

# NOCTI Graphic Design Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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## **Questions**

- 1. What type of file would you use for a high-quality print project?**
  - A. PNG**
  - B. JPEG**
  - C. TIFF**
  - D. GIF**
- 2. Which software is commonly used for vector graphic design?**
  - A. Photoshop**
  - B. CorelDRAW**
  - C. Adobe Illustrator**
  - D. InDesign**
- 3. In the printing process, which color is used alongside cyan, magenta, and yellow?**
  - A. Blue**
  - B. White**
  - C. Black**
  - D. Red**
- 4. What effect does emphasis create in a design?**
  - A. Equal weight to all elements**
  - B. A distraction from the main message**
  - C. A clear focus on a specific area or element**
  - D. Uniformity among elements**
- 5. What type of images is made up of line segments and anchor points?**
  - A. Raster images**
  - B. Sculptural images**
  - C. Vector images**
  - D. 3D images**

- 6. Which principle is essential for creating a balanced composition?**
- A. Alignment**
  - B. Repetition**
  - C. Contrast**
  - D. All of the above**
- 7. What is the preferred printing process for plastic materials?**
- A. Lithography**
  - B. Offset printing**
  - C. Flexography**
  - D. Screen printing**
- 8. In a design context, what are "ethics"?**
- A. Marketing strategies**
  - B. The tools used for design**
  - C. The moral principles that guide the decisions and actions of a designer**
  - D. The techniques used in color theory**
- 9. A document created using a word processing program for "Sam's Subs" is known as what?**
- A. File**
  - B. Template**
  - C. Layout**
  - D. Text Document**
- 10. What must be considered when selecting colors for a print project?**
- A. Light source**
  - B. Image resolution**
  - C. Coated vs. uncoated stock**
  - D. File format**

## **Answers**

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1. C
2. C
3. C
4. C
5. C
6. D
7. C
8. C
9. A
10. C

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What type of file would you use for a high-quality print project?**

- A. PNG**
- B. JPEG**
- C. TIFF**
- D. GIF**

For a high-quality print project, a TIFF file is the most suitable choice. TIFF, which stands for Tagged Image File Format, is a widely used format in the professional printing industry due to its capacity for storing images with high color depth and maintaining image quality without compression losses. This means that images saved in TIFF format will retain their detail and fidelity, making them ideal for printing where color accuracy and resolution are critical. Unlike formats such as JPEG, which uses lossy compression that can degrade image quality, TIFF files can be saved in a lossless manner, preserving all the original data from the image. This is particularly important in professional settings where the clarity of images can directly impact the quality of printed materials. Furthermore, TIFF files support various color models, including CMYK, which is essential for print projects that require accurate color reproduction on paper. As a result, using a TIFF ensures that the final printed product is true to the designer's vision, maintaining sharpness and clarity across various print processes.

**2. Which software is commonly used for vector graphic design?**

- A. Photoshop**
- B. CorelDRAW**
- C. Adobe Illustrator**
- D. InDesign**

Vector graphic design is primarily associated with software that manipulates images based on mathematical equations, rather than pixels. Adobe Illustrator is widely recognized in the design industry for its robust vector graphic tools, making it the preferred choice for creating scalable artwork. This software allows designers to create illustrations, logos, and typography that maintain their quality at any size, which is an essential feature of vector graphics. CorelDRAW is also a viable option for vector graphic design, but Adobe Illustrator is often regarded as the industry standard, particularly among professional designers working on branding and digital illustrations. While Photoshop is primarily used for raster graphics and photo editing, and InDesign focuses on layout design for print and digital publications, Adobe Illustrator distinctly specializes in vector graphics, making it the most relevant choice in this context.

**3. In the printing process, which color is used alongside cyan, magenta, and yellow?**

- A. Blue**
- B. White**
- C. Black**
- D. Red**

In the printing process, black is used alongside cyan, magenta, and yellow as part of the CMYK color model, which stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black. The addition of black is essential because it enhances the depth and quality of printed images. While cyan, magenta, and yellow can produce a wide range of colors, they cannot create true black effectively; their combination typically results in a muddy or gray color. Therefore, black ink is added to provide a richer and more defined black in printed materials, and it also helps with details and shadows in images. This combination allows for a broader color gamut and improved overall contrast in printed works.

**4. What effect does emphasis create in a design?**

- A. Equal weight to all elements**
- B. A distraction from the main message**
- C. A clear focus on a specific area or element**
- D. Uniformity among elements**

Emphasis in design is crucial for guiding the viewer's attention to specific areas or elements that are significant within the composition. By using techniques such as contrast, color, size, or placement, a designer can highlight certain components, making them stand out. This creates a focal point, which helps the audience to quickly identify the most important parts of the design. Clear focus is essential for effective communication because it helps convey the intended message without confusion, allowing the viewer to engage with the content meaningfully. In contrast, equal weight among elements might result in a cluttered design without clear direction, while uniformity can lead to monotony and a lack of visual interest. A distraction from the main message generally detracts from the intended communication, making it harder for viewers to grasp the essential information. Therefore, establishing emphasis is a key principle in creating effective design by ensuring that the most important aspects are universally recognized and understood.

