Lesson on Layout and Dominant Feature

1. students will look at picture. Ask them questions.

What do you see? Why?

What are your eyes focusing on?

What colours do you see?

What can you tell me about the background? Foreground/Background Depth (perspective)

By using proportion and scale, placement in layers (elements overlapping

each other) a static image can create **a sense of depth or three**

**dimensionality** (3D).

This can draw the reader into the image and gives it more impact.

Discuss contrast. Contrast

Contrast is **a way of highlighting something** – drawing attention to it or

making it stand out. It can take many forms, in both words and images: light

and dark tones; colour vs. monochrome; humour vs. horror; cliché vs.

novelty/originality etc.

Discuss what are main images you can see.

Where is it placed?

Discuss composition. Composition

Composition is how all the elements of the design are arranged on the page:

words and images. A good composition has a **single focus** and is **appropriate**

to the idea or theme, the purpose of the static image and its intended

audience.

Harmony

As in music, harmony refers to **all the elements** (words and images) in a

design **working together** to create a pleasing whole, where every element

seems to have the same focus, style, mood and tone and creates **a unified**

**effect**.

The opposite (**disharmony**) is created by contrast – conflicting elements that seem to fight each other. Sometimes this is deliberately used to create

tension or a sense of unease (good for horror etc).

• Leading the eye

Good layout leads the viewer’s eye through the design, makes it ‘read’ in

logical order and **makes its point** clearly. Where text and images are placed

and their size, colour etc is what makes this happen. *See S/Z Curves,*

*converging diagonals etc.*

• ‘Less is more’ principle

**Don’t try to put too much into a design**. Sometimes this works but usually it makes the design hard to follow and the viewer confused. Let the elements ‘breathe’ by leaving space around them and concentrate on delivering a

single, clear message. *See ‘white space’*

Vocabulary:

design, layout, contrast, background, foreground, dominant image, appropriate image, composition, focal point

• Dominant Visual Image (DVI)

Every static image should have ONE dominant visual image. It is the **biggest, most noticeable element in the design**. If a design has two or three images

of equal size and ‘weight’, the reader is unsure what the main idea, focus or

point of the image is. The **DVI may be a word used as an image**.

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| Dominant Visual Image | makes it ‘read’ in logical order and **makes its point** clearly |
| Less is more’ | has a **single focus** and is **appropriate** to the idea or theme, the purpose of the static image |
| Leading the eye | is **a way of highlighting something** – drawing attention to it or making it stand out. |
| Harmony | **biggest, most noticeable element in the design** |
| Composition | using proportion and scale, placement in layers |
| Contrast | **all the elements** (words and images) in a design **working together** |
| Foreground/Background Depth | **Don’t try to put too much into a design** |