Formal Elements
Line
Learning Objective
- To develop an understanding of line and how it is used within art.

Success Criteria
- To be able to define different types of line.
- To apply this knowledge to experiment with different types of line.
- To identify different types of line in the work of others.
What types of line do you see in this image?

Think about length, width, distance and direction of the lines you see.

Vincent van Gogh
‘View from the Wheatfields’
1888
What types of line do you see in this image?

- Thin
- Thick
- Straight
- Curved
- Long
- Short
- Vertical
- Horizontal
- Diagonal
- Cross hatching
- Dotted lines
- Spirals
What is Line?

A line is a connection between two points.

Line is one of the most important elements of art. Imagine trying to draw, design or paint without using lines!

Line is essential to the creative process, it can communicate a thought, an idea and even a feeling.

- A line can vary in width, length and direction.
- Lines can also be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, straight, curved, thick or thin.
- Line is used to sketch, draw and outline, they help you develop the composition of your artwork.
How is line used in art?

Line forms the basis of any good piece of artwork. Here is an example of an artist using contour lines.

Contour lines are the outlines of an object, shape or form.

Contour drawing is a technique where the artists sketches the outline of a subject.

Contour drawing focuses on the shape of the subject and the artist is not concerned with detail.

The French word ‘contour’ means outline.

Egon Schiele – ‘Franz Hauer’ - 1914
Expressive Line

Line can be used to show expression or feeling. A short, thick, straight line conveys a different feeling or emotion to one that is long, thin and swirly.

Line can also demonstrate movement within a piece of artwork, showing the flow of a fabric, or the speed of a bird in flight.

Vincent Van Gogh
‘The Starry Night’
1889
3-Dimensional Line

Line can give an object the appearance of it being 3-dimensional. Using techniques such as cross hatching, shading and blending, line can make an object appear realistic, as in Herbert Railton's drawing.

Herbert Railton
‘Wrought Iron Gates, Gray’s Inn’
1895
What are the different types of line?

You will be provided with the **Formal Elements Line Mark Making** activity sheet.

Your first activity is to experiment and test a variety of mark making using pencil.

Equipment you will need for this task:
- HB pencil
- Rubber
- Sharpener
- Ruler
- Worksheet
- Can-do attitude!

**Key Terms**
- Horizontal, vertical, diagonal, 3-dimensional, contour lines, continuous, expressive line.
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What have you learnt today?

1. Line is a connection ________________________.

2. Name five different types of line you have used.

3. Where and when is line used when creating a piece of artwork?

4. What are contour lines?

5. What is expressive line?

6. How is 3-dimensional line used when drawing?

7. What do you think the next drawing task will be?

Pause for Thought
You now need to think back to what you have learnt and the task you have completed today.