

VISUAL LANGUAGE

Fill in the gaps with the right choice from the words given below the text:

Perception is the process by which a person, or a group of people, acquires **information** from the outside. Perception starts at one of the **five senses**: **Sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste**. From those five senses many people agree that the sense of _____ is the most important, or at least the one they appreciate the most.

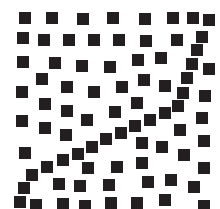
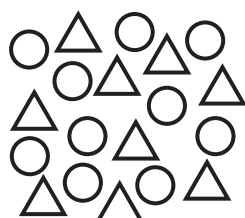
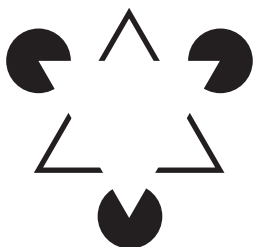
A **visual language** is a system of communication using _____ elements. As well as verbal means of communication, **images** transmit information. And, as any other means of communication, the **visual language communication process** starts with a sender who is the individual, or sometimes a group of people, that initiates a message (in this case an image). **Image messages** are involved in some circumstances such as the **media**, the **code**, the **channel**, etc. and end up the communication process with the receiver who is the observer or the _____ of the images.

The **Gestalt** was a group of **psychologists** that studied Visual _____. Gestalt stands for "**shape**" or "**form**" in German. They set up some laws that lead everybody to **interpret** in certain ways any image we _____. These laws have been taken into account by _____ **designers, visual artists and advertising agents** to achieve their communicative goals when producing their images.

Images have, as any other kind of messages, an intended purpose. Most of the images hold more than one **purpose**, even though usually any _____ has its main purpose. Some of the most important purposes are: **Informative, indicative, aesthetic and hortatory** (wanting or advising us to do something), attending to these and some other purposes Visual Perception Gestalt laws are used and followed.

perception · sight · graphic · image · see · visual · viewer

Label each diagram with the corresponding Gestalt law: Similarity, Proximity, Good continuation, Closure



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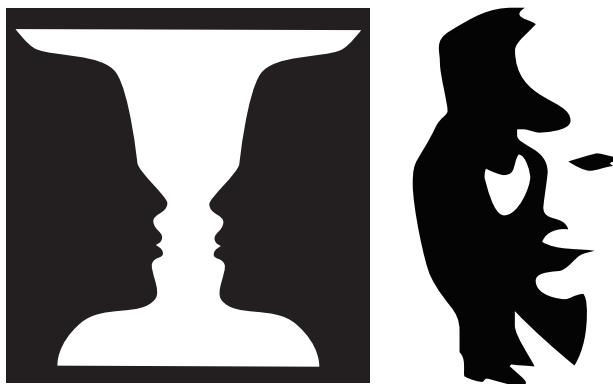
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OTHER GESTALT AND NON GESTALT PERCEPTION LAWS

One of the most important Gestalt law is the **Figure-Ground law**. Our brain, any time we observe a picture tries to identify a figure of foreground object on or in front of a background.

Symmetry is another image perception law. As the world is totally crowded with symmetric objects people have had that visual feature settled in their minds so symmetry definitely affects our perception.

On the right you can see two images showing the figure and background law. It is impossible to separate both elements and perceive them independently of one another.



The image on the left also shows a symmetry.

Enhancement and **Uniformity** are other aspects that also affect our visual perception constantly. Sometimes these two opposite features come along together in images, and some other separated. For instance while advertisements or traffic signs use enhancement as their main feature to **call the attention** of observers, army camouflage clothes or many animals skin or fur use uniformity in order to **be unseen**.

Many times enhancement or uniformity are one of the main features of some visual artists, artistic trends or artworks.

FAUVIST AND WARHOL ENHACEMENTS:

Fauvism was an **artistic movement** formed by artists who were tired of the current depicting rules. They used **shocking bright colors** in their artworks.

Matisse, the author of Portrait of Madame Matisse. (The green line), took a long new breaking step depicting the lights and shadow areas frontier as a **green line border** that **enhances the profile** of the woman's face.



Watch this [Youtube video](#) on the main Gestalt laws and an example of attending to them with a main page of a website design.

<http://youtu.be/LizuJqZ797U>



Andy Warhol was a **Pop artist**. Pop artists used images of daily consumer society. Warhol also made **portraits** of many famous people of the moment. He used **bright colors** and many times made different **versions** of the same portrait using different colors.

Untitled (Marilyn)
Andy Warhol. 1967.

Image source: http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=61239



Portrait of Madame Matisse.
(The green line). Henry Matisse. 1905

Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Matisse_-_Green_Line.jpeg

POLLOCK AND HIS DRIPPING UNIFORMITY:

Jackson Pollock was an abstract expressionist painter who started a new **technique** for painting called **DRIPPING**. It consisted on **letting the paint flow** all over the canvas or board surface by **pouring** it with brushes or straight from the pots. That is called **Action Painting**. Most of the artworks made this way looked very **uniformed**.



Visit this [YoutPollock website](#) of the national Gallery museum and watch pictures, read his biography watch footage, etc.

<http://www.nga.gov/feature/pollock/>

Photographer Hans Namuth extensively documented Pollock's unique painting techniques.

Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackson_Pollock



ARTISTS, VISUAL LANGUAGES AND PORTRAITS

Name the authorship of the given portraits regarding to the descriptions of the following artists artworks:

Vik Muniz: He is a Brazilian art **photographer** who takes pictures of portraits or other images drawn or made by himself with unusual (extrange or random) materials like food.

Hanoch Piven: He is an Israeli **illustrator** who mixes **illustration** with **objects** to represent famous real or imaginary characters

Arcimboldo: He was a **renacentist** artist who made portraits **composing** the images with any kind of vegetables.

Tony Oursler: This contemporary american artist works with **video**. He projects gesture faces on puppets expressing different situations.



AUTHOR:.....



AUTHOR:.....



AUTHOR:.....



AUTHOR:.....

Image sources:

Arcimboldo, summer. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arcimboldo_Verano.jpg Hanoch Piven, Homer. <http://www.neatorama.com/2006/09/02/hanoch-pivens-artwork/#1133Bw>
 Vik Muniz, Che. <http://www.artandculture.com/users/4171-vik-muniz> Tony Oursler: <http://www.artattacksonline.com/post/57535227260/tony-oursler-for-decades-has-been-known-for-his>



Surf Tony Oursler [website](http://tonyoursler.com/) and see his artwork.

<http://tonyoursler.com/>



Watch Hanoch Piven portraits and illustrations on [his website](http://www.pivenworld.com/).

<http://www.pivenworld.com/>



Watch Arcimboldo portraits on [this website](http://www.abcgallery.com/A/arcimboldo/arcimboldo.html) you'll also find a bio and some other info.

<http://www.abcgallery.com/A/arcimboldo/arcimboldo.html>



Watch Vik Muniz pictures on [this website](http://vikmuniz.net/) you will also find a bio and some other info.

<http://vikmuniz.net/>

CHEMA MADDOZ VISUAL METHAFORS: OBJECT POEMS



Chema Madoz (Madrid 1958) is one of the most popular Spanish photographers and his work is considered as visual poetry. His pictures always provoke people to think.

Observe Chema Madoz's pictures and think about what they suggest to you. Compare with your class mates your thoughts.

Are your class mates impressions the same as yours?

Chema Madoz.

Image source: <http://www.chemamadoz.com/>



Watch Chema Madoz visual poemson [this website](http://www.chemamadoz.com/) yand think about them.

<http://www.chemamadoz.com/>

DAVID HOCKNEY'S COLLAGES:

David Hockney is a British artist who makes many kind of visual arts and studies. His collages are some of his best known pieces.

He makes collages out of the pictures he took from places before. Hockney's collages have influenced many artists



Watch [this Youtube video](http://youtu.be/sD123svCFHQ) on Hockney explaining where he got the idea for this collage.

<http://youtu.be/sD123svCFHQ>



Pearblossom Highway. D. Hockney 1986

Image source: <http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/hockney/>



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VISUAL LANGUAGE THROUGH PORTRAITS.
MADDOZ VISUAL POEMS AND HOCKNEY COLLAGES

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Images can hold different purposes. All the images have more than one **purpose**, although usually most images have their main purpose or role.

Informative images are images which main purpose is to transmit information, a good example are most of the images you can find in newspapers, those are meant to illustrate a story and they can be either photos or drawings. But we cannot avoid thinking that any photographer would be interested in beauty and aesthetics, so that could be a second purpose for that type of image.

Sometimes graphic journalists, photographers, don't have time to think about aesthetic, composition or beauty and just take the picture all of a sudden. In those cases there wouldn't be any other purpose but the informative.



World trade center attack image, 2011:

Image Source <http://pinkunderbelly.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/worldtradecentersept2001.jpg>



Aesthetic images are those meant more because of their beauty or at least with some exclusively visual objective. A piece of artwork in a museum is the best example for an aesthetic purpose for an image. It is hard to give a definition to the word aesthetic, it is related to beauty, but every image nice looking or not transmits some sort of information, so we could still say a aesthetic image is also informative.

The Birth of Venus. 1485. Sandro Botticelli.

Image Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sandro_Botticelli_-_La_nascita_di_Venere_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Hortatory, also exhortative, exhortatory and hortative, is a purpose for images or messages that encourage us to do something. The most common images with this purpose are advertising images. Even us not being aware of it (subconsciously), they use color theory, composition rules and the Gestalt laws to achieve their goals. So we could wonder, any time we see an ad we should, if an advertising image should be more informative or descriptive rather than hortatory as a main purpose...



Indicative images are usually simplified pictures that try to give us directions or short information about how to behave or how to act in certain circumstances. A common example of those are "the woman" and "the man" on the restrooms doors, or some road signs that might also be hortatory at a time.

PICTOGRAMS:

A pictogram is a figurative drawing or picture, usually a silhouette, representing a word, sound or idea. Pictograms are the earliest form in the evolution of a system of writing. An example is the ancient Egyptian writing called hieroglyphs. This method of communication is still used today by certain civilisations including Chinese, Japanese, and American Indians.



National Park Service sample pictographs

Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:National_Park_Service_sample_pictographs.svg



Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Egypt_Hieroglyphe4.jpg

Pictograms are ideograms that convey their meaning through their pictorial resemblance to a physical object. That is why they can often transcend languages in that they can communicate to speakers of a number of tongues and language families equally effectively, even if the languages and cultures are completely different. This is why road signs and similar pictographic material are often applied as global standards expected to be understood by nearly all.