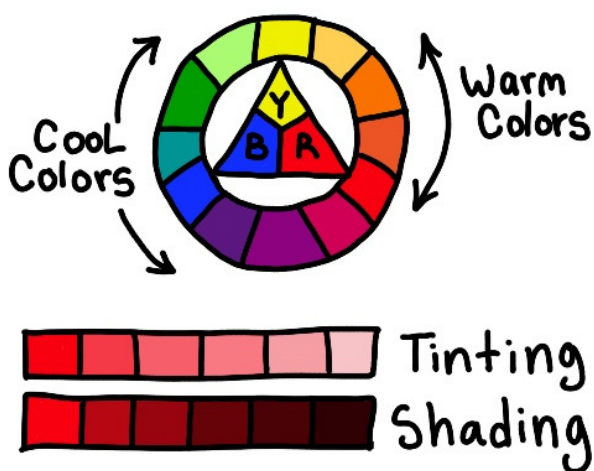
Now you try!



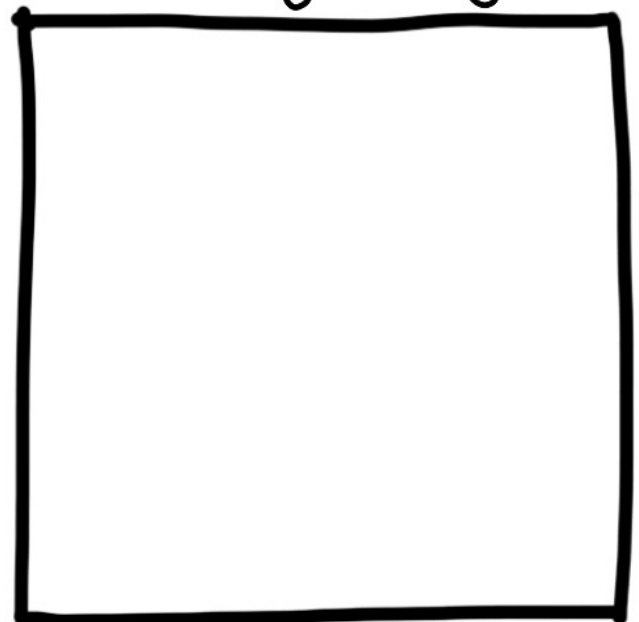
What would using different types of lines do for an advertisement? Try sketching lines that you would use to advertise your product.

Color

Colors on the color wheel are created from the three primary colors: red, yellow, and blue. Mixed in different proportions, we can create all colors that fall between the three primary colors. Tint a color by adding white to it, or shade a color by adding black.



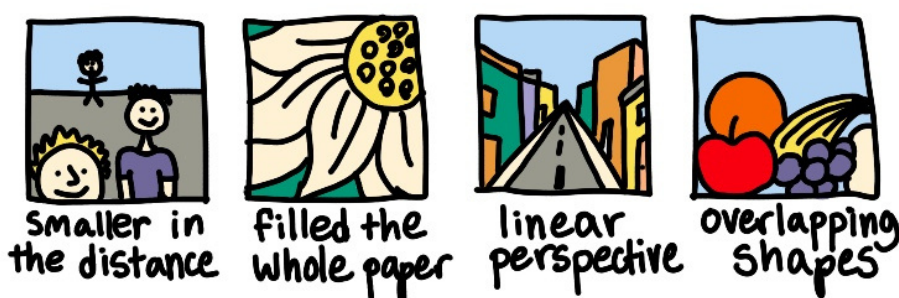
Now you try!



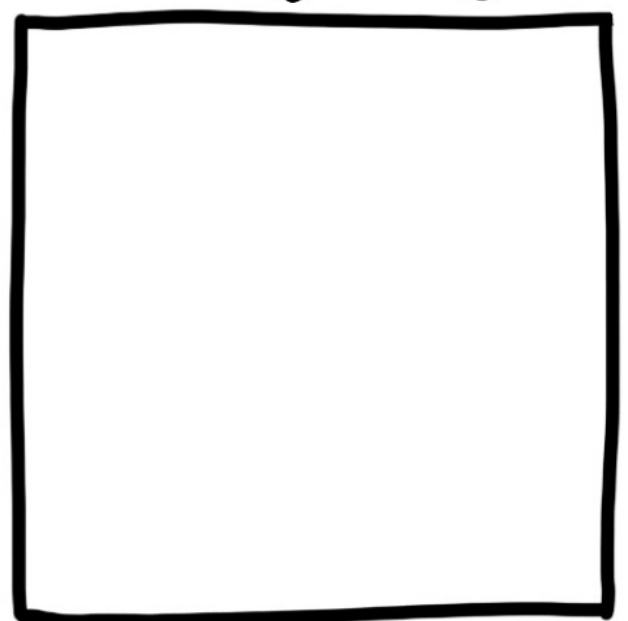
Colors can have a big impact on the message of an advertisement. Try creating colors, tints, and shades. When you find the perfect color for your advertisement, paint the square above.

Space

Space refers to the distance between objects as well as the area around and within shapes, forms, colors, and lines. There is positive space (filled in) and negative space (empty), and space includes the background, middle ground, and foreground.



Now you try!



Experiment here with how the organization of shapes in a space effects the meaning of an advertisement.

My Advertisement

Product: _____

Target Audience: _____

Message: _____

