

Overview

In this assignment you are to analyze the composition of a magazine ad and describe it using the the principles of design that have been covered in class.

Describe each principles of design using the elements of design (value, colour, texture, shape, line, space).

Use comparative terms when making comparisons between two elements of a composition. Such words include: more, less, slightly, similar, alike, comparable

To draw conclusions, use the following words to form your sentences: “but”, “and”, “however”, “therefore”.

Use subtitles for each of the four sections (Unity and Variety, Balance, Emphasis and Subordination, Gestalt)..

Make sure that wherever “one paragraph” is indicated, write a **minimum** of one paragraph.

Remember that when discussing the principles of design that it is not an exacting science, therefore, avoid using absolutes in your discussion. Say, for instance, that you are discussing the vertical balance of a composition. It would be the wrong approach to say:

The left side has seven elements and the right side has only six, therefore, it is not balanced.

A better approach would be to write:

You can say that the content is somewhat different from left to right, therefore, it is informally balanced (asymmetrical). You can go as far as to say that, even though it is slightly heavier on the left side, it is more or less balanced. Therefore, along the vertical axis the composition is balanced informally.

Here’s a hint: Magazine ads are almost always balanced!

Recommended:

Label the elements of an ad with numbers and in your discussion, cross reference your examples with the numbers. For example: In the make-up ad, one notes the colour blue in the model’s eye first (#1).

Unity and Variety

Discuss conceptual unity (**One paragraph**)

- Discuss conceptual unity, specifically, what the underlying idea or message the layout artist is trying to achieve and how it was accomplished.

Discuss visual unity (**One paragraph**)

- Discuss visual unity, how all the elements work together to communicate one message
- In your discussion, identify 3 elements that the layout artists used to create a sense of wholeness and explain why they relate to each other to reenforce the concept.

Discuss the effectiveness of the design's unity. Justify. **(One paragraph)**

- Include in this discussion the concept of variety, specifically, if there is something in the composition that takes away from the overall message.

Balance

Discuss vertical balance **(One paragraph)**

- Is it balanced vertically? How?
- Is it formal or informal? Why?

Discuss horizontal balance **(One paragraph)**

- Is it balanced horizontally? How?
- Is it formal or informal? Why?

Emphasis and Subordination

- What do you see first? Explain why using the terms contrast, placement and isolation.
- What do you see second? Explain why using the terms contrast, placement and isolation.
- Third? Why?
- Etc.

Gestalt

Discuss the composition with regard to similarity **(One paragraph)**

- value and colour
- shape
- size

Discuss alignment **(One paragraph)**

- edge
- center

Discuss proximity **(One paragraph)**

- close edge
- touch
- overlap
- combination

Evaluation

4 categories x 20 marks = 80 marks total

Rubric

(Applies to each category: Unity & Variety, Balance, Emphasis & Subordination, and Gestalt)

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
10 11	12 13	14 15	16 18 20
Limited paragraph and sentence structure; Limited use of good grammar; Discussion is limited in its focus, it is not systematic and lacks comparisons; Discussion lacks completeness	Paragraphs and sentences are somewhat well structured; Somewhat good use of grammar; Discussion is somewhat focused, systematic and comparative; Discussion is somewhat thorough	Paragraphs and sentences are considerably well structured; Considerably good use of grammar; Discussion is considerably focused, systematic and comparative; Discussion is considerably thorough	Paragraphs and sentences are well structured; Good use of grammar; Discussion is focused, systematic and comparative*; Discussion is thorough

* It is **focused**, for example, if you are discussing Unity you are not discussing Balance.

* The discussion is **systematic**, that is, the content is written in the order that the questions are asked.

* Use **comparative** terms to discuss the elements of design. For example, element A and element B have a lot of visual weight, but A is heavier because is slightly larger.