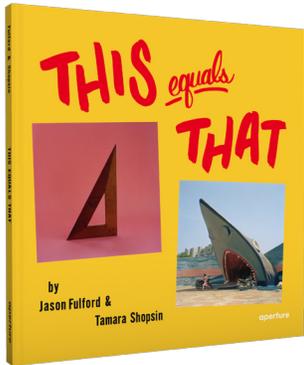


This Equals That

By Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin

All ages



This Equals That, a clever and surprising picture book by Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, takes viewers on a whimsical journey, while introducing them to the fundamentals of visual literacy and teaching them associative thinking. As the first lesson in Aperture’s visual literacy curriculum, *This Equals That* can be used to teach how form, content, and context work together to create meaning(s) within a single image or group of images. Through a playful and considered sequence of photographs, the book inspires conversation and multiple interpretations, allowing for an inquiry-based learning experience. Teacher/parent and student/child can continually answer the question: how does this equal that?

The sequence begins with candid connections, encouraging the viewer to articulate the differences and similarities between pairs of images. This exercise is an excellent opportunity to introduce basic vocabulary related to all visual images, along with more complex concepts suggested by key pairings. For example, the book’s first spread, with images of a drafting triangle and a large, artificial (virtually architectural) shark’s head, demonstrates a visual association primarily through shape. However, one can also begin to discuss color, scale, and the depiction of static objects vs. objects in motion. The next pairing of the same oversized fun-house shark’s head and a ubiquitous string of red, white, and blue triangular pennants creates an obvious association through shape and color, but dissociation through scale. As the sequence progresses, the links become more conceptual: a mysterious image of prismatic light introduces abstraction into

the conversation, while an image of a fisherman followed by that of a fish market departs from pure visual association to suggest cause and effect. Depending on the age of the viewer, one can also plunge into a conversation about commerce and food, while introducing a new use of the word scale: could one man with one rod catch all those fish?

As Fulford and Shopsin’s book progresses, it moves back and forth between easy, familiar associations like pattern, color, or shape, which provide continual affirmation for young viewers, and more complicated, challenging pairings: numbers, signs, vessels, and voids. In one particular spread, an old metal dice cup and pair of dice face off with a pair of playground slides. Here, one association exists only in the mind’s eye: dice roll out of the cup and children slide down the slide! *This Equals That* has a dynamic range of content that invites and allows for multiple points of entry regardless of the age of the viewer.

Aperture teaching artists have used *This Equals That* with students in grades 4 to 8. The book has effectively strengthened students’ ability to make comparisons and recognize patterns, as well as understand how context—one image placed next to another—can suggest an entirely new and unexpected idea. Students gain a deeper understanding of pictorial vocabulary, and confidence in approaching images from a critical perspective. Younger children enjoy the book by themselves, engaging with its narrative mysteries, but also benefit from a guided viewing with a parent or teacher, discovering associations together.

Below are some of the words and concepts found within the pages of *This Equals That*. Can you find these in the book? Discuss.

shape

visual texture

pattern

color

line

composition

value

form

flatness

two-dimensional

three-dimensional

depth

depth of field

light

dark

shade

prismatic

shadow

subject

sign

symbol

static

motion

picture

framing

abstraction

juxtaposition

space

opaque

transparent

map

direction

cause and effect

materials

sculpture

image

balance

edit

portrait

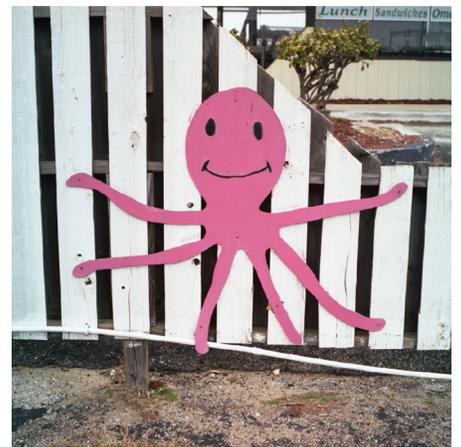
landscape

documentary

style

focus

smiley face



THIS *equals* THAT

Master Vocabulary Definitions

shape

Shape pertains to the use of areas in two-dimensional space that can be defined by edges.

