SCHOLASTIC art

Elements and Principles of Art

Which can you find in Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*?

☐ LINE   ☐ SHAPE   ☐ COLOR   ☐ TEXTURE   ☐ SPACE   ☐ VALUE

MORE ONLINE!

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ART HISTORY VIDEO: Van Gogh and the Elements of Art

DEBATE: Share your opinion about video game art!

HOW-TO VIDEO: Hands-on project
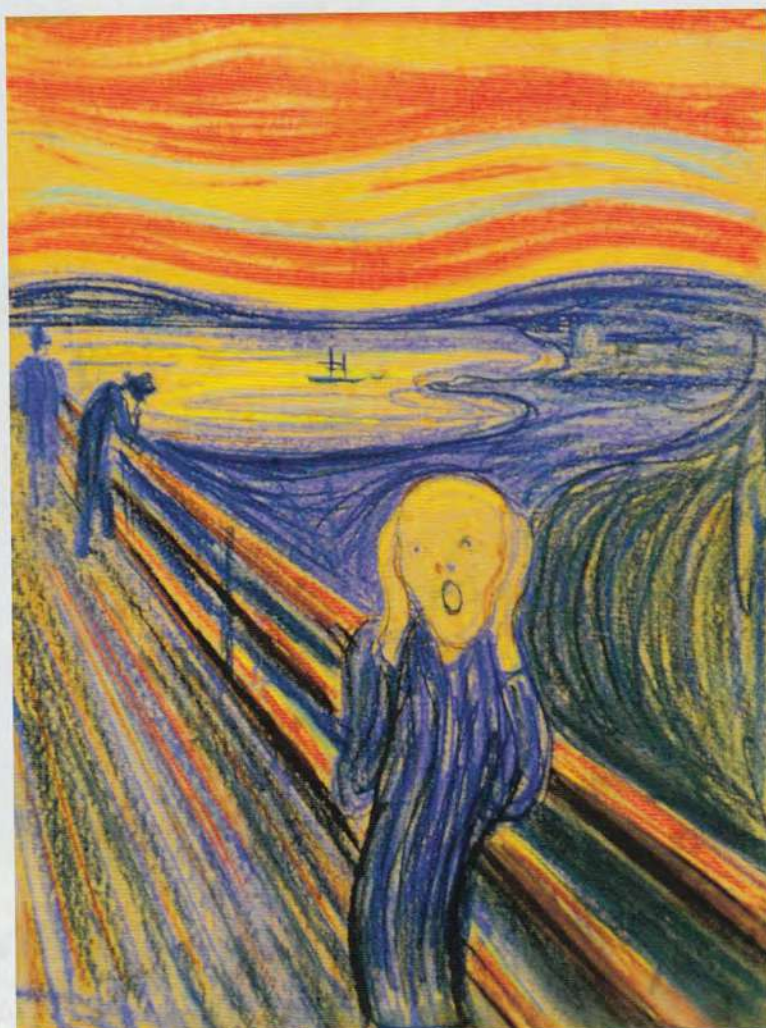
$119.9 MILLION SCREAM

Norwegian painter Edvard Munch's most iconic subject finally has something to scream about. One of the four versions of Munch's famous *The Scream* recently sold at auction for a record-breaking $119.9 million—the highest price ever paid at auction for a work of art.

Munch created the versions of *The Scream* in different media. The one that recently sold is a pastel version (below) created in 1895. It is unique because the artist wrote a poem on its frame describing the inspiration for the piece—a day he and his friends saw the sky turn a bloody red. In part it reads: *"My friends walked on/ I remained behind/shivering with anxiety/I felt the great Scream in Nature."* How did the artist use **line** and **color** to express the anxiety described in this poem? Turn the page to learn about the elements of art and decide for yourself!

David T. Waller arranged 2,500 toy cars into this eye-catching artwork!

David T. Waller, *Car Atlas—Rainbow*, 2010. Toy cars. ©David T. Waller.

Edvard Munch's *The Scream* recently sold at auction for a jaw-dropping $119.9 million.

Edvard Munch, *The Scream*, 1895. Crayon or pastel drawing on board. Photo: ©Stephen Simpson / LNP / Zuma Press.

Actual Size

Color Wheels

A lot of kids have collections—trading cards, action figures, stuffed animals, you name it. But what should they do with those old toys once they've lost interest in playing with them? British contemporary artist David T. Waller has the answer. He transformed his childhood collection of toy cars into art!

