

FORM

ONE OF THE SEVEN ELEMENTS OF ART

In art, form often refers to a three-dimensional object, such as a sculpture.

Forms can be **GEOMETRIC** or **ORGANIC**:



GEOMETRIC FORMS

are precise shapes that have names such as Sphere, Cube, Pyramid or Cone.



ORGANIC FORMS

are free-flowing, curvy, or sinewy shapes that may remind you of shapes in nature such as flowers, branches, puddles, clouds, animals, people, etc.

WHAT CAN YOU SPOT?

In this worksheet you are going to explore 3D forms by looking at sculptures created with materials such as plastic, metal and stone. Take your time to examine the photographs and look at how the artists use different materials, shapes, space (negative and positive), and light (including highlights and shadows), to influence how you feel when you look at their sculptures.

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What do you see when you compare the two artworks on this page? What do the shapes remind you of?

Which sculpture feels “lighter” and which one feels “heavier”? Why do you think that is?

Some artists use light and gravity to help you understand their forms.

In the sculpture made of metal (top), do you see how one form is balancing on the other and how its lines look like it is flowing through space? The artist used organic forms with balance and line to make this sculpture feel lighter.

In the sculpture made of plastic on the right, do you see how the cubes are packed closely together and stacked? This artist used dense, geometric forms (cubes) to make this sculpture feel heavier.



Alexander Calder, *Snake on Arch*, 1944.
Cast bronze, Collection Friends of the Neuberger Museum of Art,
Purchase College, State University of New York,
Gift from the Estate of Roy R. Neuberger, EL 02.2011.19.



Louise Nevelson, *Transparent Sculpture VII*, 1967-68.
Plexiglas, 4 from an edition of 6, Collection Neuberger Museum of Art,
Purchase College, State University of New York,
Gift of Roy R. Neuberger, 1993.05.09.

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As you look at the sculptures on this page, let's continue thinking about their visual weight.

Which of the sculptures appear to be heavy, dense and solid? These are called **closed-form sculptures**. And which do you think are more light, fluid and dynamic? These are called **open-form sculptures**.

Now, trace the edge of the sculpture with your eyes. Explore the space inside and around the artwork. What shapes do you see? The sculpture itself is **positive space** while the space around the sculpture is **negative space**.

Artists use negative and positive space to help us understand their form and its weight.



Andy Goldsworthy, *East Coast Cairn*, 2001, from the Three Cairns Project 2001-03. Limestone, Collection Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York, Museum purchase with funds from the Roy R. Neuberger Endowment Fund, the Klein Family Foundation, Sherry and Joel Mallin, Douglas F. Maxwell and other private donations. EL 04.2001.01



Henry Moore, *Two Large Forms*, 1966-1969. Bronze, From an edition of 4, Collection Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York, Gift of the artist and Marie S. and Roy R. Neuberger, 1974.38.01.



David Smith, *Billiard Player III*, 1945. Welded, painted, and patinated steel, Collection Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York, Gift of Roy R. Neuberger, 1974.22.16.

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WORD SEARCH

Look up and down and across to find these 22 words about FORM:

Closed
Cone
Contour
Cube
Curvy
Cylinder

Flowing
Form
Geometric
Height
Length
Light

Open
Organic
Pyramid
Shadow
Sinewy
Sphere

Three-Dimensional
Value
Volume
Width

E	E	T	F	O	R	M	Q	M	Q	N	C	U	L	K	F	L
F	S	H	Q	A	S	D	B	W	L	Y	R	C	U	B	Z	T
Q	K	E	C	V	A	L	U	E	V	Y	H	O	W	P	S	H
M	G	G	L	V	O	L	U	M	E	C	G	N	I	G	D	R
C	T	A	O	O	Z	S	D	R	V	U	Y	E	D	L	T	E
L	Q	J	C	R	Y	X	B	T	G	B	G	S	T	R	O	E
O	D	U	Y	G	E	D	V	V	E	E	Q	F	H	Y	P	D
S	U	B	L	A	E	H	J	P	Y	R	A	M	I	D	E	I
E	D	I	I	N	G	E	O	M	E	T	R	I	C	W	N	M
D	P	O	N	I	D	G	C	O	N	T	O	U	R	C	Z	E
O	D	M	D	C	R	E	Y	W	U	Y	B	W	N	T	C	N
Y	Y	O	E	C	H	E	I	G	H	T	H	O	M	M	U	S
L	M	R	R	E	S	L	E	N	G	T	H	V	L	S	R	I
I	D	P	O	S	P	H	E	R	E	U	C	W	Z	O	V	O
G	H	H	M	M	J	H	I	X	S	I	N	E	W	Y	Y	N
H	J	I	C	R	O	E	Y	R	F	L	O	W	I	N	G	A
T	T	C	Z	X	J	D	R	S	H	A	D	O	W	T	P	L



