

KCPA 110: 2D DESIGN
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ASSIGNMENT IV: GESTALT PRINCIPLES

DUE 10/1

Objective: Utilizing both digital examples and traditionally created designs, demonstrate comprehension of four Gestalt Principles.

Gestalt Principles:

In the early part of the twentieth century, Max Wertheimer, a German Gestalt psychologist, began to investigate how the viewer sees form, pattern, or shape as configurations in terms of group relationships rather than as individual terms. He discovered that several factors, such as nearness, size, and shape relatedness, help the mind relate objects visually. When the arrangement of visual units suggest that they are part of a larger pattern or shape, people mentally “fill in” missing gaps and tend to see incomplete patterns as complete or unified wholes.

Gestalt Defined

A physical, biological, psychological, or symbolic configuration or pattern of elements so unified as a whole that its properties cannot be derived from a simple summation of its parts.

Gestalt Principles addressed in Assignment 4:

Similarity

Proximity

Continuity

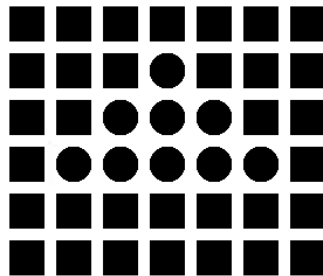
Closure

Similarity

The principle of similarity states that things which share visual characteristics such as shape, size, color, texture, value or orientation will be seen as belonging together. Our eye movement will visually connect items that are similar within a composition.



In the above example, the image appears unified because of the similarity of the triangular forms. This example (containing 10 distinct objects) appears as a **single unit** because all of the shapes have **similarity**. Unity occurs because the triangular shapes at the bottom of the eagle symbol **look similar** to the shapes that form the sunburst.



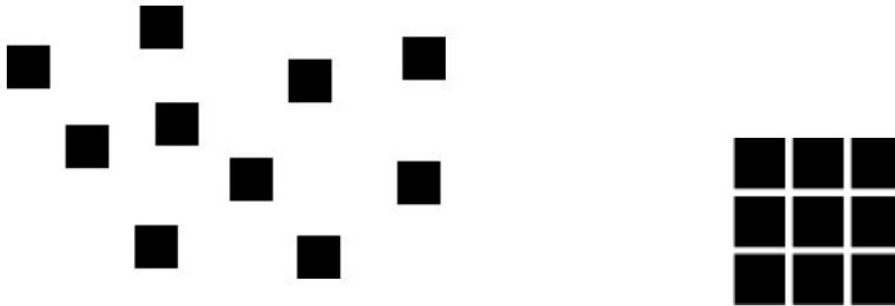
We perceive the 42 shapes above as two distinct groups, circles and squares.



When similarity occurs, an object can be emphasized (or made more dominant) if it is *dissimilar* to the others. This is called an **anomaly**.

Proximity

The principle of proximity or contiguity states: things that are closer together will be seen as belonging together. *Proximity* occurs when elements are placed close together. They tend to be perceived as a group.



The squares on the left are randomly arranged with an adequate amount of space between each of them so as to regard each square as a separate entity. The squares on the right are placed so that their relative closeness allows us to perceive all of the squares as one unified group, a larger square.



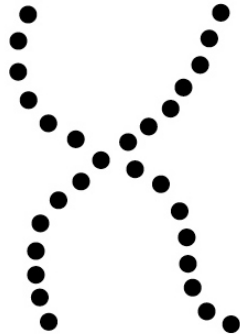
Looking at the above picture, the fifteen separate and disjointed characters read as a unified image, the shape of a tree.

Continuity

The principle of continuity predicts the preference for continuous figures. Continuation occurs when the eye is compelled to move through or around one object and continues to another object.



The swooping crossbar of the “H” leads our eye directly to the stem of the leaf. One form visually continues to the next.



We visually link the dots to form lines, because of their tight proximity. Furthermore, we perceive the “X” shape to be created by 2 lines intersecting one another rather than 4 lines meeting up in the center of the “X”.

Closure

Closure occurs when an object is *incomplete* or a space is not *completely enclosed*. The principle of closure applies when we perceive complete figures even when part of the information is missing.



On the left, we tend to see the white triangle in the center of this image as covering 3 black circles, rather than 3 incomplete circles. On the right we recognize the image of the white square as overlaying the black circles, rather than 4 incomplete circles. Our minds react to patterns that are familiar, even though we often receive incomplete information.



Even though the head and the back of this panda are “open” and blend into the background, our mind visually connects or closes the gaps to complete the image of the bear.

Assignment 4:

Part One:

For each of the four Gestalt principles we have discussed (Similarity, Proximity, Continuity, Closure), research and find one logo or graphic, clip art image that **best** exemplifies each principle. DO NOT JUST SEARCH "GESTALT" AND USE THOSE IMAGE RESULTS.

Change your logos/graphics to achromatic values, adjust contrast if necessary, and print them, 5" x 5".

Part Two:

Using only Sharpie on 5" x 5" white square papers, draw two additional examples for each principle. YOUR DESIGNS MUST BE COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF NON-REPRESENTATIONAL FORMS.

Think simplicity: use basic geometric forms created with line to get started with your drawings. Use your sketchbook!

Each final image should be 5 x 5" and mounted on a 20 x 30" black presentation board. Use appropriate labeling including your name, the project title "Gestalt", and each of the Gestalt Principles you are representing. Remember to design the overall layout of your board.

You should have a total of twelve 5" x 5" squares:

4 found logos/graphics (one for each principle)

8 drawings (two for each principle)

Craftsmanship is key!