

Lesson B2–4

Understanding the Design Elements

Unit B. Floriculture

Problem Area 2. Floral Design

Lesson 4. Understanding the Design Elements

New Mexico Content Standard:

Pathway Strand: Plant Systems

Standard: IV: Exercise elements of design to enhance an environment (e.g., floral, forest, landscape, farm).

Benchmark: IV-A: Apply basic design elements and principles to create a design using plants.

Performance Standard: 1. Conduct a site evaluation for physical condition and design implications. 2. Apply elements of design (e.g., line, form, texture, color). 3. Incorporate principles of design (e.g., space, scale, proportion, order). 6. Select plant(s) for design.

Student Learning Objectives. Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

1. List and describe the major forms (or shapes) used in floral design.
2. Explain how space and depth enhance floral design.
3. Describe the importance of texture in floral design.
4. Explain how color influences floral work.

List of Resources. The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Recommended Resources. One of the following resources should be selected to accompany the lesson:

Biondo, Ronald J. and Dianne A. Noland. *Floriculture: From Greenhouse Production to Floral Design*. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Publishers, Inc., 2000.

Other Resources. The following resources will be useful to students and teachers:

Behe, Bridget K., et al. *The Retail Florist Business*. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Publishers, Inc., 1994.

List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies and Facilities

Writing surface
Overhead projector
Transparencies from attached masters
Photos of floral arrangements

Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

Advancing color
Analogous
Color wheel
Complimentary
Depth
Design elements
Filler flowers
Form
Form flowers
Free form
Geometric
Line
Line materials
Mass flowers
Monochromatic
Naturalistic
Polychromatic
Primary colors
Receding color
Secondary colors
Shape
Space

Tertiary colors
Texture

Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Pass out several different photographs of floral arrangements. Ask the students to work in pairs to compare and contrast the different arrangements. Try to draw the students into a discussion on shape, color, texture, and size of arrangements. Ask the students to visualize the same arrangements in a different color or size. Would the arrangements have the same visual effect? Why or why not?

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective I: List and describe the major forms (or shapes) used in floral design.

Anticipated Problem: What are the major forms or shapes used in floral design?

- I. Floral arrangements are composed of flowers, greenery, and containers. These different elements can be arranged in various ways to create visually pleasing compositions. The physical characteristics that the designer uses to create the arrangements are called **design elements**. The design elements that must be understood when first creating floral arrangements are form and shape. **Form** refers to the 3-dimensional outline of the arrangement, while **shape** refers to the 2-dimensional aspect of form. Form, or shape can exist naturally in floral design elements, or they can be created by the designer. The common forms used in floral design are: naturalistic, free form, and geometric.
 - A. The **geometric** shapes used in floral design are most often the circle and the triangle. These basic shapes can be varied to create ovals, fans, or crescent arrangements from the circle and right triangles, scalene triangles and isosceles triangles from the basic triangle.
 - B. **Naturalistic** designs mirror the natural growth of plant material. Designs that exhibit this form often include groupings of plant material, using branches to symbolize trees and shorter flowers as undergrowth.
 - C. A **free form** arrangement is more contemporary, allowing the designer to take on any liberty with color, shape, and placement. Free form arrangements are very creative and do not have to follow any particular design rule.
 - D. All forms of arrangement are created through the use of lines. **Line** is the visual movement between two points in an arrangement. The placement of the lines can help create a shape or express an emotional response. Lines can be created through the use of line materials. **Line materials** like snapdragon, liatris, and scotch broom are used to create very definite vertical, horizontal, diagonal, or curvilinear lines. The remainder of the arrangement is created through the combination of form flowers, mass flowers, and filler flowers. **Form flowers** are those flowers that have distinctive shapes like lilies or tropical

flowers. **Mass flowers** are round, solid flowers like carnations and mums. The last category of flowers, **filler flowers** are light, airy flowers like baby's breath and sea lavender that fill in the space between other flowers. By combining any number of line flowers, mass flowers, form flowers, and filler flowers, a designer has an infinite number of ways to create an attractive, eye-catching, visually pleasing arrangement.

