

PART II KEY CONCEPTS, ACTIVITIES, AND TESTS

This part of the manual suggests relevant classroom activities, demonstrations, and discussion themes and includes quizzes for each *Sight Sound Motion* chapter:

- Key concepts
- Suggested activities and exercises
- ZVL 4.0
- Essay/discussion questions
- Multiple-choice questions
- True/false quizzes

CHAPTER 1 APPLIED MEDIA AESTHETICS

KEY CONCEPTS

Applied media aesthetics examines the aesthetic characteristics and potentials of the four fundamental image elements: (1) light and color, (2) space, (3) time/motion, and (4) sound. These elements are discussed in the context of the five principal and interrelated aesthetic fields: (1) light and color; (2) two-dimensional space—area; (3) three-dimensional space—depth and volume, including 3D; (4) the four-dimensional field—time and motion; and (5) the five-dimensional field—sound. The key to the field concept is that all five fields usually interrelate in one way or other to create meaning and the intended emotional effect. To achieve these objectives, the basic aesthetic elements are structured for the clarification, intensification, and interpretation of events for a specific audience.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISES

1. For basic orientation tell students that the purpose of media aesthetics is not only to discover through careful analysis the aesthetic elements in various video and film presentations but also, if not especially, to discover how they can be used in production. Explain that the term *aesthetics* is not used here in the traditional way, which generally refers to the theory of art or the argument of whether something is beautiful. In applied media aesthetics, we are interested primarily in identifying the fundamental image elements and how they can be used for optimal communication through audiovisual media, such as video (including various forms of television), film, and computer-generated images.
2. To demonstrate that some of our basic perceptual processes are hardwired and that they are relatively independent of environmental or cultural differences, show a series of traditional visual illusions (any text on perception psychology has them).
3. Demonstrate how context can influence perception. Find examples that are similar to the “B and 13” context as explained on pages 8 and 9 of the text. You could play a scene and repeat it with different background music. Or show a relatively neutral scene (two people talking to each other) without audio: The first time tell students that the people are arguing and have students identify the visual clues that would point to the argument context. Then play the scene again with the stated context that they are discussing their daughter’s success on the swim team. What visual clues would students now see to reinforce the new context?

4. Play a short video piece (a television commercial or a scene from a crime drama) or a scene from a well-known motion picture and have students identify as many aesthetic elements and processes as possible. Commercials and action movie scenes are especially good because they pack a great amount of aesthetic variables into a relatively short period.
5. Ask students to comment on the relative effectiveness of the aesthetic elements and why they think those particular elements were selected. Ask them what aesthetic elements or processes they would change to increase the communication effectiveness.
6. Compare the vulnerability of an anesthetized patient with that of an aesthetically illiterate video or film viewer. Ask students to suggest specific examples of how audience perceptions and emotions may be manipulated and have them discuss the producer's ethical responsibility in such instances.

ZVL 4.0

Tell students how they can use *Zettl's VideoLab 4.0* DVD-ROM (ZVL) for reviewing basic production techniques and for specific applications of aesthetic image elements and processes. Have students: (1) set up a profile, (2) create a folder per the on-screen instructions, and (3) e-mail the results to you. They will be prompted by the on-screen instructions.

To organize and review the results from students, use the Administrator application in the Admin Tool folder on the ZVL disc. If you have any questions, contact the Cengage technology support group at (800) 354-9706.

ESSAY/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the major differences between traditional aesthetics and applied media aesthetics?
2. If as individuals we look at the world in different ways (depending on personal experience, biases, or preconceptions), to what degree, if at all, can aesthetic responses be predicted?
3. What are some of the ways in which context changes our perception of a specific event? Good examples are various music tracks or lighting for the same event.
4. What are the differences between a deductive methodological approach (analysis) and an inductive approach (synthesis) as used in the text? What are the advantages and the disadvantages of each?
5. Because we are engaged in learning how to manipulate viewers' perceptions, what are the necessary ethical components in the study and the application of media aesthetics?

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Note: The left-hand column of page numbers and arrows (such as p. 4→) points to the correct answers and indicates where the relevant discussion first appears in *Sight Sound Motion*. You can cover these answers with a strip of paper or a sticky note when copying the questions for the exam.

- p. 4→
1. Which one of the following statements helps describe the functions of applied media aesthetics?
 - a. it is used for analysis but not synthesis
 - b. it deals primarily with the theory of beauty
 - c. it can be used for analysis and synthesis
 - d. art is the exclusive province of painting, music, and dance
 - e. its theories minimize the influence of the medium on the message
 2. In the context of applied media aesthetics, how do we distinguish between ordinary life experiences and art?
 - a. by clarifying, intensifying, and interpreting the event for a specific audience
 - b. by featuring famous artists
 - c. by producing shows that deal with the traditional fine arts
 - d. by visiting art galleries and music, dance, and theater performances
 - e. by admitting that the media simply cannot produce art
 3. Which describes most accurately the process of selective seeing?
 - a. peripheral vision
 - b. careful observation
 - c. what the camera lens sees
 - d. selective exposure to meaningful information
 - e. selecting specific programs for a target audience
 4. Does the medium influence the shaping of the message?
 - a. not at all
 - b. yes, to a great extent
 - c. only if the message content is compatible with the medium
 - d. it depends on the target audience
 - e. it depends on the communication objective
 5. Which statement best expresses the influence of context on perception?
 - a. context has no influence
 - b. context can have an influence only if it is compatible with our expectations
 - c. context can have an influence only if it is incompatible with our expectations
 - d. context matters only if it intensifies the message
 - e. context will always have some influence on our perceptions
 6. Which best describes the inductive method used in applied media aesthetics?
 - a. it examines the individual image elements of film and video
 - b. it analyzes various scenes from films and video programs
 - c. it analyzes media programs as text
 - d. it examines the underlying meaning of the text
 - e. it probes the message design
- p. 12→

- p. 6→
7. Which is one of the key principles of perception?
 - a. we automatically reduce the stimuli to stabilize the environment
 - b. each stimulus produces its own unique effect
 - c. we respond consciously to each stimulus our senses perceive
 - d. we select each sense impression by its intensity
 - e. we select and label each sense impression separately
 8. Is there any connection between applied media aesthetics and ethics?
 - a. only if the message content deals with controversial issues
 - b. no, because aesthetics and ethics are two distinct and separate humanistic disciplines
 - c. only if the message content deals with ethical issues
 - d. yes, every aesthetic decision must be made in an ethical context
 - e. yes, because you may have to justify your use of aesthetic manipulation in court
- p. 14→

TRUE/FALSE QUIZ

	T	F	
T	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Contextual media aesthetics stresses an intimate and purposeful relationship between art and life.
F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Aesthetic choices are largely the province of artists, not ordinary people.
F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Because media aesthetics is an artistic endeavor, we can ignore the prevailing ethical principles.
T	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. It is possible to manipulate a viewer's perception by precise, calculated applications of aesthetic principles.
T	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. The medium has a great influence on how the various aesthetic elements must be structured.
F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. As used in <i>Sight Sound Motion</i> , applied aesthetics means discussing the various theories of art.
T	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. One of the basic perceptual mechanisms is designed to stabilize the environment.
F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Because the aesthetic elements are fairly universal, we perceive them in the same way regardless of context.
T	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Selective seeing means that we tend to expose ourselves primarily to images that are in agreement with our existing views.
F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Order and complexity are polar opposites and cannot be used in the same message.