**Department Name:** Visual & Preforming Arts

**Grade level:** Grade 7

**Course Title:** Foundations of Visual Arts: Elements, Principles, and Criticism

**Duration:** September 2024 – June 2025

**Course Prerequisites:**

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**Basic Drawing Skills**: Ability to create simple drawings, such as shapes and figures, and use basic drawing tools like pencils and crayons.

**Understanding of Basic Art Concepts**: Familiarity with fundamental concepts such as line, shape, color, and texture. Students should be able to identify and use these elements in their artwork.

**Artistic Observation**: Ability to observe and describe simple visual elements in their environment and in artwork.

**Use of Art Materials**: Basic experience with common art supplies like markers, colored pencils, paints, and brushes, including understanding how to use and care for these materials.

**Creativity and Imagination**: Willingness to explore their creativity and express ideas through drawing, painting, and other art forms.

**Following Instructions**: Ability to follow directions for art projects and understand basic project guidelines and expectations.

**Simple Art History Knowledge**: Basic awareness of some well-known artists or art styles might be introduced, but this is usually very elementary at this stage.

These prerequisites help ensure that students are prepared to engage with new techniques and concepts introduced in their visual arts curriculum in Grade 7. **However, we will meet the students where they are if they do not have all of the above.**

 **Course Overview:** This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the fundamental aspects of visual arts, focusing on the essential elements and principles of art, as well as the methods and theories of art criticism. Designed for students seeking to deepen their understanding of artistic concepts and enhance their analytical skills, this course explores the foundational components that contribute to effective visual expression and critique.

**Course Objectives:**

1. **Understanding the Elements of Art:** Students will learn to identify and utilize the core elements of art—line, shape, form, space, texture, color, and value—to create and analyze visual compositions.
2. **Applying the Principles of Art:** Students will explore the principles of design, including balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity, and understand how these principles guide the organization of artistic elements in a composition.
3. **Developing Art Criticism Skills:** Students will engage in critical analysis of artworks using established art criticism methods, developing the ability to articulate their observations, interpretations, and evaluations effectively.

**Topical Outline of Course Content:**

1. **Elements of Art:**
	* **Line:** Understanding different types of lines and their expressive qualities.
	* **Shape and Form:** Differentiating between geometric and organic shapes, and understanding form in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional contexts.
	* **Space:** Exploring the concept of space in art, including positive and negative space, depth, and perspective.
	* **Texture:** Examining both actual and implied texture, and its impact on visual interest.
	* **Color:** Studying color theory, including the color wheel, color harmony, and the psychological effects of color.
	* **Value:** Analyzing light and dark values, and their role in creating contrast and depth.
2. **Principles of Art:**
	* **Balance:** Exploring symmetrical and asymmetrical balance in composition.
	* **Contrast:** Understanding how contrast enhances visual impact and creates emphasis.
	* **Emphasis:** Identifying focal points and the techniques used to draw attention to specific areas.
	* **Movement:** Analyzing how movement guides the viewer’s eye through an artwork.
	* **Pattern:** Examining the use of repeated elements to create visual rhythm and structure.
	* **Rhythm:** Understanding how rhythm creates a sense of movement and flow in art.
	* **Unity:** Exploring how various elements work together to create a cohesive and harmonious composition.
3. **Art Criticism:**
	* **Descriptive Criticism:** Learning how to describe artworks objectively, focusing on what is seen.
	* **Interpretive Criticism:** Developing skills to interpret the meaning and context of artworks.
	* **Evaluative Criticism:** Understanding criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of art.
	* **Art Historical Perspectives:** Exploring different historical and cultural contexts in art criticism.

**1. Elements of Art**

**Objective:** Students will learn and apply the elements of art (dot, line, shape, space, form, texture, colour, and value) in their projects.

**Student Learning Outcomes / Specific Objectives and Content:**

* **Interactive Demonstrations:** Start each lesson with a visual demonstration of each element using various media. For example, create a large design or digital presentation that shows examples of line, shape, form, etc.
* **Hands-On Activities:** Provide students with materials to explore each element individually. For instance, let them experiment with different types of lines (thick, thin, curved) or create collages using various shapes and textures.
* **Guided Practice:** Conduct exercises where students must incorporate specific elements into a single artwork. For example, a project where they use lines and shapes to create abstract compositions.
* **Visual Aids:** Use charts, diagrams, and example artworks to reinforce the understanding of each element. Display student work that exemplifies the effective use of these elements.