Waller arranged more than 2,500 model cars by color into the installation on the left called *Car Atlas–Rainbow*. An *installation* is a temporary artwork that transforms the place it is in. Waller arranged the cars according to the colors of the rainbow.

Waller's piece shares some characteristics with the abstract paintings of American artist Alma Woodsey Thomas. Turn to page 11 to see one of her pieces. In what ways are the two works alike? In what ways are they different?

America's 2,100,000 Artists

Think the only career in art is to become a painter or sculptor? Think again! According to a recently released study by the National Endowment for the Arts and the United States Census Bureau, just 10 percent of the 2.1 million artists in the United States make their living creating fine art. Nearly 40 percent of artists today are designers, which includes graphic design, fashion design, and interior design. What other great art careers do you see on the circle graph?

Source: 2005-2009 ACS PUMS, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, National Endowment for the Arts. NOTE: Figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

WRITERS & AUTHORS
9%

PERFORMING ARTISTS
17%

DESIGNERS
39%

About 2.1 million artists live in the United States.

PRODUCERS & DIRECTORS
7%

ARCHITECTS
10%

PHOTOGRAPHERS
7%

FINE ARTISTS & ANIMATORS
10%

Ferrari: iStockphoto.com; Graph: iStockphoto.com (7)

How to Make a Masterpiece

Find out how Vincent van Gogh created a painting that transports us to the cosmos

THE ELEMENTS OF ART
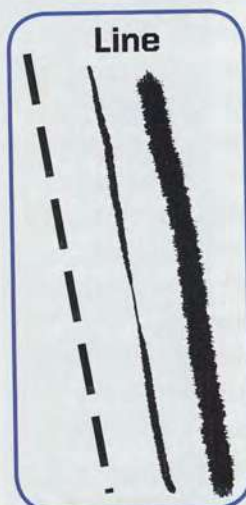
Line

Artists use line to determine the edges of the images they're depicting. Lines can have different qualities.

Shape/Form

Shapes are two-dimensional. Forms are three-dimensional—in appearance or in actuality (as in a sculpture).

Space

Artists who paint or draw create the illusion of space on a flat surface. Sculptors create work using physical space.

Color

The three primary colors—red, yellow, and blue—are used to make all other colors. Artists use color to create mood.

Value

Value is the lightness or darkness of a color. Artists use value to shade images and add light and shadows.

Texture

Texture means surface quality. It can be the way a painting or sculpture actually feels or an illusion like this feather.

Artists, like chefs, use a variety of ingredients to make art. The way they're combined influences the final piece, just as a chef's mixture of ingredients makes a meal spicy or sweet. Art's ingredients, called the elements of art, are **line**, **shape/form**, **space**, **color**, **value**, and **texture** (see chart at left). Artists **compose**, or arrange, the elements in endless ways to create vastly different works of art.

Lines Give Art Shape

Have you seen the painting above right before? It is Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh's 1889 *The Starry Night,* one of the most famous works in modern art. This painting a favorite of many people. But why? It is easy to discuss what makes Van Gogh's painting a masterpiece when we break it down to the elements of art.

Line is one of the most prominent elements in this painting. Notice how Van Gogh uses **continuous spirals** to paint the night sky. He contrasts this by using **long**, **organic** (curved) lines to paint the large cypress tree on the left and **short**, **sharp** dashes in the tiny village below.

The artist also uses line to develop shape and form. He uses short, choppy lines to circle the stars and call attention to their shape. He uses thick, dark **outlines** to build the **geometric forms** of the village houses and make them look **three-dimensional**.

Space Is More Than Stars

Can you tell how Van Gogh sets up the **illusion** of physical space on the **picture plane** (two-dimensional art surface)? Take a

SPACE: The enormous cypress tree in the foreground helps the viewer understand the arrangement of space.

COLOR: The yellow highlights in the sky help move your eye around the mostly blue composition.

LINE: Van Gogh uses spiraling lines to create the swirling night sky.

TEXTURE: The artist uses visible brushstrokes to create areas rich with texture.

SHAPE/FORM: The organic shape of the cypress tree contrasts the geometric forms of the buildings.

Vincent van Gogh's *The Starry Night* is one of the most acclaimed works in modern art.

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890), *The Starry Night*. Saint Rémy, June 1889. Oil on canvas, 29 x 36 ¼ in. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY. Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.

look at the cypress tree in the **foreground**. Compare its size with the steeple of the church. Which is closer to the viewer? In the **middle ground**, the artist paints rolling hills on the **horizon**, which separate the sky from the land. The night sky in the **background** occupies nearly two thirds of the canvas. Which part of the painting demands the most attention?

