

# SESSION 3: BIG IDEAS IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

Age range: 11 - 14 years

<b>Outline</b> <p>In this session, learners will be exposed to four big design ideas that have informed designers from the twentieth century up until today. By discussing and recording the effect of these techniques, learners will begin to appreciate the importance of planning and drawing on conventions in the design process. They will then put this theory into practice by re-thinking and modifying their rudimentary designs from last session.</p>		
<b>Learning objectives</b> <p>Learners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a critical understanding of historical design trends that continue to inform today's infographic designers</li> <li>• Experiment with pictograms, calligrams, complementary colours and/or overlapping transparent colours.</li> </ul>	<b>Learning outcomes</b> <p>Learners will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify a range of technical design choices and analyse their effect on the meaning and/or aesthetic appeal of the works listed on Activity Sheet 3.1</li> <li>• Refine their 1% designs from last session by adopting one or more of these choices.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What design ideas and techniques do today's infographic designers borrow from the past?</li> <li>• Which of these could I practise using to improve the design I drew in the last session?</li> </ul>	<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session 3 slideshow           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Print notes pages</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Session 3 Teacher's Guide, including:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Activity Sheet 3.1 copied for each learner</li> <li>◦ Activity Sheet 3.1, Teacher's Edition</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Colouring pencils or a computer with printer access for each learner (for the optional extension activity in the final column of Activity Sheet 3.1).</li> </ul>	
<b>Curriculum links</b>		
<b>England</b> Art & Design curriculum links Pupils will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design.</li> </ul>	<b>Wales</b> Art & Design curriculum links Pupils should be given opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use their knowledge of other designers to enrich their own work through analysis, comparison and evaluation.</li> </ul>	<b>Scotland</b> Art & Design curriculum links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work (EXA 3-07a).</li> </ul>

**Before session**

- Print enough copies of Activity Sheet 3.1 for working individually.
- Set up the projector/slideshow.
- Teachers with a graphic design background may want to add further examples of influential techniques at the end of the slideshow before sharing.

**Activity 3.1***Big ideas in graphic design (Slideshow and activity sheet)*

- Many learners will already have noticed eye-catching visual representations of data on the internet and/or in newspapers. The purpose of this slideshow, therefore, is to:
  - Firm up their visual vocabulary so they can start to produce more sophisticated infographic designs.
  - Ensure they understand that the clean and elegant finish of contemporary infographics belies a skillful (and often lengthy) process of selecting, synthesising and simplifying a range of traditional design conventions.
- The four big design ideas featured in the slideshow (slides 18-22) are:
  1. Pictograms
  2. Calligrams
  3. Complementary colours
  4. Overlapping transparent colours
  - During or following the discussion of each of these, give learners time to fill in their ideas and observations on Activity Sheet 3.1. The Teacher's Edition of the activity sheet and the notes pages of the slideshow can be used to guide learners further if necessary.

**Activity 3.2***Assessing the 1% design*

- Put learners into smaller groups to peer-assess each other's designs from the last session on the basis of the following criteria:
  - Are the inequality data easily understood?
  - Could any of the text be reduced, removed or replaced with visual representations?
  - Which of the four Big Ideas from the slideshow would enhance the design most?  
How?

**Activity 3.3***Refining the 1% design*

- Learners will then need time (and perhaps a new sheet of paper) to revise their designs so that they can incorporate their chosen design idea from the four they were introduced to in the slideshow. As with all practical tasks, it's important for the teacher to move around the classroom at this point monitoring each learner's progress. Common traps

may include overcomplicating the design to the point where the basic statistic is no longer clear and/or committing to new sizes and shapes too quickly with heavy rather than faint lines. Projecting slide 23 may help to keep learners focused.

**Differentiation**

- *Make it harder.*
  - Learners could be asked to come up with their own assessment criteria in Activity 3.2. They could also then be challenged in Activity 3.3 to incorporate more than one of the design ideas covered in the slideshow.

**Please note:** Source information and more ideas for differentiation can be found in the slideshow notes.

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**Activity Sheet 3.1**

	<b>Designer</b>	<b>Design title</b> <i>(in chronological order)</i>	What graphic <b>choice</b> has the designer made?	What <b>effect</b> has this achieved?	<b>Extension: Draw or print</b> out a relevant cropped section of the design
<b>1</b>	Lester Beall	<i>Rural Electrification Administration Posters Series, 1934</i>			
<b>2</b>	Otto Neurath	<i>Structure of Society in Vienna, 1938</i>			
<b>3</b>	Guillaume Apollinaire	<i>Eiffel Tower, 1918</i>			
<b>4</b>	Fanette Mellier	<i>La Fête de la Musique, 2009</i>			

**Activity Sheet 3.1 Teacher's copy**

					<b>Extension: Draw or print out a relevant cropped section of the design</b>
<b>Designer</b>	<b>Design title</b> <i>(in chronological order)</i>	What graphic <b>choice</b> has the designer made?	What <b>effect</b> has this achieved?		
<b>1</b>	Lester Beall <i>Rural Electrification Administration Posters Series, 1934</i>	Complementary colour blocks (opposites on the colour wheel, e.g. red and green) positioned next to each other	To appear to vibrate and demand attention		Hot/cold colour blocking 
<b>2</b>	Otto Neurath <i>Structure of Society in Vienna, 1938</i>	Pictogram: simple images using only lines and blocks of black and white	To cut down on text; create a universal visual language		Working man 
<b>3</b>	Guillaume Apollinaire <i>Eiffel Tower, 1918</i>	Calligram: The lettering conforms to a recognisable shape (from ancient Greek <i>kallos</i> = beauty and <i>gramma</i> = thing written)	To cut down on the need for a separate title or labels		Physical shape of structure 
<b>4</b>	Fanette Mellier <i>La Fête de la Musique, 2009</i>	Overlapping transparent colours	To create an illusion of depth		Yellow behind or in front 