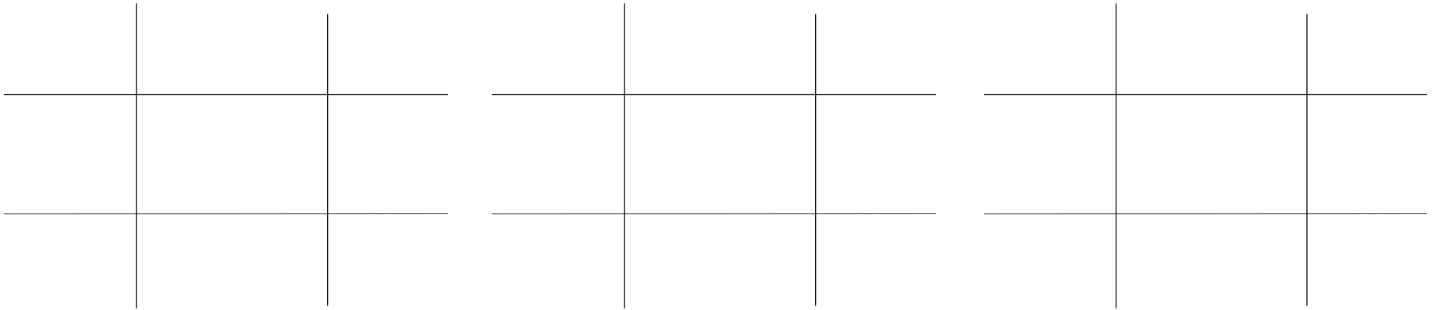


Picture This!

Do you like to take pictures? It's so easy to do with our cellphones! Here is an idea that will help you make all of your pictures look great - COMPOSITION. Composition is a long word that means how you place things in your photo or drawing.

Have you ever played Tic-Tac-Toe? Ask your adult to play a few games with you on these grids:



Now, look through a camera and imagine a big tic-tac-toe grid that would cover the whole picture. The grid would cut your picture into threes - both side-to-side and up-and-down. Look at Picture 1. The line where the sky meets the ground is not in the middle - it is closer to the bottom than the top. If that line was in the middle, it would seem like the picture was cut in half. Our eyes usually don't like it that way.



Picture 1



Picture 2

Now look at Picture 2. When we put a tic-tac-toe grid over it, you can see that the picture has been cut into three pieces side-to-side. Two sections (2/3) of the picture are sky, and one section (1/3) is land. This makes our eyes happier. Our brains like it when the line is not right in the middle.

Look at Picture 1 again. Do you see how the children in the tree are not in the middle of the picture either? Do you see where they are in Picture 2? They are very close to an up-and-down line. This also makes our brains happy. This whole idea is called THE RULE OF THIRDS. It works when you take pictures, or draw pictures, or even when you hang pictures on the wall. Always try to place the people or things so they are not smack-dab in the center.

Let's practice! Here are some more old photos from the museum collection. Go ahead and draw the grid pattern right on the photos. If the picture follows the RULE OF THIRDS, up-and-down, side-to-side, or both, draw a smiley face under it. If the picture doesn't follow the RULE OF THIRDS, draw a frowny face under it. Don't worry if the lines don't exactly match up with the pictures. If they are close, that's good enough!



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

How do you think you did? It's okay if you really didn't know. The Rule of Thirds is just a guideline to help you make more interesting pictures. Now it is your turn. Take or draw some pictures using what you have learned! The answers are upside down at the bottom of the page.

(1. smiley, 2. frowny, 3. smiley, 4. smiley, 5. frowny)