The Value of Color

Blue is the dominant **hue**, or color, in *The Starry Night*. How many different values (shades) of blue can you identify in it? The artist paints the stars, the moon, and a band of light on the horizon in yellow and white. These **highlights** (brighter colors)

also reflect off the roofs in the town, giving the entire work a mysterious glow.

Layers of Texture

Van Gogh used a painting technique called *impasto* on this work. He spread paint thickly across the canvas. The thick paint makes the brushstrokes more visible. By changing the direction of his brushstrokes, the artist gives the painting a dense texture, or surface quality. The thick paint also gives the work an uneven surface that has its own natural highlights and shadows when light shines on it.

You can use the same elements of art Vincent Van Gogh did to create your own masterpiece. Turn the page to learn more!

Watch a Video! scholastic.com/art

WRITE ABOUT ART

Write a paragraph describing *The Starry Night*. Include at least two ways Van Gogh uses the elements of art.

Portraits With Personality

Find out how famous artists created portraits using the elements of art

Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), *Self-portrait with gloves*, 1498. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain. Image: Scala / Art Resource, NY.

Dürer's Sense of Space ▲

Albrecht Dürer was a Renaissance painter and printmaker from Germany. During the Renaissance, artists figured out how to create the illusion of **three-dimensional space** on a flat surface. In his 1498 *Self-Portrait With Gloves*, above, Dürer introduces three layers of space. The subject sits in the first layer, just inside the frame, or the foreground. The second, in the background, recedes through the window on the right. Trees, meadows, hills, and sky are visible through this window, indicating a vast landscape lies beyond. The third layer is unexpected. The subject leans on a ledge and looks out, almost as if looking through a second window into the gallery where the painting hangs. He seems to be inviting the viewer to interact with the art.

Matisse Shapes Up ▼

Henri Matisse was a modern artist known for his paintings and prints. Matisse painted for most of his career until poor health made him unable to hold a paintbrush properly. So the artist picked up a pair of scissors instead. He cut up brightly colored paper and created **collages**. In *The Sword Swallower* below, created in 1947, the artist layers cutout **shapes** over solid **color fields**. Even though he does not use common shapes, a face in profile still emerges. What do you think the rectangular shapes near the mouth are supposed to be? Does the title of the piece provide you with a clue?

Henri Matisse (1869-1954), *The Sword Swallower*, 1947. Pochoir, plate XIII from the illustrated book "Jazz". Composition: various; sheet: 16 3/4 x 25 11/16 in. Publisher: Tériade Éditeur, Paris. The Museum of Modern Art, Gift of the artist, 1948. © 2012 Succession H. Matisse / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Digital Image: ©The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.

Kahlo's Textured Ideas ▼

Frida Kahlo was a Mexican artist known for her self-portraits. In the one below, painted in 1948, the artist depicts herself wearing a traditional bridal headdress. Notice how many different textures appear in this painting. Kahlo's skin looks smooth, and her hair seems to pull sharply away from her face. The rough-looking fabric surrounding her head is rich with **patterns**. The artist creates these varied textures by changing the delicate paint surface. Her skin is carefully **blended** so that the brushstrokes are not visible at all. The texture in the headdress is made of many tiny **crosshatched**, or crisscrossing, lines. These lines get darker and denser in areas of **shadow**, and subtler in the places where light hits the fabric. Think about the texture of the clothing you are wearing. How would you draw it so that someone else would know how it feels without ever touching it?

Warhol's Unusual Colors ▲

Andy Warhol is an icon of Pop Art, a movement that began in the mid-1950s. Pop artists use recognizable images from popular culture. The vibrant colors in Warhol's 1967 silkscreen print titled *Marilyn Monroe* above, strike the viewer immediately, boldly announcing their importance. Monroe, a famous movie star, appears in tones of the **complementary colors** (opposite) green and red, with a shock of yellow hair. By using an **unnatural color scheme**, Warhol draws the viewer's attention to the colors themselves. He transforms a very recognizable face into a statement about the colors he chose to use. Warhol began his career in advertising and was an expert at communicating his ideas to the public. What idea do you think he is trying to share here?

Haring Draws the Line ▼

Inspired by 1980s graffiti art in New York City, Keith Haring is known for his distinctive line drawings. The 1985 self-portrait below is an ink drawing on paper depicting Haring's own laughing face. Both cartooning and Pop Art influenced Haring's style. The artist uses bold lines without any **shading**. Despite this simplicity, Haring adds a few details like the wrinkles on his forehead. This technique gives the drawings a sketchy, playful energy.