One way to help students master this objective is to have them view pictures of arrangements. Then have the students decide on which form (or shape) they exhibit. Students can then practice making arrangements that show a particular shape. TM: B2–4A will reinforce the geometric shapes.

Objective 2: Explain how space and depth enhance floral design.

Anticipated Problem: How do space and depth enhance floral design?

- II. Almost as important as the placement of individual flowers, is the areas in the design where there are no flowers. Areas that are devoid of flowers are called **space**. It is important for the floral designers to leave space in their arrangements. Designers can also increase the apparent size of a design by adding space and depth to the design.
 - A. **Depth** in a design gives the arrangement more of a three dimensional form than just a shape. By tucking flowers in further so they are partially hidden by others, dangling flowers upward or to the side, a designer can add interest and character to the arrangement.
 - B. Space is very important in arranging. By placing the flowers away from each other, not touching, the arrangement appears to be larger but no more materials have been used. When this technique is used, the designer can save money by creating the illusion of a larger, more expensive design. By having space among the individual flowers, the visual attributes of each flower are then showcased. This allows for added interest in the design.

One way to help students master this objective is to have them create an arrangement that exhibits depth or space. It is very challenging for a beginning designer to learn how to avoid crowding the flowers and to prevent making a flat 2-D arrangement. Once the arrangements are made, the students can evaluate them as a class, giving advice on how to create more depth and space within the arrangements.

Objective 3: Describe the importance of texture in floral design.

Anticipated Problem: How is texture important in floral design?

- III. Floral designers can create visually attractive arrangements by combining plant material with different texture. **Texture** is the design element that refers to the surface quality of the plant material.
 - A. Plant material can be rough, smooth, leathery, velvety, satiny, or hairy.
 - B. Plant material is also described as having visual texture. The materials look fine or airy, lacy, delicate, or bold and coarse. By varying the textures in an arrangement, the arrangement can attract attention and hold the viewer's interest for longer periods of time.

One way to help students master this objective is to have the students view several different plant materials. Have the students label the texture of each item using the terms listed above.

Objective 4: Explain how color influences floral work.

Anticipated Problem: How does color influence floral work?

- IV. Color is probably the most obvious element in design. A beautifully arranged floral arrangement can lose its appeal if the color combination is not striking. Physiological studies have shown that colors actually help contribute to people's feelings. Colors have also come to symbolize certain occasions or events. For example, red has become the symbol for love, while yellow often means friendship or happiness. Green is very restful and symbolizes life, while blue is very cooling. Other colors are white for purity and innocence, purple for royalty, and orange for warmth. An understanding of the color wheel is important when designing floral work.
- A. The **color wheel** is made up of primary colors, secondary colors, and tertiary colors. **Primary colors** are the basic colors of red, yellow, and blue. All other colors come from combining these primary colors. **Secondary colors** are green, orange, and violet. They are created by combining two primary colors. For example, yellow and red create orange. By combining one primary color with one secondary color, **tertiary colors** are created. Tertiary colors are often written as hyphenated names like blue-green or yellow-orange.
- B. Floral designers often use basic color schemes in order to create eye-catching arrangements. Color schemes are created through the combination of one or more colors. A **monochromatic** color scheme would be made from one color and all its light and dark variations. For example, if red was the chosen color, the arrangement might include deep red, maroon, pale pinks, and hot pinks. All of these colors originate from the primary color red. **Analogous** color schemes use colors that are next to each other on the color wheel. An arrangement made of yellow, yellow-orange, and orange would be analogous. By choosing two colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel, a **complimentary** color scheme is created. Red/Green, Violet/Yellow, and Blue/Orange are all complimentary color schemes. A **polychromatic** color scheme includes a wide range of colors.
- C. No matter what color scheme is chosen, it is important to remember that colors are viewed differently depending on what other colors they are combined with. When yellow and violet are placed together, yellow tends to be a more **advancing color**, moving towards the viewer. Violet on the other hand, is a **receding color**, disappearing into the background. This is important to remember when creating arrangements for a stage or altar. Violet tends to disappear when viewed from a distance.

One way to help students master this objective is to have the students go through various pictures of floral arrangements. Then have the students divide the arrangements according to their various color schemes. Students may also use the pictures to point out primary or secondary colors, or to state what emotion the arrangement evokes. Display TM: B2–4B to illustrate the color wheel.

