

## Clues to Looking at Art

### Still life:

A **still life** (plural **still lifes**) is a work of art depicting mostly inanimate subject matter, typically commonplace objects which may be either natural (food, flowers, plants, rocks, or shells) or man-made (drinking or reading glasses, books, vases, jewelry, coins, pipes, etc.) in an artificial setting, such as a tabletop.

Still life works of art can be grouped together by:

Objects from nature (food, flowers, plants, rocks, shells, etc.)

Objects man-made (drinking or reading glasses, books, vases, jewelry, coins, pipes, etc.)

Can you find other groupings?

### Clues:

Clues in some still lifes make the food look especially real and inviting. Texture (how things feel) and color are important clues.

### How the artist puts the picture together:

The arrangement of shapes, lines, and colors in a painting is called the composition. Artists often arrange the colors, shapes, and lines to move your eye around the work of art.

### Activity:

Select 2 still lifes. Using these works, answer the following:

1. Compare and contrast how the 2 works depict still life objects.
2. Do both works have a similar mood?
3. Are the works from the same time period?
4. Does this influence the overall look and feel of the still lifes?

After answering these questions, what similar questions come to mind that can be answered by works in this category?