ABOVE: How does Winslow Homer draw our attention to the man in the boat?

The Ocean by Design

See how four famous artists created dynamic compositions about the sea

O nce you understand the elements of art, you can begin using them in your own artwork. But how do you put them to the greatest effect? Follow the principles of design! These are guidelines for organizing the elements of art into a composition. They are **emphasis**, **contrast**, **balance**, **rhythm**, and **unity**.

Focus, Focus, Focus!

Artists use the elements of art to place emphasis on, or draw your attention to, the **focal point** of a work of art. In his 1899 painting of a ship on a stormy sea, *The Gulf Stream* (above), American realist painter Winslow Homer uses line, shape, and color to place emphasis on the man in the small boat at the center of the painting. A small white sunlit section of the boat with a streak of bright red (the color of blood) draws our attention to the boat and surrounding sharks. The man's body and the boat itself are **diagonal lines**, indicating their dangerous position on the unsettled sea.

In his 1923 *The Seafarer* (top right) Swiss/German abstract painter Paul Klee (klay) places emphasis on a man in a boat, but this is a very different looking battle. The top and bottom are in sharp **contrast**—the **tonal values** change from blue-black at the top to bright blue at the bottom. The boat rests on a thin line separating top from bottom. Klee uses a **horizontal** red line to draw attention to the strange sea creatures below the surface. Who do you think will win this battle?

RIGHT: How does Paul Klee use color to emphasize certain areas?

Paul Klee (1879-1940), Battle Scene from the Comic Opera *The Seafarer*. 1923. Watercolor. Collection Trix Duerst-Haass, Muttenz, Switzerland. © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Image: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

Balancing Act

Another way artists create emphasis is by choosing how to balance their compositions. Japanese woodblock printmaker Katsushika Hokusai (cat-soo-shee-kah hoh-koo-sigh) uses an **asymmetrical balance** in his 1826 *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* (center right). The huge wave on the left dominates the composition and threatens to engulf the small boats and men on the right. The curved lines of the wave and repeated curled-edge **motif** at its crest draw our attention to the focal point—Mount Fuji in the background.

American contemporary artist Faith Ringgold uses **symmetrical balance** in her 1986 *Sonny's Quilt* (bottom right). The left and right sides of the work are nearly identical. The repeating **vertical lines** of the iconic cables of the Brooklyn Bridge draw our attention to the subject—the artist's friend Sonny Rollins, a jazz saxophonist.

Rhythm of the Water

You probably associate the word "rhythm" with music, but works of art have rhythm too. Artists create rhythm by adding visual "beats" throughout a work, using line, color, or shape. In *The Gulf Stream*, Homer creates rhythm by repeating v-shaped waves throughout the composition. Patterns can also be used to create a sense of rhythm. Compare Klee's *The Seafarer* and Ringgold's *Sonny's Quilt*. How does each artist use pattern to develop rhythm?

It All Comes Together

Unity is one of the most difficult principles to describe—it occurs when the elements of art and principles of design come together to form a complete work. When a work of art is unified, it has a sense of order and is pleasing to the eye. Do you think all of the paintings on these pages achieve unity? Why or why not?
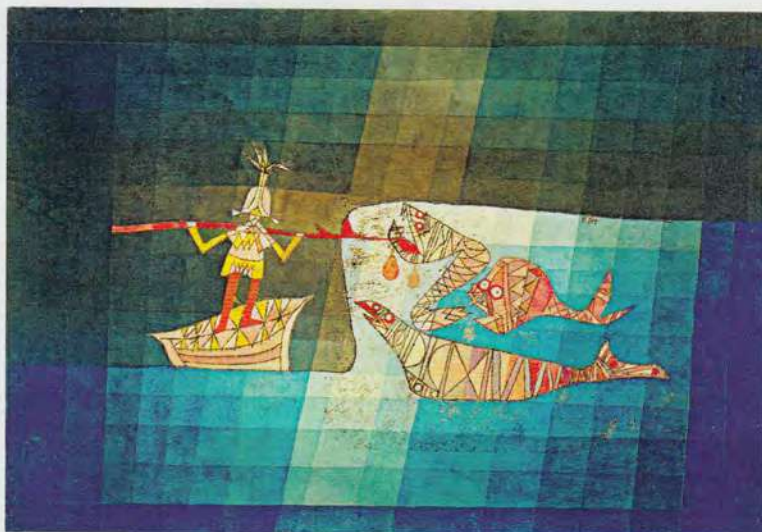

ABOVE: What image dominates Hokusai's print? Is this the focal point? Why or why not?

Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*. Print. Image: Gianni Dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY.

LEFT: How does Faith Ringgold use the line of the Brooklyn Bridge to establish rhythm?

Faith Ringgold (b. 1930), *Sonny's Quilt*, 1986. Acrylic on canvas, 91 x 72 in. Collection: High Museum of Art. Faith Ringgold ©1986.

5 Things to Know About the Elements and Principles
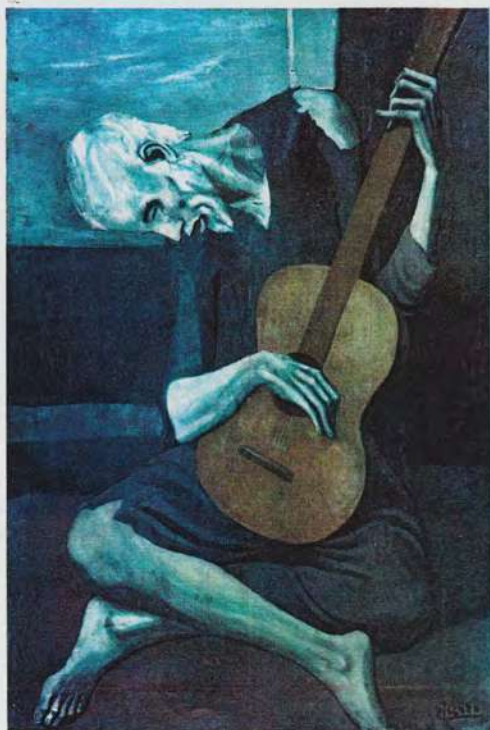
How do you feel when you look at Pablo Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*? How has the artist used color to make you feel this way?

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *The Old Guitarist*, late 1903-early 1904. Oil on panel, 48 3/8 x 32 ½ in. Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection, 1926.253. The Art Institute of Chicago. © 2012 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Image: The Art Institute of Chicago.

How does Salvador Dalí create the feeling of three-dimensional space in his fantastical landcape?

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989), *The Persistence of Memory*, 1931. Oil on canvas, 9 ½ x 13 in. Given anonymously. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Image: The Bettmann Art Library. © 2012 Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

2 YOU CAN INVENT SPACE ▼

Have you ever noticed that you remember parts of your dreams but not entire dreams? Some things are clear and seem very real, but other things are fuzzy or don't make sense. In the 1920s, a group of artists called Surrealists tried to capture these strange dream experiences in art, writing, film, and theater.

The Persistence of Memory (below), completed by Spanish surrealist painter Salvador Dalí in 1931, features a series of melting clocks in an exaggerated dreamlike landscape. It has a clear foreground, middle ground, and background. But recognizing the arrangement of space doesn't help you understand what is happening, does it? Why is a tree growing out of a table? What is the creature in the center? What planet is this? Do these questions make the painting more interesting to look at than a typical landscape?

1 USE COLOR TO ▲ SET THE MOOD

Spanish painter and sculptor Pablo Picasso completed *The Old Guitarist* (above) in 1903 during his "Blue Period." During this time the artist painted **monochromatic** (single-color) works using the color blue. The blue color and subjects including the poor and outcast, give the paintings from this time a melancholy **mood**.

The Old Guitarist shows an old man whose tired body creates a cascade of **diagonals**. His skin is **tinted** blue, with white **highlights** glowing against the shadowy background. In another color, would this painting have a different mood?

3 LINE + COLOR = ORDER ▶

Dutch painter Piet Mondrian believed that the purest form of art was based on a **grid**. He painted black lines on a white background and used **primary colors** for the shapes within. The artist felt that his paintings had perfect order, **balance**, and **unity**.

In his 1930 work on the right, Mondrian uses vertical and horizontal lines to form rectangles of different sizes. The red square is much larger than the others. Why do you think Mondrian has chosen to **emphasize** the red shape and minimize the yellow?

Do you agree with Piet Mondrian's idea that grid painting achieves perfect unity? Why or why not?

Piet Mondrian (1872-1944), *Composition with Red, Blue, and Yellow*, 1930. Oil on canvas, 18.1 x 18.1 in. Kunsthaus, Zurich, Switzerland. © 2012 Mondrian/Holtzman Trust c/o HCR International USA. Image: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

Compare Alma Woodsey Thomas's (above) *The Eclipse* with David T. Waller's car installation on page 3. How are they alike? How are they different?