Review/Summary. Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have the students try to match the vocabulary with the actual pictures that exhibit that idea. The student responses can be used to determine which objectives need clarification.

Application. Application of this lesson can be achieved through the following ways:

Showing TM: B2–4A

Creating an actual floral arrangement that exhibits one concept from this lesson (form, color, texture)

Reading appropriate sections of *Floriculture: From Greenhouse Production to Floral Design*

Evaluation. The evaluation of the student achievement of the objectives for the lesson will be the successful completion of an arrangement and the written test. A sample written test is attached.

Answers to Sample Test:

Part One: Matching

1=a, 2=c, 3=d, 4=e, 5=b

Part Two: Completion

1. red, yellow, and blue
2. violet, green, and orange

Part Three: Short Answer

1. circle, oval, fan, triangle, crescent, hogarth curve
2. makes the arrangement appear bigger with the use of less material

Test

Lesson B2–4: Understanding the Design Elements

Part One: Matching

Instructions. Match the term with the correct response. Write the letter of the term by the definition.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| a. monochromatic | b. form | c. naturalistic |
| d. analogous | e. complimentary | |

- _____ 1. One color with all its light and dark variations.
- _____ 2. A type of design that mirrors plants in nature.
- _____ 3. Color scheme that uses colors next to each other on the color wheel.
- _____ 4. The color scheme used when choosing red and green.
- _____ 5. The three dimensional outline of an arrangement.

Part Two: Completion

Instructions. Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

- 1. _____, _____, and _____ are primary colors.
- 2. _____, _____, and _____ are secondary colors.

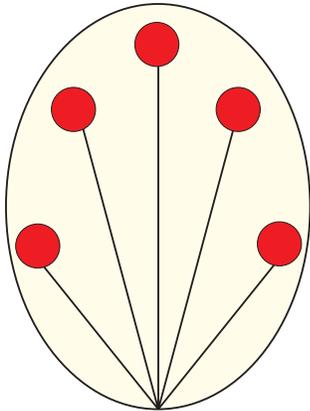
Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions. Provide information to answer the following questions.

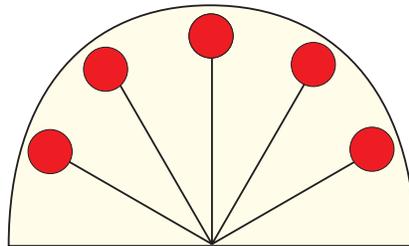
- 1. List four geometric shapes of arrangements.

- 2. Explain why space is important in floral design.

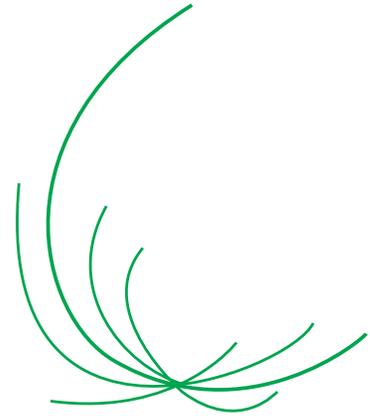
GEOMETRIC SHAPES OF FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS



Oval



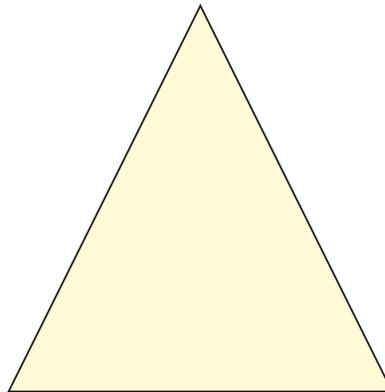
Fan



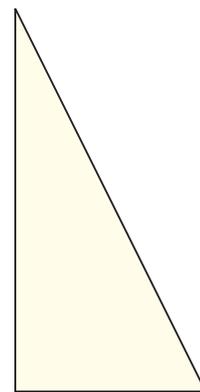
Crescent



**Hogarth
Curve**



**Equilateral
Triangle**



**Right
Triangle**

(Courtesy, Interstate Publishers, Inc.)

COLOR WHEEL

