### **GREAT MINDS® WIT & WISDOM**

# Wit & Wisdom Visual Art Glossary

A Resource for Teachers

WIT & WISDOM™	Visual Art Glossary

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## Wit & Wisdom Visual Art Glossary

In Wit & Wisdom, students observe visual arts and analyze the choices artists make in creating their work. Using the vocabulary of artists and art historians helps to build students' visual literacy and supports dialogue about the artistic process and viewers' experiences. This glossary should serve as a resource for classroom instruction, providing definitions of specific terms along with works from Wit & Wisdom that exemplify the term being defined.

Occasionally, two definitions are provided. **Definition A** is intended for teachers, older students, and students with strong language skills. **Definition B** is intended for younger students, English learners, and any students who might benefit from scaffolded support.

If **A** or **B** is not specified, the definition is intended for all audiences.

Word	Meaning	Wit & Wisdom Examples
abstract art (n.)	A work of art that uses elements of art such as line, color, and shape but does not try to show what the world looks like	The Snail, Henri Matisse http://witeng.link/0049 Grade 1 Module 2  Number 1, 1950 (Lavender Mist), Jackson Pollock http://witeng.link/0534
		Grade 3 Module 4
analogous colors (n. pl.)  See also color, color wheel, complementary colors, cool colors, primary colors, warm colors.	Colors next to each other on the color wheel, such as red and orange	Le Gourmet, Pablo Picasso  http://witeng.link/0620  Grade K Module 1
architecture (n.)	The style or design of a building     The art and science of designing     buildings	Fallingwater, Frank Lloyd Wright http://witeng.link/0075 Grade 4 Module 2 The Parthenon
		http://witeng.link/0453 Grade 4 Module 4

Visual Art Glossary
WIT & WISDOM™

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background (n.)  See also foreground, middle ground.	The area in a work of art that seems the farthest from the viewer	Among the Sierra Nevada, California, Albert Bierstadt http://witeng.link/0747 Grade 2 Module 2  Washington Crossing the Delaware, Emanuel Leutze http://witeng.link/0205 Grade K Module 3
balance (n.)	A way of organizing the shapes and colors in a work of art so that the sides or main parts seem even  Balance is a principle of art.	Joachim among the Shepherds, Giotto di Bondone http://witeng.link/0712 Grade 7 Module 1  Illustrations from The Odyssey, Gillian Cross (author) and Neil Packer (illustrator) http://witeng.link/0758 Grade 6 Module 2
brushstroke, brushwork (n.)	The marks an artist makes with a paintbrush	Snow Storm–Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth, Joseph Mallord William Turner http://witeng.link/0748 Grade 6 Module 4  Bathers at Asnières, Georges Seurat http://witeng.link/0632 Grade 2 Module 1
chiaroscuro (n.)	A: The arrangement of light and shade that creates a dramatic contrast     B: When some parts of an image are very dark and other parts are very light	Portrait of Dr. Samuel D. Gross (The Gross Clinic), Thomas Eakins http://witeng.link/0667 Grade 4 Module 1
cityscape (n.) See also landscape.	A: A work of art depicting an urban environment     B: A work of art showing a city	The Block, Romare Bearden http://witeng.link/0727 Grade 8 Module 1
collage (n.)	A work of art made by attaching different materials to a surface	The Snail, Henri Matisse http://witeng.link/0049 Grade 1 Module 2  The Block, Romare Bearden http://witeng.link/0727 Grade 8 Module 1