visual texture

Visual texture is the illusion of having physical texture.

pattern

Pattern is a combination of qualities, acts, or tendencies, forming a characteristic arrangement.

color

Color is the element of art that is produced when light, striking an object, is reflected back to the eye. There are three properties to color: hue, intensity, and value.

line

Lines are marks that span a distance between two points. A line has a width, direction, and length.

composition

Composition is the placement or arrangement of visual elements in a work of art.

value

Value refers to the use of lightness and darkness in a piece of artwork. It is sometimes referred to as "tone."

form

Form may be described as any three-dimensional object. Form is also defined by light and dark and may be enhanced by tone, texture, and color. It can be illustrated or constructed.

flatness

"Flatness" is used when describing a surface that is without marked projections or depressions.

two-dimensional

When a shape is two-dimensional, it only has height and width, and its elements are organized in terms of a flat surface. A square is two-dimensional.

three-dimensional

When a shape is three-dimensional, it has length, width, and depth, and gives an illusion of varying distance. A cube is three-dimensional.

depth

Depth is the dimension taken through an object or body of material, usually downward from an upper surface, horizontally inward from an outer surface, or from top to bottom.

depth of field

Depth of field is the range of distances along the axis of an optical instrument, usually a camera lens, through which an object will produce a relatively distinct image.

light

Light makes things visible or affords illumination.

dark

Dark is when there is very little or no light.

shade

Shade is the comparative darkness caused by the interception or screening of rays of light from an object, place, or area.

prismatic

Prismatic means spectral in color or brilliant.

shadow

A shadow is a dark figure or image cast on the ground or some surface by a body intercepting light.

subject

The subject of an artwork is the object, scene, incident, etc., chosen by an artist for representation.

sign

A sign is a conventional or arbitrary mark, figure, or symbol used as an abbreviation for an idea.

symbol

A symbol is something used for representing something else.

static

When something is static, it means that it shows little or no change. It lacks movement, development, or vitality.

motion

Motion is the action or process of moving or changing place or position.

picture

A picture is a visual representation of a person, object, or scene, as a painting, drawing, photograph, etc.

framing

Framing, especially in the photographic arts, is primarily concerned with the position and perspective of the viewer.

abstraction

Abstraction indicates a departure from reality in depiction of imagery in art. This departure from accurate representation can be slight, partial, or complete.

juxtaposition

Juxtaposition is an act or instance of placing things close together or side by side, especially for comparison or contrast.

space

Space is concerned with the area within the moment of designated design. For a two-dimensional design, space concerns creating the illusion of a third dimension on a flat surface.

opaque

When something is opaque, it means it is not transparent or translucent, and is impenetrable to light.

transparent

Transparent means that something is sheer enough to permit light to pass through.

map

To map something is to represent or delineate as if on a map.

direction

Direction is the line along which anything lies, faces, or moves.

cause and effect

A cause and effect notes a relationship between actions or events, such that one or more are the result of the other.

materials

Materials are the substance or substances of which a thing is made or composed.

sculpture

A sculpture is a representation of a form made by carving, casting, or other shaping techniques.

image

The image is the physical likeness or representation of a person, animal, or thing, photographed, painted, sculpted, or otherwise made visible.

balance

When something is balanced, it is in a state of equalized tension and equilibrium, which may not always be calm.

edit

When you edit something, you revise and correct, or eliminate and add.

portrait

A portrait is a likeness of a person, especially of the face, as a painting, drawing, or photograph.

landscape

A landscape is a section or expanse of rural scenery, usually extensive, that can be seen from a single viewpoint.

documentary

A documentary photograph is based on or recreates an actual event, era, lifestyle, etc., that purports to be factually accurate.

style

A style is a particular kind, sort, or type that references a form, appearance, or character.

focus

The focus of an artwork is the central point, attraction, attention, or activity. Also, if an image is "in focus," it is sharp and not blurry.

smiley face

