

Creative Challenge: Line Dynamics

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This challenge can be used in the first week of a 2D design course. It is fast, requires few supplies, and demonstrates the importance of iteration.

Challenge: Through 3 iterations, develop a dynamic, non-objective design using line and shape.

Objectives/Assessment Criteria:

- To fully engage the edges of the format.
- To create an illusion of space using overlap, size, and/or placement within the format.
- To experiment with symmetrical and asymmetrical balance
- To use editing to increase visual impact.



Materials: Black felt markers and 4-8 sheets of 18" x 24" drawing paper

Strategy: Start by creating an "inventory" of lines: thick, thin, broken, jagged, curved, etc. Then, use thumbnail sketches to rough draft at least ten ideas. Expand the best idea into your first iteration, then revise it in a second iteration, discarding distracting details and strengthening the dominant movement. After the in-progress critique, complete your final design.



- Pay special attention to the edge of the composition. When a line or shape intersects this edge, the composition can visually extend beyond the page and into the viewer's world.
- Overlap, variations in size, location, and degrees of definition can be used to create the illusion of space. The illusion of space gives more room for movement, increasing the design's overall energy.
- Symmetrical balance is often used when stability is needed, while asymmetrical balance is generally more dynamic. Curves and diagonals tend to be more dynamic than horizontal lines.



Key Questions:

- Is there a dominant movement in the composition?
- If so, how was this movement created? Is there anything blocking this movement?
- Can greater spatial depth increase the power of the design?



Critique Strategy: We will use a visual critique when iteration #2 is complete. Student A will select a study by Student B, then re-design it on a fresh sheet of paper, making it 50% stronger. Student A then gets to talk through the choices he or she made. What were the strengths in the initial design? What areas needed greater clarity? Could a part of the initial design be expanded to create a stronger new design?

Examples/Readings: See examples on the right and Chapters 1 & 3, *Launching the Imagination*.

Timing: 15-40 minutes per drawing/15-40 minutes per discussion. Alternating between drawing and discussion works well.

NOTE to teachers: This seemingly simple assignment can actually provide an introduction to the several design elements and principles. To create a dynamic design, students must understand balance and use it effectively. By creating the illusion of space, they can suggest movement from foreground to background. If necessary, a focal point can provide a dramatic pivot point for the entire composition.