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color (n.)  See also analogous colors, color wheel, complementary colors, cool colors, primary colors, warm colors.	The way we see light reflected from objects  Color is an element of art.  Red, blue, and yellow are colors.	The Snail, Henri Matisse http://witeng.link/0049 Grade 1 Module 2 I and the Village, Marc Chagall http://witeng.link/0114 Grades K-2 Module 0
color wheel (n.)  See also analogous colors, color, complementary colors, cool colors, primary colors, warm colors.	A: A circular chart showing the relationships between colors in the spectrum     B: A circle that shows the range of colors and how they are related	color wheel http://witeng.link/0759
complementary colors (n. pl.)  See also analogous colors, color, color wheel, cool colors, primary colors, warm colors.	Colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel: red and green, blue and orange, and yellow and violet	The Snail, Henri Matisse http://witeng.link/0049 Grade 1 Module 2  Cakes, Wayne Thiebaud http://witeng.link/0377 Grade 2 Module 4
composition (n.)	A: The thoughtful arrangement of the various parts of an artistic work so that the final piece is unified and whole     B: How an artist organizes the lines, colors, shapes, forms, textures, and space in a work of art	Joachim among the Shepherds, Giotto di Bondone http://witeng.link/0712 Grade 7 Module 1  Washington Crossing the Delaware, Emanuel Leutze http://witeng.link/0205 Grade K Module 3
contrast (n.)	A: When an artist creates a distinct difference between the elements in a work of art (i.e., between colors, shapes, textures)      B: When an artist uses very different or opposite colors, shapes, or textures in a work of art	Portrait of Dr. Samuel D. Gross (The Gross Clinic), Thomas Eakins http://witeng.link/0667 Grade 4 Module 1  Selma to Montgomery March, Alabama, 1965, James Karales http://witeng.link/0361 Grade 2 Module 3
cool colors (n. pl.)  See also analogous colors, color, color wheel, complimentary colors, primary colors, warm colors.	The side of the color wheel that includes greens, blues, and purples	Le Gourmet, Pablo Picasso http://witeng.link/0620 Grade K Module 1  The Boating Party, Mary Cassatt http://witeng.link/0650 Grade 3 Module 1

Visual Art Glossary WIT & WISDOM™

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documentary photography (n.)	A: Photography that attempts to report an accurate representation of events, people, and/or environments	Migrant Mother, Dorothea Lange http://witeng.link/0695 Grade 6 Module 1
	B: Photography that tries to show the reality of events, people, and/or places	Manzanar from Guard Tower, Ansel Adams <a href="http://witeng.link/0039">http://witeng.link/0039</a> Grade 7 Module 2
elements of art (n. pl.)	A: The components in a work of art: line, color, shape, form, texture, value, and space	All works of art are composed of the elements of art.
	B: The basic parts in a work of art: line, color, shape, form, texture, value, and space	
emphasis (n.)	The effect created when an artist arranges the elements of art to direct the viewer's attention to a certain area or focal point in a work of art	Portrait of Dr. Samuel D. Gross (The Gross Clinic), Thomas Eakins http://witeng.link/0667 Grade 4 Module 1
	Emphasis is a principle of art.	I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold, Charles Demuth http://witeng.link/0529 Grade 3 Module 4
engraving (n.)	A work of art made by carving or scratching a design into a hard surface and then printing the image on paper	The Boston Massacre, Paul Revere Jr. http://witeng.link/0207 Grade 4 Module 3
figure (n.)	A human body represented in a work of art	Soldiers Playing Cards, Fernand Léger http://witeng.link/0010 Grade 8 Module 2
		Illustrations from <i>The Ramayana</i> , Sanjay Patel <a href="http://witeng.link/0760">http://witeng.link/0760</a> Grade 6 Module 2
focal point (n.)	A: The section of a work of art that attracts the viewer's eye as the center of attention, also called the center of interest	The Great Wave off Kanagawa, Katsushika Hokusai http://witeng.link/0649 Grade 3 Module 1
	B: The part of a work of art that seems most important	Portrait of Dr. Samuel D. Gross (The Gross Clinic), Thomas Eakins <a href="http://witeng.link/0667">http://witeng.link/0667</a> Grade 4 Module 1

