

WORD PLAY

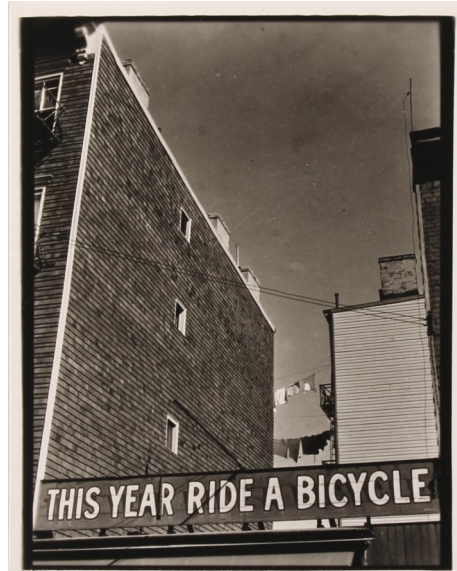
Welcome to the activity workbook for *Word Play*!

In this packet you will find:

- Introduction to the themes present in the exhibition, *Word Play*
- Examples of works in the exhibition
- Collage activity (materials needed: magazines/newspapers/printed materials, blank paper, scissors, and glue or tape)
- Concrete poem activity (materials needed: paper and pencil; optional: colored pencils, sidewalk chalk)
- Typeface activity (materials needed: paper and pencil; optional: colored pencils)
- Information on how to share your creations with us at the Museum (and on social media)

Words and pictures have a long history of playing well together, sometimes reinforcing and sometimes contradicting each other. This exhibition of more than forty works of art in a variety of mediums features images by artists who incorporate letters, words, and phrases into their visual creations.

Among the delights of the exhibition are photographs inspired by the words in our everyday environment, such as shop signs, graffiti, and advertising by photographers including Van Deren Coke, Miguel Gandert, and Walker Evans.



Ralph Steiner, *This Year Ride a Bicycle* (from *Twenty-two Little Contact Prints from 1921-1929 Negatives*), 1924 (printed 1980), Gelatin silver print, 3 15/16 x 3 1/8 in. New Mexico Museum of Art. Gift of Willard Van Dyke, 1985 (1985.5222.19) © William Alan Oram. Photo by Blair Clark.



Betty Hahn, *Let Me Explain*, 1998, Five-color lithograph with photocopy, photo transfer and chine collé, New Mexico Museum of Art. Gift of Betty Hahn, 2010 (2010.24.1) © Betty Hahn. Photo by Cameron Gay.

Comics and cartoons offer another familiar model for joining words with images, as seen in prints by Betty Hahn, Jason Knapp, and Joyce Neimanas.

In other cases, words and images work together in service of a social or political message, seen in pieces by Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, David Sloan, and May Stevens.



David-Alexander Hubbard Sloan, *Tsísnálbáhi (Honey Bee)*, 2013, Monoprint, 19 x 14 in. Courtesy of the artist. ©David-Alexander Hubbard Sloan.



Kenneth Chapman, *Portrait*, ca. 1924, Collage with paint. New Mexico Museum of Art. Gift of Dr. Kenneth M. Chapman, 1965 (1897B.23P). Photo by Cameron Gay

Notes, handwritten letters, and poems also make an appearance, incorporated into compositions by Meridel Rubenstein, Alex Traube, and others.

These whimsical, poignant, and sometimes cryptic compositions inspired a number of activities for this workbook. Each one explores the use of words and text and can be done with minimal supplies at home!

Collage Activity

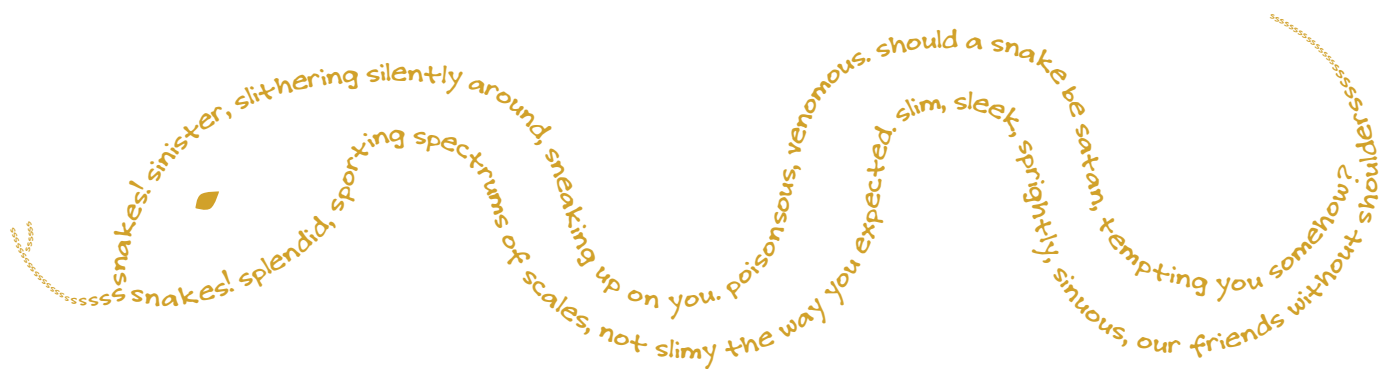
A collage is a piece of art made by sticking various different materials such as newspaper clippings, photographs, dried flowers, and pieces of paper or fabric onto a backing (such as printer paper or poster board).

