BASIC VISUAL DESIGN

Use these four basic principles of visual design to guide your design choices:

Contrast
Repetition
Alignment
Proximity

CONTRAST Make your text and images stand out from the background by choosing contrasting colours. You can also use fonts, formatting, and colour to create contrast between items on your slide or poster.
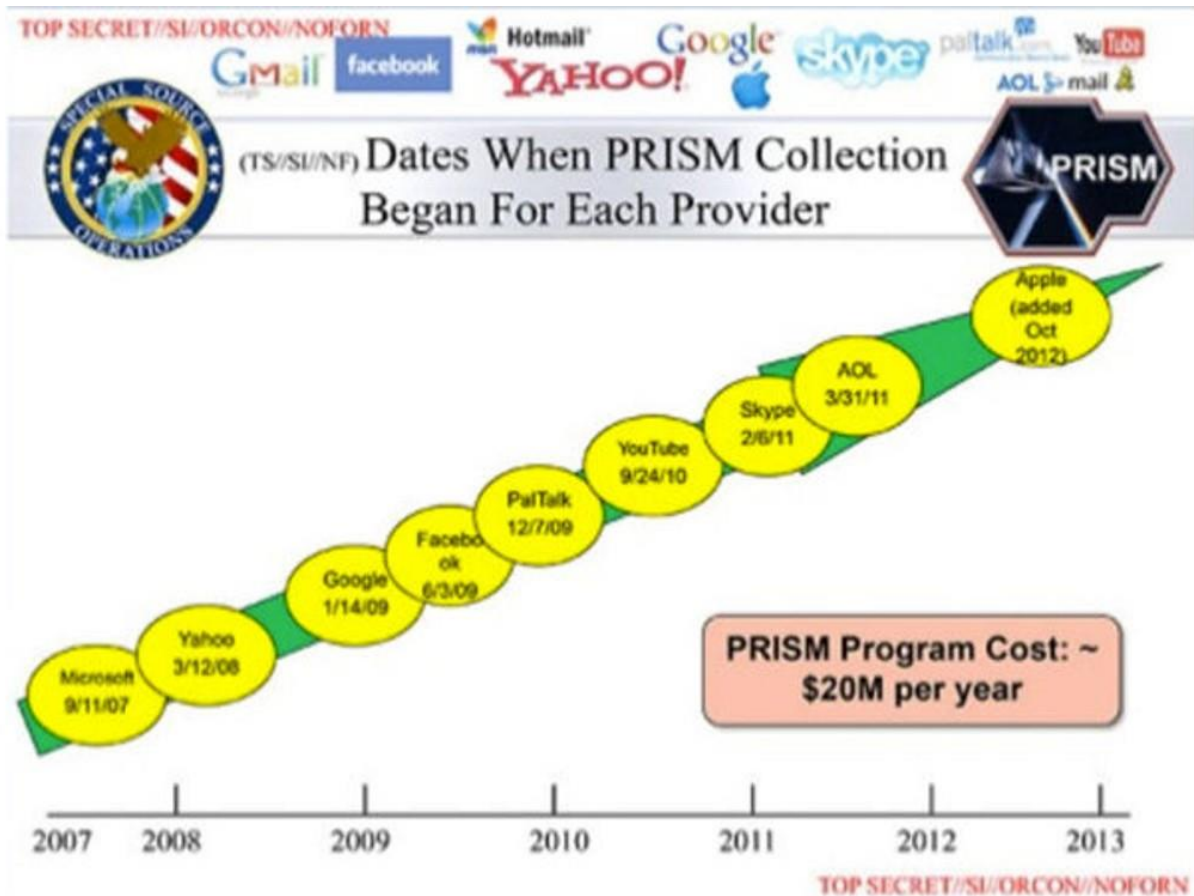
REPETITION Set up a pattern of colour, layout, style, and tone so that your audience can quickly identify how to read your visuals. You can also break that pattern (once!) to create a moment of surprise.

ALIGNMENT Create a logical flow between items on your slide or poster by paying attention to where they are on the page. English readers look at the top-left first and tend to skip or ignore the bottom-right.

PROXIMITY Help your audience understand how to interpret your visuals by grouping like items together and creating distance between separate objects.

writing *and Communication* centre

UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Activity: Assess these bad slides according to the CRAP principles.

SLIDE 1:

1. Contrast
   a) What do they do right?
   b) What do they do wrong?
   c) What would you do to fix it?

2. Repetition
   a) What do they do right?
   b) What do they do wrong?
   c) What would you do to fix it?

3. Alignment
    a) What do they do right?
    b) What do they do wrong?
    c) What would you do to fix it?

4. Proximity
    a) What do they do right?
    b) What do they do wrong?
    c) What would you do to fix it?

SLIDE 2:

Introduction - Outline

This presentation will first provide the background information about the problem

Overview: First Nations reservations and towns have significantly less access to clean water than any other group in Canada

Existing solution: Federal government commitment to clean water

Methods: I conducted interviews using a grounded theory approach with 30 families in 3 different First Nations reservations

Results: there are hidden consequences to the lack of clean water

Recommendations: The federal Government must commit to 3 Actions

I will conclude by discussion future research directions

5. Contrast
    a) What do they do right?
    b) What do they do wrong?
    c) What would you do to fix it?

6. Repetition
   a) What do they do right?
   b) What do they do wrong?
   c) What would you do to fix it?

7. Alignment
   a) What do they do right?
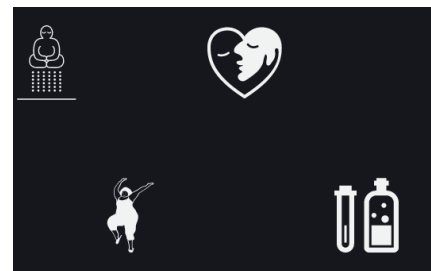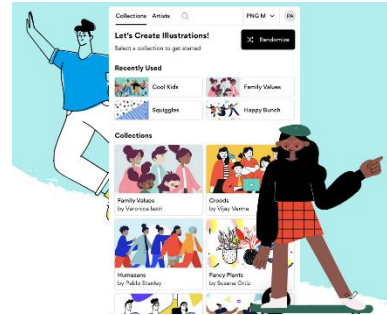   b) What do they do wrong?
   c) What would you do to fix it?

8. Proximity
   a) What do they do right?
   b) What do they do wrong?
   c) What would you do to fix it?

Don't use Google Images to find your visuals!

Instead, use stock photo sites, open-access or Creative Commons-licensed databases, and even create your own visuals. Head to **bit.ly/StockPhotosEtc** for an ever-growing list of resources, which includes the examples below, as well as many others:

1. **blush.design** is a platform to mix and match illustrations created by many different artists. As long as you credit the illustrator, you can download medium images for free!

2. **The Gender Spectrum Collection** is a stock photo database that offers images of gender non-conforming and trans people in everyday settings, such as school, work, and healthcare.

3. **TheNounProject** is a database of thousands of icons drawn by artists from around the world. Provide attribution and you can use as many icons as you want, for free!

4. **Flourish** is a tool that helps you make charts and visuals to help you tell stories with your data