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foreground (n.)  See also background, middle ground.	The area in a work of art that appears closest to the viewer	American Gothic, Grant Wood http://witeng.link/0033 Grade K Module 2  Among the Sierra Nevada, California, Albert Bierstadt http://witeng.link/0747 Grade 2 Module 2
form (n.)	A three-dimensional object in a work of art  Form is an element of art.	Space Object Box: "Little Bear, etc." motif, Joseph Cornell <a href="http://witeng.link/0162">http://witeng.link/0162</a> Grade 3 Module 2  Joie de Vivre, Mark di Suvero <a href="http://witeng.link/0466">http://witeng.link/0466</a> Grade 5 Module 4
frame (v.)	The decision of what to include in a photograph and from what direction and distance to take the picture  When <b>framing</b> , the photographer thinks about how the viewer will see the image.	Migrant Mother, Dorothea Lange http://witeng.link/0695 Grade 6 Module 1  School Children, Ansel Adams http://witeng.link/0041 Grade 7 Module 2
fresco (n.)	A work of art made by painting on wet plaster, so that the paint becomes a part of the plaster surface	Joachim among the Shepherds, Giotto di Bondone <a href="http://witeng.link/0712">http://witeng.link/0712</a> Grade 7 Module 1
genre (n.)	A type of painting classified by subject, such as history, landscape, portrait, scene of everyday life, or still life	
geometric shape (n.) See also organic shape, shape.	A: A set of points connected by a curved or straight line that creates a closed, two-dimensional object, such as circles, squares, triangles      B: Regular shapes made of points and lines, such as triangles, squares, and circles	Soldiers Playing Cards, Fernand Léger http://witeng.link/0010 Grade 8 Module 2  My Egypt, Charles Demuth http://witeng.link/0533 Grade 3 Module 4

Visual Art Glossary WIT & WISDOM™

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horizon line (n.)	A: The horizontal line in a work of art where the land or sea appears to meet the sky	The Persistence of Memory, Salvador Dalí http://witeng.link/0148 Grade 5 Module 2
	B: Where the land or sea seems to meet the sky in a work of art	The Red Mill, Piet Mondrian http://witeng.link/0220 Grade 1 Module 3
juxtaposition (n.)	The act of placing things close together or side by side in a work of art, usually to create an effect, such as when two opposing or contrasting elements are used	Time Transfixed, René Magritte http://witeng.link/0149 Grade 5 Module 2
		Space Object Box: "Little Bear, etc." motif, Joseph Cornell <a href="http://witeng.link/0162">http://witeng.link/0162</a> Grade 3 Module 2
landscape (n.)	A: A work of art depicting a view of or scene from nature	Among the Sierra Nevada, California, Albert Bierstadt
See also <i>cityscape</i> .	B: A work of art showing nature	http://witeng.link/0747 Grade 2 Module 2
		Autumn Landscape, Maurice de Vlaminck http://witeng.link/0555 Grade 2 Module 1
line (n.)	A mark that is made or suggested that can vary in direction, weight, and length	My Egypt, Charles Demuth http://witeng.link/0533 Grade 3 Module 4
	<b>Line</b> is an element of art.	Antietam, Md. Allan Pinkerton, President Lincoln and Major General John A. McClernand, Alexander Gardner http://witeng.link/0193 Grade 5 Module 3
medium (n.) (pl. <i>media</i> )	The material an artist uses to create a work of art, such as oil paint, watercolor, clay, or wood	All works of art are composed of different media.
middle ground (n.)  See also background, foreground.	The area in a work of art between the area that appears closest to the viewer (foreground) and the area that appears farthest away (background)	Manzanar from Guard Tower, Ansel Adams http://witeng.link/0039 Grade 7 Module 2

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monument (n.)	A building that honors a person, event, or idea	Washington Monument, Robert Mills http://witeng.link/0324 Grade 3 Module 3 The Temple at Abu Simbel http://witeng.link/0294
	The constitution of the line o	Grade 7 Module 3
mood (n.)	The emotion or feeling expressed in a work of art	Migrant Mother, Dorothea Lange http://witeng.link/0695 Grade 6 Module 1
		American Gothic, Grant Wood http://witeng.link/0033 Grade K Module 2
movement (n.)	A: The use of the elements of art to direct the viewer's eye from one point to another in a work of art	Number 1, 1950 (Lavender Mist), Jackson Pollock <a href="http://witeng.link/0534">http://witeng.link/0534</a> Grade 3 Module 4
	B: The sense of motion in a work of art  Movement is a principle of art.	I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold, Charles Demuth http://witeng.link/0529 Grade 3 Module 4
organic shape (n.) See also geometric shape,	A: An object with irregular, inconsistent edges	Flower Day, Diego Rivera http://witeng.link/0621 Grade K Module 1
shape.	B: An object with uneven edges, like a leaf or a cloud, often found in nature  An organic shape often resembles objects in nature, such as a leaf or a cloud.	The Persistence of Memory, Salvador Dalí <a href="http://witeng.link/0148">http://witeng.link/0148</a> Grade 5 Module 2
palette (n.)	<ul> <li>A thin platter artists use to hold and mix paint</li> <li>A: The range of colors an artist uses to</li> </ul>	Cool Color Palette:  Le Gourmet, Pablo Picasso  http://witeng.link/0620  Grade K Module 1
	make a specific work or works of art  B: The colors an artist uses most in a work of art	Warm Color Palette:  Autumn Landscape, Maurice de Vlaminck  http://witeng.link/0555  Grade 2 Module 1

