

Design for Composition: Inspiration for Creative Visual and Multimodal Projects

by Sohui Lee and Russell Carpenter

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Description of Design for Composition by Sohui Lee and Russell Carpenter

Design for Composition offers a range of creative, multimodal projects aimed at improving student proficiency and awareness of how we, as humans, create visual, verbal, vocal, and multimodal messages. With an emphasis on learning by doing, these projects give students an active introduction to modes, composition processes, and design concepts essential for twenty-first-century literacy. Design for Composition is unique in focusing on creativity as a heuristic, as a part of the composing process, and as a tool or skill that can be applied across a wide range of making. Each chapter introduces students to different multimodal projects (visual, tactile, auditory, verbal, physical/embodied, or a combination), layered with different levels of creative engagement. Design for Composition provides students with experiences in composing and communicating that are creative, fun, and relatable. Each creative project comes with its own chapter and includes samples, steps in the process, suggested tools, collaboration guidelines, context discussions, and reflection questions.

Design for Composition is printed in full color and presented on high-quality 70# acid-free paper and includes a bibliography, index, and project checklists.

Biographies of Sohui Lee and Russell Carpenter

Sohui Lee is the Associate Professor and Faculty Director of the Writing and Multiliteracy Center at California State University Channel Islands. Russell Carpenter is Assistant Provost and Professor of English at Eastern Kentucky University. Lee and Carpenter are co-editors of *The Routledge Reader on Writing Center and New Media*.

Pages from Chapter 6, “Touching Evaluation: Creativity in Clothing and Texture”

6 TACTILE EVALUATION OF CREATIVITY: EVALUATE CREATIVITY IN CLOTHING AND TEXTURE

“Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.” — Steve Jobs

SET THE SCENE

In the context of product design, texture is the feel (tactile characteristics) and look of something on its surface. These surfaces could be on everyday items that we interact with, such as pencils, cups, paper, computers, bookshelves, bags, towels, etc. We talk about texture in the way we describe the feel and look of furniture and aspects of architecture, such as glass, buildings, and floors. Visual and tactile characteristics are essential in the design of clothing fabric in particular because the look and feel of fabric varies with its various kinds of social meaning/standing in different contexts and different communities: a glossy silk evening dress is appropriate at a formal event but not for a meeting with a school administrator; a padded leather jacket and rough jeans may be appropriate for a rock concert but not for a job interview. Fabric (and clothing) sometimes carry a message about the personality of the wearer or the moment: elegant, scientific, sporty, casual, romantic, down-to-earth, fun, playful, serious, rebellious, approachable, tough, feminine, masculine, etc. In this chapter, we will explore how we might identify texture that is creative. What makes certain textures more creative than others? How does creative texture impact the social message carried in the design of clothing? We'll explore these ideas in this chapter by developing a rubric for creative use of texture.

CONNECT TO CREATIVITY

Chapter 6 asks you to investigate the connection between visual and tactile textures and how they communicate creatively. The goal of this lesson is to understand strategies for evaluating creative use of texture and what the creative use of texture communicates. This chapter shows you to evaluate creativity in the design of fabric, as well as in the wearer's gaze in two parts. In part one, you will generate a rubric. In part two, you will apply it to a specific item of clothing that you think is “creative” (See *Learn More*).

This chapter exercises your creative skills in the following ways:

- Learn about basic categories of visual and tactile texture in fabric.
- Explore how visual and tactile textures may communicate.
- Generate a rubric of the creative use of texture.
- Apply the rubric to a creative item of clothing.

LEVEL UP

Learn More

As you explore texture in fabrics and items you encounter in your daily life, you'll find a variety of tools available for you to archive what you find. In addition, you'll find a variety of items that will help you think in different ways about texture. For example, try “What is Fabric? Texture and Why Should I Care?” <https://bit.ly/designforcomposition1>.

Basic Categories for Textures

Visual Textures: There are four basic visual motifs or units of textile design.

1. **Geometric Motifs:** Patterns in geometric shapes
2. **Realistic Motifs:** Patterns of natural or man-made objects
3. **Stylized Motifs:** Patterns of natural or man-made objects that are too recognizable
4. **Abstract Motifs:** Patterns of color, shape, or size that are not connected to natural or man-made objects

Tactile Textures: As sound carries, waves of fabric, and its texture impact how the cloth feels against your skin as well as how it looks. Silk fabric is a good example of fabric that is often selected in clothing for several reasons, particularly because it has a distinctive feel and look: fine silk weaves have a soft, smooth, glossy texture but it is also light. Basic types of how we feel fabric may fall under these three areas:

1. **Surface Textures:** Smooth/flexible to rough/fold (includes woolly, fuzzy, bumpy)
2. **Pressure Textures:** Softness (includes flexible) to hardness (includes plasticity)
3. **Weight Textures:** Lightness to heaviness

Directions for Brainstorming

1. Brainstorm attributes of the “creative” use of texture in fabric in the two categories (visual and tactile) in small groups or teams.
2. Share the results as classmate or group members.
3. Decide what attributes are most prominent and provide a rationale.
4. Organize attributes and be prepared to use them for part two.

Example Rubric: Visual Textures

Visual Texture	What attributes are common to really creative uses of visual texture? When considering general creative attributes of visual texture, review the list of basic visual texture types and think about creative visual textures that you've seen.
Ex.	What makes visual textures stand out or look unique? How does it draw your attention? Is how it is graphically applied on the clothing (location, size, proportion, color, etc.)? After identifying the attribute, provide a brief rationale and example.

Example Rubric: Tactile Texture

Tactile Texture	What attributes are common to creative tactile textures (surface, touch, weight)? When considering general creative attributes of tactile texture, review the list of basic tactile texture types.
Ex.	What makes certain tactile attributes unique or memorable on clothing? Identify in the fabric below creative attributes of the tactile texture types, along with a brief rationale and example.

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