

**Abstract art:** Artwork that is not realistic but may be based on an actual object or objects.

**Area:** The number of square units that cover a shape or figure.

**Background:** The part of a painting that is most distant from the viewer. It is located highest on the picture plane and is behind the middleground and foreground, with objects there appearing small to scale.

**Batik:** A method of dyeing cloth that involves the use of removable wax to repel (resist) the dye on parts of the design where dye is not desired. Batik originated in Indonesia, where its production continues to thrive.

**Battle of Trenton:** A battle that involved George Washington and the Continental Army against the Hessians camped at Trenton. Washington surprised and routed the Hessians, providing his army with its first victory.

**Blending:** In artwork, a technique to merge colors applied to a surface, whether with a brush, crayon, colored pencil, or other medium. This is sometimes called feathering.

**Blind contour drawing:** A continuous line drawing done of the outline of an object or figure without looking at the paper.

**Buffalo jump:** A cliff formation that Native Americans historically used to kill Plains bison by herding the bison toward and over the cliff.

**Center-pivot irrigation:** A method of crop irrigation in which equipment rotates on a center point or pivot. An area centered on the pivot is watered, often creating a circular pattern when viewed from above.

**Civil Rights Movement:** A worldwide movement of civil unrest and rebellion that began in the mid-1950s. In the United States, this movement refers to a set of events that focused on eliminating racial discrimination against African-Americans. This also included movements toward gender and sexual equality.

**Collage:** A grouping of papers, fabrics, or other two-dimensional objects attached to a flat surface with an emphasis on color and texture. The word “collage” comes from the French word *coller*, meaning “to paste.”

**Concentric circles:** A set of circles having a common center.

**Contemporary art:** Art made after 1970 or works of art made by living artists. Unlike modern art, contemporary art is not defined by a succession of periods, schools, or styles.

**Contrast:** A large difference between two things; e.g., hot and cold, green and red, light and shadow. Closely related to “emphasis,” a principle of design, contrast refers to a way of juxtaposing elements of art to stress the differences between them.

## Glossary

**Cool colors:** Blues, greens, and violets. These are colors that can be found in ice or the evening light. Cool colors give the illusion of receding away from the viewer.

**Crop circle:** Any area of grain or crops that has been flattened or cut into a circular geometric pattern, sometimes thought to be made by flying saucers, though many are known to be man-made.

**Daguerre, Louis (French; 1787–1851):** Developed the first permanent photographic images in 1839, having continued the pioneering work of Joseph Niépce. Daguerre’s process is called “daguerreotype.”

**Double bar graph:** A type of graph that uses two bars to compare similar sets of data (e.g., boys vs. girls, fourth grade vs. fifth grade).

**Foreground:** The area in a work of art that is nearest to the viewer. It is located lowest in the painting, and objects there are large in scale.

**Intensity:** The brightness or dullness of a hue or color. For instance, the intensity of the pure color blue is very bright. When a lighter or darker color is added to blue, the intensity is less bright, or more subdued.

**Interpretation:** A stage in the work of art criticism in which one identifies the work’s meaning, mood, or main idea.

**Intersecting lines:** Lines that have one and only one point in common.

**Irony:** A form of expression in which the real meaning is concealed or contradicted by the words or images used. The meaning either markedly contrasts or is entirely opposite to that which appears to be presented.

**Jazz:** A style of music, native to the United States, which originated around the beginning of the twentieth century.

**Journey:** (1) To travel or to take a trip to a different area; (2) A passage from one state of being or age to another; e.g., the journey from youth to maturity or a journey through time.

**Landscape:** A painting, photograph, or other work of art that depicts nature; also includes the cityscape and seascape.

**Line:** An element of art that refers to the continuous mark made on a surface by a moving point. Types of lines include vertical, horizontal, diagonal, straight or ruled, curved, bent, angular, thin, thick or wide, interrupted (dotted, dashed, broken, etc.), blurred or fuzzy, controlled, freehand, parallel, hatching, meandering, and spiraling.

**Mean:** The average of a set of data.

**Median:** The middle number of a set of data.

**Middle ground:** The area in a work of art that is between the background and the foreground. This area is immediately under the horizon line.

**Mode:** The number that occurs most frequently in a set of data.

**Movement:** The quality (as in a painting or sculpture) of representing or suggesting motion.

**Myth:** A traditional story or sacred narrative that contributes to the system of values or to the habits and beliefs of a group of people.

**Narrative art:** Art that represents elements of a story. Two types of narrative art are genre painting and historical painting.

**Nautical mile:** A unit of length that corresponds to approximately one minute of latitude along any meridian. It is used to measure distance traveled at sea.

**Negative space:** Area in an artwork that is empty; e.g., the space around a sculpture.

**Nonobjective art:** A type of abstract art that contains no recognizable subject.

**Orpheus:** A poet and musician in a Greek legend who followed his dead wife, Eurydice, to the Underworld in an attempt to rescue her.

**Opaque:** Material through which light cannot travel.

**Parallel lines:** Lines that are in the same plane and never intersect.

**Perpendicular lines:** Two lines, signals, or rays that intersect to form a 90-degree angle.

**Photography:** The art, craft, and science of producing permanent images on light-sensitive surfaces.

**Polygon:** A closed plane figure with at least three straight sides.

**Positive space:** Space in an artwork that contains something, such as one or more objects, lines, colors, or shapes.

**Probability:** In an experiment, the total number of successful events divided by the total number of possible events.

**Proportion:** The comparative relation between things or magnitudes as to size, quantity, number, etc.; also called “ratio.”

**Quartet:** Any group of four persons or things.

**Range:** The difference between the lowest and the highest numbers in a set of data.

## Glossary

**Relief print:** An image created from a block or plate that is carved and covered with wet color (usually ink). The plate is pressed onto a flat surface, such as paper or textile, to transfer the image thereby creating the print.

**River Styx:** In Greek mythology, a river that formed the boundary between Earth and the Underworld.

**Scale:** The size of an object in relation to the size of something else.

**Silhouette:** A two-dimensional representation of an outline of an object, filled with a solid color. It is typically black on a white ground, and most often a portrait.

**Stencil:** A device for applying a pattern, design, words, or the like to a surface. It is made from a thin sheet of cardboard, metal, or other material from which figures or letters have been cut out. A coloring substance such as ink is brushed, rubbed, or pressed over the sheet, passing through the perforations and onto the surface.

**Surrealism:** A twentieth-century art movement that included artworks featuring the element of surprise and unexpected combinations. It originated with the Dadaists and French literary figures, in particular André Breton. These artworks can have a realistic approach but contain dreamlike imagery or objects in unusual combinations. Surrealist artists include Salvador Dali and René Magritte.

**Symbol:** A form, image, or subject representing a meaning other than the one with which it is usually associated.

**Texture:** *Actual texture:* The surface quality of an object. *Visual texture:* The appearance of a surface quality in an artwork.

**Translucent:** Material through which a limited amount of light can travel, producing a diffuse image of an object or objects beyond the material.

**Transparent:** Material through which light travels easily, producing a clear image.

**Value:** The element of art referring to the lightness or darkness of a color, or the proportional effect of light and shade in an artistic work.

**Warm colors:** Reds, oranges, and yellows. These are colors that can be found in fire or the sun. Warm colors give the illusion of advancing toward the viewer.

**Washington's Crossing:** Site at which George Washington and the Continental Army crossed the Delaware River on Christmas Eve, 1776, during the Revolutionary War, to march on Trenton, New Jersey, and surprise the Hessian army in the Battle of Trenton.