Visual Art Glossary WIT & WISDOM™

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pattern (n.)	A regular, repeated design  Pattern is a principle of art.	American Gothic, Grant Wood http://witeng.link/0033 Grade K Module 2  Cakes, Wayne Thiebaud http://witeng.link/0377 Grade 2 Module 4
perspective (n.)	1 The technique artists use to show three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface in a realistic-looking way 2 How things are seen from a particular angle or point of view  Perspective is how artists give the idea of space and depth, even on a flat surface.	Artist in His Museum, Charles Willson Peale http://witeng.link/0389 Grade 7 Module 4  Photograph of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis http://witeng.link/0323 Grade 3 Module 3
portrait (n.)	A work of art showing a specific person	Chief Joseph, Nez Percé Chief, Head-and-Shoulders Portrait Facing Front, E. A. Burbank http://witeng.link/0676 Grade 5 Module 1  Portrait of George Washington, Gilbert Stuart http://witeng.link/0678 Grade 5 Module 1
pose (n.)	How a figure is sitting or standing in a work of art	Washington Crossing the Delaware, Emanuel Leutze http://witeng.link/0205 Grade K Module 3  Antietam, Md. Allan Pinkerton, President Lincoln and Major General John A. McClernand, Alexander Gardner http://witeng.link/0193 Grade 5 Module 3
primary colors (n. pl.)  See also analogous colors, color, color wheel, complementary colors, cool colors, warm colors.	The three colors–red, yellow, and blue–that can be combined to make all other colors	The Fall of Icarus, Henri Matisse http://witeng.link/0495 Grade 5 Module 4  The Red Mill, Piet Mondrian http://witeng.link/0220 Grade 1 Module 3

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principles of art (n. pl.)	The different ways the elements of art can be organized in a work of art: balance, emphasis, unity, scale, proportion, rhythm, movement, and pattern	All works of art represent the principles of art.
print (n.)	A: A work of art made by pressing one surface against another surface to create an impression or mark      B: A work of art made by pressing one surface against another that has paint or ink on it	The Boston Massacre, Paul Revere Jr. http://witeng.link/0207 Grade 4 Module 3  Starfield, Vija Celmins http://witeng.link/0541 Grade 3 Module 2
proportion (n.)	The relative size and scale of the different elements in an artwork  Proportion is a principle of art.	Time Transfixed, René Magritte http://witeng.link/0149 Grade 5 Module 2  The Temple at Abu Simbel http://witeng.link/0294 Grade 7 Module 3
realistic (adj.)	Representing a figure, setting, or scene in a way that accurately depicts how it appears to the eye      B: Showing something the way it might look in real life	Joachim among the Shepherds, Giotto di Bondone http://witeng.link/0712 Grade 7 Module 1  Young Hare, Albrecht Dürer http://witeng.link/0054 Grade 1 Module 2
rhythm (n.)	The combination of repeated elements in a work of art to create a sense of motion or movement  Rhythm is a principle of art.	Fallingwater, Frank Lloyd Wright http://witeng.link/0075 Grade 4 Module 2  The Boston Massacre, Paul Revere Jr. http://witeng.link/0207 Grade 4 Module 3
scale (n.)	A: The size or ratio of a component of a work of art in comparison with its surroundings     B: How big or small something seems compared to what is around it	Space Object Box: "Little Bear, etc." motif, Joseph Cornell <a href="http://witeng.link/0162">http://witeng.link/0162</a> Grade 3 Module 2  The Temple at Abu Simbel <a href="http://witeng.link/0294">http://witeng.link/0294</a> Grade 7 Module 3