Explore the variety of typefaces in your everyday life! Try looking through magazines, newspapers, or mail advertisements for examples of different ways text is used. With permission, cut out images that inspire you and tape or glue them on to a blank piece of paper (if you don't have scissors, you can also tear images out).

What draws you to these examples? How would you describe the letters (elegant, blocky, subtle, bold, sharp, and/or rounded). In a later activity, you will get the chance to dive deeper into the parts of letters!

Create a concrete poem

Concrete poetry, also called “shape poetry,” is poetry whose visual look matches the subject of the poem. The words form shapes that illustrate the poem’s subject or literal meaning as a picture, like the example below:



Try making a concrete poem of your own!

- 1 Choose your subject.
- 2 Make a simple line drawing of its shape to illustrate the subject.
- 3 Write a poem 2–6 lines long using words that describe the subject. It doesn't have to rhyme!
- 4 Lightly write the lines of your poem along the lines of your drawing. Remember that we normally read from left to right and from top to bottom. If you don't have enough words, or have some left over, don't worry. Decide where you need to make your writing bigger or smaller to make it all fit, then erase and fit the words in until you are happy with the concrete poem.
- 5 Erase the line drawing so that the words from your poem create the image. Use colored pencils to complete the image, if you'd like.

When you're done, take it with you, or pin it up for others to enjoy, or take a photo and share it on social media!

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What's your type?

Typeface refers to the design or shape of a group of letters. Each typeface can be changed by using a font, for example by making the letters **bold** or *italicized*. Often, the words typeface and font are used interchangeably.

Typefaces can have an important impact on how words are understood. For example, if you were to read a sign that said:

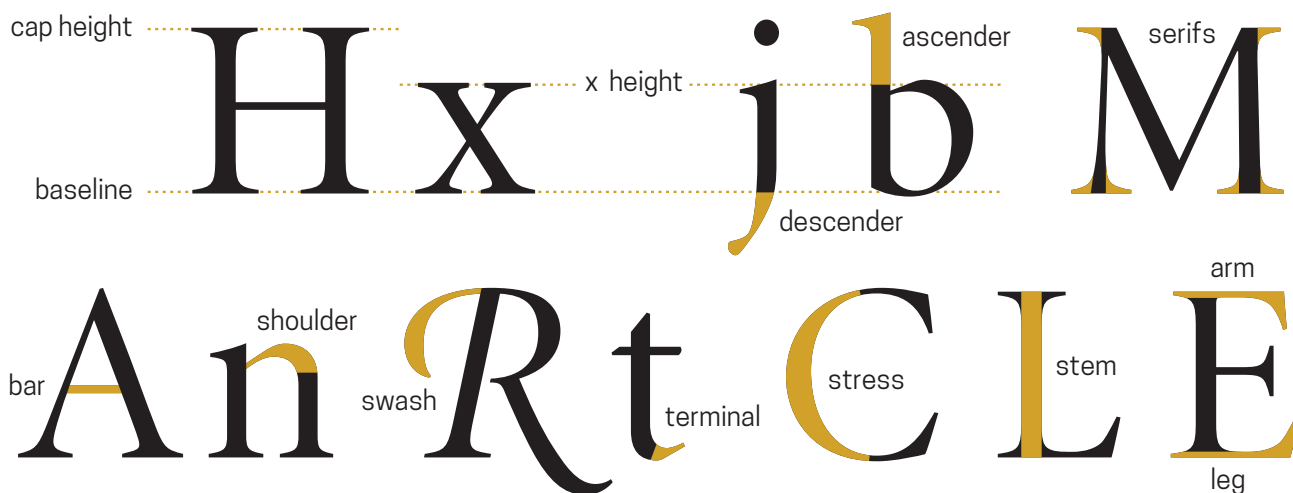
Welcome to the Museum of Art

it would likely bring to mind a different kind of museum than:

WELCOME TO THE MUSEUM OF ART

In calligraphy, the different parts of each letter are designed and drawn by hand. Did you know that there are names for the different parts of letters?

Check out some of these parts below:



Keeping these parts in mind, try creating a typeface that reflects you!

When you're done, take it with you, or pin it up for others to enjoy, or take a photo and share it on social media!

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