Alma Woodsey Thomas (1891-1978), *The Eclipse*, 1970. Acrylic on canvas, 62 x 49 ¾ in. Gift of Alma W. Thomas. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC. Image: Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC. / Art Resource, NY.

4 SHAPES CAN FORM PATTERNS

Alma Woodsey Thomas is an African-American painter who used color and simple shapes to depict nature.

Thomas's *The Eclipse* (left), painted in 1970, features vibrant colors **radiating** from a dark blue circle. The circular shape sets the pattern that repeats throughout the painting. Cool blues and greens form rings around the circle. As the rings reach toward the edges of the canvas, they become warmer with reds, oranges, and yellows. Thomas uses small, repeating rectangles to create the rings of color, rather than blending the colors seamlessly. This sets up a feeling of **movement** pulsating from the dark center.

5 TEXTURE CAN MAKE A PAINTING DANCE ▶

Jackson Pollock used his whole body to paint, pouring or flinging layers of house paint across the surface of the canvas. Using this "action painting" process, Pollock created giant **abstract** paintings rich with color and texture.

In Pollock's 1948 **drip painting** on the right, *Summertime: Number 9A*, weblike, narrow lines cover the surface and thicker, bolder ones randomly mark the canvas. This combination of thin and thick lines creates texture. Pollock punctuates the canvas with shapes painted using primary colors. The **repetition** of color creates a visually pleasing **rhythm** for the viewer.
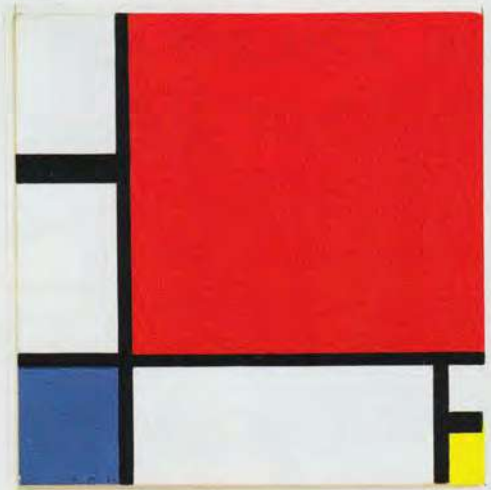

What would the texture of a Jackson Pollock painting feel like?

Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), *Summertime: Number 9A*, 1948. (Detail). Oil, enamel and house paint on canvas, 84.8 x 555 cm. The Tate Gallery, London. © 2012 The Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Image: The Tate Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY.

Is There Art in Your Xbox?

A new museum exhibit about video games is touring the country. You decide if it's art or just fun and games.

Next time an adult tells you that video games are rotting your brain, you might reply that you're actually appreciating fine art. A new exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum of American Art claims that video game design is actually an art form worth displaying alongside the world's masterpieces.

"The Art of Video Games," which will tour the country later this year, explores video games as an artistic medium. The first such exhibit at a major museum, the show features 80 games and 20 game systems. Starting with the Atari VCS in 1976 and ending with Sony PlayStation 3, visitors can see how video games have evolved over the past 40 years. Video and photographic displays showcase the creative ideas in the games, such as visual effects and creative use of technology.

Some say video games are more than just fun—they stir the imagination and reflect popular culture. The exhibit's curator, game developer Chris Melissinos, says game creators are artists. "We're able to create worlds and environments that just don't exist in the real world," Melissinos tells CBS News. Critics say video games do not belong in an art museum. They say the games are for entertainment only. What do you think? Can video games be works of art?

Visitors to the Smithsonian Museum of American Art an appreciate the art of video games.

Tell us what you think! www.scholastic.com/art

YES — **Video games are art. Here's why:**

- ▶ Video games use design, illustration, storytelling, cinematography, and music. Teams of creative people collaborate to make the games.
- ▶ Video games are engaging. Each player gets a unique experience based on how he or she plays the game.
- ▶ Video games reflect our culture and society. They have become more complex and reflect our changing values and attitudes.

NO — **Video games are not art. Here's why:**

- ▶ Video games are entertainment, not art. They don't make you think about deep issues. They're more about play.
- ▶ Video games should not be displayed next to paintings. Doing so cheapens the value of the art around them.
- ▶ It's pop culture, not high culture. It's just a clever way to sell museum tickets.