

AESTHETIC OPERATIONS ~ Ellen Dissanayake

Attention, Intention, and Communication

- **Repetition** – *Patterns, Rhythm, Expectations*
 - Predict the Rhythm of the day, the seasons, life
 - Pay Attention to Patterns, repeated colors, lines, shapes, sensory experiences
 - Anticipate Expectations in behavior, language, song
 - The BRAIN seeks Patterns

- **Formalization** – *Balance, Space, Unity*
 - Balance in Space – the basic simplification and structure given a space
 - Overall Unity - the feeling of completeness; overall harmony

- **Dynamic Variation** – *Movement, Contrast, Variety*
 - A sense of change, growth or movement or lack of movement
 - Variety creates a dynamic tension between elements in a space. Arrangement or objects.
 - Holds our attention by contrasting specific aspects of an art element

- **Exaggeration** – *Scale, Emphasis, Proportion*
 - Makes us stop! And look again
 - Creates drama – Demands Attention
 - Requires us to experience in another way

- **Surprise** – *Manipulation of expectations, Novelty*
 - Focuses Attention within one of the other operations
 - Juxtaposes one element against another; creates wonder and curiosity
 - Promotes critical and creative thinking; Problem posing and problem solving

Aesthetic Operations Create a Sense of....

- **Mutuality:** closeness, intimacy
- **Belonging:** member of a group, identity
- **Competence:** something to do physically & psychologically
- **Meaning:** purpose and value
- **Artifying:** caring about important things; make the ordinary special

Aesthetic Operations

The word aesthetic means to awaken. An **aesthetic environment**

- awakens the senses, focuses attention, and engages learners in a perceptually rich and visually cohesive learning space
- is organized around the five aesthetic operations that create a sense of belonging, mutuality, meaning, competence, and artifying
- highlights the elements of art and principles of visual organization to communicate, inspire, and guide children's imaginations and learning

The five aesthetic operations, repetition, formalization, dynamic variation, exaggeration, and surprise are evident in our natural world and an essential aspect of our humanness (Dissanayake, 2007). These operations can be vividly seen in the interactions between infants and mothers as they engage in the physical, visual, and verbal exchange of looks, gestures, sounds, and touch. Designers, architects, graphic artists, and all other artists intentionally consider the five aesthetic operations and deliberately arrange the elements and principles of visual organization to create artistic works or aesthetic spaces.

Basic Aesthetic Characteristics

This chart shows the dynamic relationship between the five **Aesthetic Operations** and the **Elements and Principles of Visual Organization**.

	LINE	SHAPE/FORM	COLOR/VALUE	TEXTURE
REPETITION: Pattern, Rhythm, Expectations				
FORMALIZATION: Space, Balance, Overall Unity				
DYNAMIC VARIATION: Movement, Variety, Contrast				
EXAGGERATION: Emphasis, Scale, Proportion				
SURPRISE! Manipulate expectations, Novelty				

AESTHETIC OPERATION FLIP BOOK #1

The Goal is to create a two-page hinged book that documents your understanding of Aesthetic Operations in your world and in works of art.

Process:

- Create a two page hinged book
- Cover:
 - Discover pictures/photos/objects that represent each of the five Aesthetic Operations – fill the nine boxes on the cover
 - Place the Flap/Grid over the pictures
 - Title the cover and label as needed
- Text:
 - *Intentionality*: Define the 5 Aesthetic Principles in your words. What were you looking for? How do you find these principles in the world around you?
 - *Reflection*: Chose a work of Art from the Met Collection, include a photo or image and discuss how this work of art incorporates the five Aesthetic Principles