
Activity 1.1.2 Design Principles and Elements

Introduction

Have you ever noticed how buildings of similar size and shape can have completely different visual effects? Architects, like artists, must understand the elements and principles of design and how they affect the visual impact of the building on a viewer. Whether it is the intent of the architect to create a feeling of strength and stability or to create an unusual form that will elicit a double-take from the public, the elements and principles of design can be used to manipulate the intellectual and emotional reactions of the people who see and use the building.



Equipment

- Principles and Elements of Design Applied to Architecture presentation notes

Procedure

In this activity you will identify design elements and principles as they pertain to images of structures.

For each of the following, choose one element of design and one principle of design that you feel is most prominent in the image and then justify your choice.

Word Bank

Balance	Form	Rhythm	Texture
Color	Line	Shape	Unity
Emphasis	Proportion/Scale	Space	Value

1. Principle of Design

Form

Justification:

The arches and columns jut out past the rest of the building.



Element of Design

Texture

Justification:

The building is made of un-sanded stone, making it rough.

2. Principle of Design

Balance

Justification:

The entire building is symmetrical along a central vertical line.



Element of Design

Rhythm

Justification:

The entire first floor is repeated onto itself on the second floor

3. Principle of Design

Emphasis

Justification:

The change in color for the clocktower emphasizes it.



Element of Design

Color

Justification:

The color helps differentiate between different parts of the building

4. Principle of Design

Rhythm

Justification:

Each floor is repeated onto itself except smaller and slightly to the right.



City Hall and London Bridge

Element of Design

Texture

Justification:

The use of glass as a building material gives it a smooth texture.

5. Principle of Design

Emphasis

Justification:

The change in color and position of the central figure emphasizes it.



Element of Design

Color

Justification:

There is a combination of cool and warm colors that unifies the mosaic.

6. Principle of Design

Rhythm

Justification:

The balcony is repeated onto itself for each floor



Element of Design

Unity

Justification:

It uses consistent materials, colors, lines, and shapes throughout the building.

7. Principle of Design

Emphasis

Justification:

The road leading up to the house emphasizes it.



Element of Design

Color

Justification:

The entire ground floor is a single color, which changes for the roof.

8. Principle of Design

Balance

Justification:

The appearance that it has been folded over itself again and again balances it.



Roman aqueduct

Element of Design

Rhythm

Justification:

The same two arches repeat over and over, showing a definite rhythm to the structure.

9. Principle of Design

Emphasis

Justification:

The golden color of the central structure draws attention to it.



Element of Design

Balance

Justification:

The entire structure and design of the building is symmetrical.

10. Principle of Design

Color

Justification:

The change in color schemes from each house helps to differentiate them.



Element of Design

Balance

Justification:

Each building appears equal in structure and shape.

Conclusion

1. In what way do certain elements or principles identify the time period in which a structure was created?

Certain elements and principles were used in different time periods based on the culture, technology, and needs of that era.

2. What factors might account for an incorrect identification?

A building could be constructed using features and elements from multiple styles.

3. Describe an example of a way that design principles and elements could impact the function of a building.

A building constructed using only cool colors would typically be used for a workplace or office, while the same building constructed using only warm colors could be used for residential purposes.

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