

Zara's Pattern Playground: Exploring Geometric and Organic Designs

Learning objective: To identify, compare, and create repeating patterns, understanding the difference between geometric and organic shapes in visual art.

Zara the Zebra sees patterns everywhere, from the stripes on her coat to the petals on a flower. Look at the characteristics of the patterns provided below. For each item, classify the pattern as 'Geometric' (made of precise shapes like triangles, squares, or circles) or 'Organic' (made of free-flowing, natural shapes like leaves, swirls, or blobs). Then, explain why you chose that classification.

Word bank: Geometric · Organic · Symmetrical · Asymmetrical · Repeating · Tessellation · Motif · Contrast

1. 1. A pattern made of repeating equilateral triangles and hexagons covering a flat surface. Is this Geometric or Organic? Justify your choice. (2 marks)

2. 2. A pattern featuring winding vine stalks and randomly sized leaf shapes. Is this Geometric or Organic? Explain your reasoning. (2 marks)

3. 3. Compare and contrast a grid-based pattern with a paisley (swirl) pattern. Which elements make them different? (2 marks)

4. 4. Justify why a pattern made from squares that perfectly fit together without gaps is often used in architecture. (2 marks)

5. 5. What might happen if you tried to create a perfect tessellation using only irregular, blob-like organic shapes? Explain the difficulty. (2 marks)

6. 6. Look at the stripes on a zebra. Are they geometric or organic? Explain why they might be considered both. (2 marks)

Draw: Using a ruler for precision and a soft pencil for curves, create a 'Contrast Tile'. Divide your square page into two halves. In the left half, draw a strict Geometric pattern using repeating squares and diamonds. In the right half, draw an Organic pattern inspired by nature, such as flowing water or clouds. Ensure your two patterns meet in the middle to create a striking contrast.



Extension challenge: Design a 'Pattern Repeat' that Zara could use for a new fabric. Your design must use at least two different 'motifs'. Write a short paragraph explaining how you used the principle of 'repetition' to create visual rhythm, and predict how the pattern would look if you changed the colours to have high contrast.