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WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to unscramble these 22 words about FORM:

1. TIGHHE _____
2. SEHEPR _____
3. REIMGETOC _____
4. CIDYNERL _____
5. NLWFIOG _____
6. OCRTOUN _____
7. ENCO _____
8. TMRLOAIEISEHNEDN- _____
9. RUYCV _____
10. IDWTH _____
11. CUBE _____
12. NEPO _____
13. HDWSOA _____
14. INOACGR _____
15. PMAIDRY _____
16. MFOR _____
17. SECODL _____
18. AVUEL _____
19. ELHTGN _____
20. LTGIH _____
21. LUV OEM _____
22. SNIWYE _____

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CROSSWORD

Across

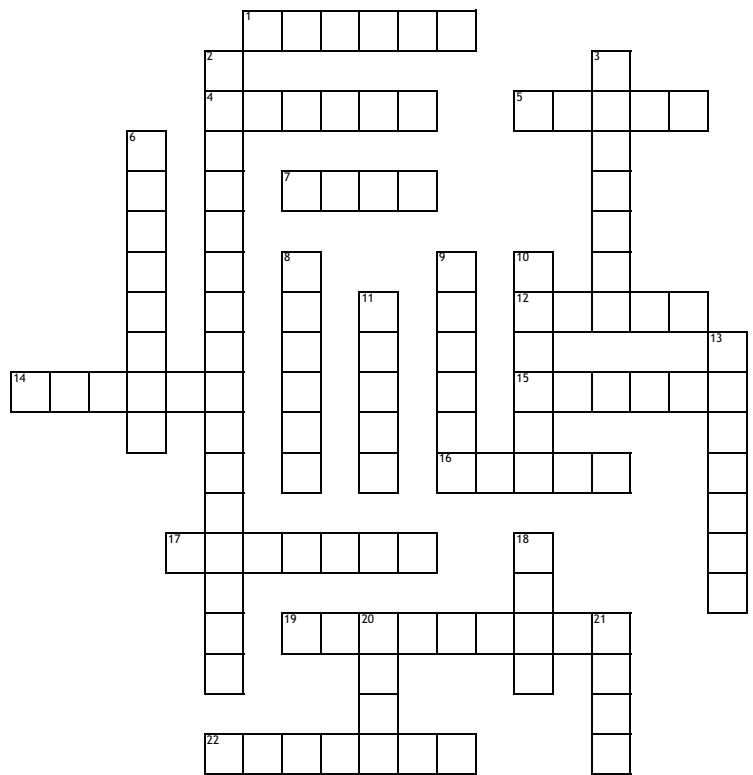
1. the measure from one end to the other
4. distance upward from a given level to a fixed point
5. the visible lightness or darkness of a color
7. six equal square faces or sides
12. illuminate
14. a round solid figure
15. pertaining to or due to physical strength
16. the measurement of something from side to side
17. line which defines a form or an edge
19. shapes made out of points and lines
22. derived from living matter

Down

2. having or appearing to have length, breadth, and depth (two words)
3. moving smoothly and continuously in or as if in a stream
6. a three dimensional shape with two round shapes at either end and two parallel lines connecting the round ends
8. the amount of space that a substance or object occupies
9. dark area or shape produced by a body coming between rays of light and a surface
10. not open
11. A line that deviates from straightness in a smooth, continuous fashion
13. structure with a square or triangular base and sloping sides that meet in a point at the top
18. the element of art most closely tied to sculpture
20. allowing access
21. three dimensional shape with a flat base and a tapered top

Word Bank

Closed	Flowing	Open	Three-
Cone	Form	Organic	Dimensional
Contour	Geometric	Pyramid	Value
Cube	Height	Shadow	Volume
Curvy	Length	Sinewy	Width
Cylinder	Light	Sphere	



Answer Key: 1. Length; 2. Three-Dimensional; 3. Flowing; 4. Height; 5. Value; 6. Cylinder; 7. Cube; 8. Volume; 9. Shadow; 10. Closed; 11. Curvy; 12. Light; 13. Pyramid; 14. Sphere; 15. Sinewy; 16. Width; 17. Contour; 18. Form; 19. Geometric; 20. Open; 21. Cone; 22. Organic