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shape (n.)	An area bounded by a line	Soldiers Playing Cards, Fernand Léger http://witeng.link/0010
See also geometric shape, organic shape.	Shape is an element of art.	Grade 8 Module 2
,		I and the Village, Marc Chagall http://witeng.link/0114
		Grades K-2 Module O
site (n.)	The location of a building or where a work	Fallingwater, Frank Lloyd Wright
	of art is placed	http://witeng.link/0075 Grade 4 Module 2
		Joie de Vivre, Mark di Suvero
		http://witeng.link/0466 Grade 5 Module 4
space (n.)	The areas around, between, or within	Among the Sierra Nevada, California,
	shapes or forms in a work of art	Albert Bierstadt http://witeng.link/0747
	Space is an element of art.	Grade 2 Module 2
		Selma to Montgomery March, Alabama, 1965, James Karales
		http://witeng.link/0361
		Grade 2 Module 3
subject (n.)	The object, scene, people, or event that a work of art shows	Roy Takeno, outside Free Press Office, Ansel Adams
	work of art shows	http://witeng.link/0040
		Grade 7 Module 2
		Joachim among the Shepherds, Giotto di Bondone
		http://witeng.link/0712
		Grade 7 Module 1
surreal (adj.)	Bizarre, weird, or eerie; having a dreamlike	Time Transfixed, René Magritte
	quality	http://witeng.link/0149 Grade 5 Module 2
		The Persistence of Memory, Salvador Dalí
		http://witeng.link/0148 Grade 5 Module 2

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symbol (n.)	An object or picture that represents a person, place, thing, or idea	Liberty Enlightening the World (Statue of Liberty), Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi http://witeng.link/0322 Grade 3 Module 3  Winged Victory of Samothrace, Unknown sculptor http://witeng.link/0462 Grade 4 Module 4
symmetry (n.)	When the elements in a work of art are arranged equally on each side or on the top and bottom	Flower Day, Diego Rivera http://witeng.link/0621 Grade K Module 1  The Red Mill, Piet Mondrian http://witeng.link/0220 Grade 1 Module 3
texture (n.)	How the surface of an object feels, or looks as though it might feel  Texture is an element of art.	Young Hare, Albrecht Dürer http://witeng.link/0054 Grade 1 Module 2  Two Cheeseburgers, with Everything (Dual Hamburgers), Claes Oldenburg http://witeng.link/0378 Grade 2 Module 4
unity (n.)	When all parts of an artwork combine to make a balanced, complete, and pleasing whole  Unity is a principle of art.	Flower Day, Diego Rivera http://witeng.link/0621 Grade K Module 1  The Arnolfini Portrait, Jan van Eyck http://witeng.link/0255 Grade 8 Module 3
value (n.)	How light or dark a color looks  Value is an element of art.  White is the lightest value and black is the darkest.	Roy Takeno, outside Free Press Office, Ansel Adams <a href="http://witeng.link/0040">http://witeng.link/0040</a> Grade 7 Module 2  Selma to Montgomery March, Alabama, 1965, James Karales <a href="http://witeng.link/0361">http://witeng.link/0361</a> Grade 2 Module 3

Visual Art Glossary
WIT & WISDOM™

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vanishing point (n.)	The point on the horizon where parallel lines seem to meet	Children's Games, Pieter Breughel the Elder http://witeng.link/0728 Grade 8 Module 1
		The Cornell Farm, Edward Hicks http://witeng.link/0179 Grade K Module 2
warm colors (n. pl.)  See also analogous colors, color, color wheel.	The side of a color wheel that includes reds, oranges, and yellows	Autumn Landscape, Maurice de Vlaminck http://witeng.link/0555 Grade 2 Module 1
complimentary colors, cool colors, primary colors.		Flower Day, Diego Rivera http://witeng.link/0621 Grade K Module 1

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