

Design Principles: Layout, Hierarchy, Whitespace

60 minutes

ICT Specialism 1: Word processing

Outcome M1.U3.4

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Learn four essential design principles to make your documents look clear and professional. Fix a sample community notice using Contrast, Repetition, Alignment and Proximity, then redesign one of your own portfolio documents for better readability.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
M1.U3.4	Apply design principles in the development and presentation of documents in line with best practice.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Apply Contrast, Repetition, Alignment, and Proximity (CRAP) to a document
- Improve visual hierarchy and whitespace for a professional feel
- Revise one existing portfolio document using design principles

BEFORE THE BELL

- Write the four CRAP principles on the board ready for the introduction.
- Pre-place the messy sm1_crap_demo.docx, with the six cramped lines already typed, in each student's sm1/01_drafts folder or in a shared class location they can open. The six lines are listed in the notes on the introduction step, and this same file is what you project as the messy example.
- Have a cleaner version of the same notice ready to show beside it if you have one, so the class can see the before and after together.
- Know what to do for a student with no finished document of their own: they personalise sm1_crap_demo.docx and still produce sm1_doc5_crap_applied.
- Pre-place messy sm1_crap_demo.docx in sm1/01_drafts for the class. Have one messy sample flyer ready on the classroom screen (side by side with a cleaned version if you have one). Students need Project_Portfolio open; ideally at least one finished one-page SM1 document to redesign, plus the fallback path using today's demo.
- Project a messy one-page flyer beside a cleaned version if you have one. No extra printouts required.
- Pre-place messy sm1_crap_demo.docx in Project_Portfolio/09_specialism/sm1/01_drafts. Students need Word Online or Google Docs. Optional: one denser sample (newsletter or letter) ready to flash CRAP on before independent practice.
- No prep needed beyond circulating during the step-by-step.
- Students need either an existing simple SM1 portfolio document to copy or the fallback sm1_crap_demo.docx from this lesson. Spot-check that copies land in sm1/03_finished as sm1_doc5_crap_applied.
- Quick filename check on a sample of machines before the end of class.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

5 min	introduction	Introduction
6 min	content	Key concepts
15 min	activity	Step-by-step task
4 min	content	Common issues
20 min	activity	Independent practice
5 min	content	Reflection
5 min	summary	Lesson summary

TEACHING MOVES

- Demonstrate Contrast and Proximity on screen before students begin, and pause them mid-task to show Align left and one paragraph-spacing control.
- Show one denser layout, a newsletter or a letter, for a moment before independent practice so students see the four moves transfer, while still steering their own choice to a one-page notice or short letter.
- Circulate during independent practice to confirm students are editing a copy and that the finished file is named sm1_doc5_crap_applied in sm1/03_finished.
- Use whole-class discussion to review the reflection questions at the end.
- Model restraint by limiting fonts and colours in your own examples; colour accent and PDF evidence are for students who finish early.
- This is the first full teach of CRAP for documents, so take the time to get the four names secure here.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students overuse fonts and colours: limit to two fonts and one accent colour.
- Double Enter for spacing: demonstrate Home-ribbon paragraph spacing instead.
- Scattered contact details: group related items using proximity.
- Overwriting the only copy of an earlier piece of work: insist on Make a copy or Copy to first.
- Choosing a dense table or merge letter as the main file: steer back to notice or short letter shape.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Use the model section wording and size-14 bold headings instead of Styles.
- Support: Redesign of sm1_crap_demo.docx for anyone with no earlier document of their own.
- Support: If time is tight, accept a stronger title, matching headings, and one tight contact block as a valid partial pass.
- Extension: Apply CRAP to a second simple document or add a restrained accent colour on the title only.
- Support: Pair students needing extra help with a peer for the redesign.