**2. Principles of Art**

**Objective:** Students will learn and apply the principles of art (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity) in their projects.

**Student Learning Outcomes / Specific Objectives and Content:**

* **Conceptual Explanation:** Introduce each principle with clear, simple definitions and examples. Use everyday objects or familiar artworks to illustrate how these principles work.
* **Classroom Projects:** Assign projects that focus on individual principles. For instance, a project on balance could involve creating symmetrical or asymmetrical compositions.
* **Visual Comparisons:** Show before-and-after examples of artwork to illustrate how principles of art affect composition. Discuss how the principles enhance or change the artwork.
* **Collaborative Work:** Have students work in pairs or small groups to create artworks that demonstrate the principles of art. Encourage them to critique and discuss each other's work based on these principles.

**3. Art Criticism**

**Objective:** Students will develop basic skills in art criticism by describing, interpreting, and evaluating artworks.

**Student Learning Outcomes / Specific Objectives and Content:**

* **Structured Framework:** Introduce a simple art criticism framework: Description (What do you see?), Interpretation (What does it mean?), and Evaluation (How well is it done?). Use this framework for analyzing various artworks.
* **Model Critiques:** Demonstrate how to critique art using sample artworks. Show how to articulate observations, interpretations, and evaluations in a constructive manner.
* **Peer Critique Sessions:** Organize regular peer critique sessions where students present their work and provide constructive feedback using the art criticism framework.
* **Reflection Journals:** Have students keep journals where they describe and critique their own work and the work of others. Encourage them to use specific art terms and principles.

**4. Tie-Dye**

**Objective:** Students will create their own tie-dye artworks, applying color theory and basic textile techniques.

**Student Learning Outcomes / Specific Objectives and Content:**

* **Introduction and Demonstration:** Start with a brief history of tie-dye and demonstrate the basic techniques (folding, twisting, binding). Show various tie-dye patterns and results.
* **Step-by-Step Instructions:** Provide clear, step-by-step instructions for the tie-dye process. Include safety guidelines and materials needed.
* **Hands-On Activity:** Allow students to create their own tie-dye designs using fabric, dye, and rubber bands. Supervise the process to ensure proper technique and safety.
* **Exploration of Color Theory:** Integrate lessons on color mixing and theory, showing how different colors interact in tie-dye. Encourage students to experiment with color combinations in their designs.
* **Display and Reflect:** After the tie-dye process, have students display their finished pieces and reflect on their experience. Discuss the results and the impact of different techniques and color choices.

**Guideline / Suggested for Method of Student Evaluation:**

**Assessment and Evaluation**

* **Formative Assessment:** Regularly assess students' understanding through observations during activities, participation in discussions, and completion of projects.
* **Summative Assessment:** Evaluate students based on their final projects, including their use of art elements and principles, creativity in tie-dye designs, and ability to articulate their critiques.
* **Feedback:** Provide constructive feedback on students' work, highlighting strengths and offering suggestions for improvement.

**Suggested Reading, Text, Objectives of Study**:

Text – Visual Arts For Secondary School by Shastri Maharaj B.F.A., M.Ed.

* **Lectures and Readings:** In-depth discussions on theoretical concepts and historical examples.
* **Hands-On Projects:** Practical exercises to apply elements and principles of art in creative projects.
* **Critique Sessions:** Opportunities to present and analyze student work and peer work using art criticism frameworks.
* **Field Visits:** Visits to galleries or museums to observe and critique artworks in various contexts.

**Target Audience:** This course is ideal for high school, aspiring artists, and anyone interested in developing a deeper understanding of visual arts. No prior art experience is required, though a passion for art and learning is encouraged.

**Outcome:** Upon completion, students will have a solid foundation in the core components of visual arts, equipped with the skills to create, analyze, and critique artworks with greater insight and confidence. Top of Form

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