Terms for Multimodal Composing

*Relationships between Modes by Karen Schriver*

**Redundant**
Visual and verbal modes tell the same story, “providing a repetition of key ideas.”

**Complementary**
Content is different across two or more modes and both modes are needed for understanding.

**Supplementary**
Content is different in written and visual modes, but one mode dominates the other, “providing the main ideas, while the other reinforces, elaborates, or explains how to interpret the other.”

**Juxtapositional**
Key ideas are created by a “clash” in different content of words and visuals. Both modes must be viewed simultaneously for meaning to be achieved.

**Stage-setting**
Content is different in verbal and visual modes and one mode “forecasts” the other mode’s content, theme, etc.

*Principles of Design: Robin Williams; The Non-Designer’s Design Book*

**Contrast**
“Difference created between elements to emphasize their difference; elements must be made quite different or else the elements simply conflict one another” (63).

**Repetition**
“How consistently elements (e.g. typeface, color, pattern, transition) are used; repetition unifies” (49).

**Alignment**
“How elements line up on a page; “every item should have a visual connection with something else on the page” (31).

**Proximity**
How close elements are on a page—related items should be close; unrelated should not be. (15-17).

*Visual Assessment Criteria: Cynthia Selfe*

**Visual Impact**
overall visual effect on an audience

**Visual coherence**
“the extent to which visual compositions are tied together”

**Visual salience**
prominence of an element within a composition—“salient elements catch viewers’ eye”

**Visual organization**
“pattern of arrangement” that allows for visual organization throughout a composition
More Multimodal Terms from Selfe’s book:

**Affordances**: “The particular representational capabilities associated with a modality of composing” (193).

**Alphabetic compositions**: Compositions which rely on words for the majority of information presentation (193).

**Fade in/Fade out**: Beginning an audio segment by building sound or ending a segment by gradually disappearing (196).

**Modalities**: “Visual, audio, gestural, spatial, or linguistic means of creating meaning” (195).

**Transitions**: “The way in which videographers join or combine two sequences or elements within a video” (201).

**Title Screen**: “A screen that uses alphabetic text to convey information about the video” (202).

Composing choices you may want to consider:

- typeface
- lines, shapes, etc.
- background
- line spacing
- margins
- layout
- color
- transition
- type of text
- media choices
- mode choices
- size of page
- line length
- navigation

Problematic Composing Choices:

- clip art
- multiple transitions
- word art
- busy pages/screens
- too little per page
- poor quality images/video/audio
- default composing (i.e. complete use of templates in powerpoint, etc.)
- extraneous aspects that inhibit reading or navigation
- center aligning everything
- double-spacing; long-line length