**5. What type of images is made up of line segments and anchor points?**

- A. Raster images**
- B. Sculptural images**
- C. Vector images**
- D. 3D images**

Vector images are created using line segments and anchor points, making them distinct from other types of images. These images are based on mathematical equations rather than pixels, which allows them to be infinitely scalable without loss of quality. Because vector graphics use paths defined by a start and endpoint, along with other points, curves, and angles, they are ideal for designs that need to maintain sharpness and clarity at various sizes, such as logos and illustrations. In contrast, raster images are composed of a grid of pixels, which can lead to blurriness or pixelation when resized. Sculptural images refer to three-dimensional representations and do not relate to the definition of images made up of lines and points. 3D images represent depth and volume but do not describe the mechanism of how images are constructed, which is the focus of vector graphics. Thus, the defining characteristic of vector images as being based on lines and anchor points makes them the correct answer.

**6. Which principle is essential for creating a balanced composition?**

- A. Alignment**
- B. Repetition**
- C. Contrast**
- D. All of the above**

The principle of balance in a composition involves ensuring that all elements work harmoniously together, creating a sense of stability and equilibrium. All the mentioned principles—alignment, repetition, and contrast—play significant roles in achieving this balance. Alignment helps to connect and coordinate elements within the design, leading the viewer's eye through the composition in an orderly way. By positioning elements along a common edge or around a central point, designers create association and clarity, which contribute to the overall balance. Repetition reinforces visual consistency and unity by repeating certain elements throughout the design. This can create rhythm and cohesiveness, making different parts of the composition feel related and well integrated, thereby enhancing balance. Contrast adds visual interest and guides viewers to focal points by using opposing characteristics—such as light and dark or large and small. This dynamic can serve to highlight important features while still contributing to a balanced overall appearance. When different elements contrast effectively, they can complement one another while maintaining an aesthetic equilibrium. Thus, incorporating alignment, repetition, and contrast together is essential for creating not only a balanced composition but one that is engaging and effective in its communication.

**7. What is the preferred printing process for plastic materials?**

- A. Lithography**
- B. Offset printing**
- C. Flexography**
- D. Screen printing**

Flexography is the preferred printing process for plastic materials primarily due to its ability to efficiently print on a variety of substrates, including non-porous surfaces like plastic. This method utilizes flexible relief plates and is known for its fast printing speeds and versatility, making it suitable for high-volume production. Flexography allows for the use of a wide range of inks, including water-based and UV inks, which adhere well to plastic surfaces. Furthermore, flexography is capable of producing high-quality images and can handle complex designs, which are often required in packaging and labeling for plastic products. Its adaptability for both short and long runs makes it a favored choice in the industry where plastic materials are widely used.

**8. In a design context, what are "ethics"?**

- A. Marketing strategies**
- B. The tools used for design**
- C. The moral principles that guide the decisions and actions of a designer**
- D. The techniques used in color theory**

"Ethics" in a design context refers to the moral principles that guide the decisions and actions of a designer. These principles are significant because they influence how designers approach their work, ensuring that their choices align with values such as honesty, integrity, respect for the rights of others, and social responsibility. Ethical considerations can impact various aspects of design, including the treatment of clients, the representation of subjects, and the environmental impact of design decisions. By adhering to a strong ethical framework, designers not only uphold their professional integrity but also contribute positively to society and the communities they serve. The other options represent different aspects of the design process but do not pertain to the moral and ethical foundations that guide a designer's decision-making. Marketing strategies focus on promoting and selling products, tools are the physical or digital instruments used in the creation of designs, and techniques in color theory cover the principles around color usage. None of these concepts directly address the moral considerations that inform a designer's work.

**9. A document created using a word processing program for "Sam's Subs" is known as what?**

- A. File**
- B. Template**
- C. Layout**
- D. Text Document**

A document created using a word processing program for "Sam's Subs" is known as a file. In computer terminology, a file is a digital document that can contain various types of data, including text, images, or audio. When you save a document in a word processing program, you are creating a file that holds the content and formatting of that document. The term 'file' broadly encompasses any saved item on a computer, while 'text document' specifically refers to files containing text-based information. Although a document for "Sam's Subs" may fit the description of a text document, it is more accurate to refer to it as a file since that term applies to any saved document regardless of its content type. The other options, such as 'template' and 'layout', refer to different concepts. A template provides a framework or pre-defined structure for creating documents, while layout pertains to how the elements within a document are arranged visually. These definitions help clarify that a document is best classified simply as a file in this context.

**10. What must be considered when selecting colors for a print project?**

- A. Light source**
- B. Image resolution**
- C. Coated vs. uncoated stock**
- D. File format**

When selecting colors for a print project, considering whether the paper stock is coated or uncoated is crucial. Coated paper has a smoother finish and typically allows for more vivid colors and sharper images since the coating helps to retain ink on the surface. This results in a high-quality print that can exhibit richer hues and more detail. In contrast, uncoated paper absorbs more ink, which can lead to a softer, more muted color appearance. The texture of uncoated stock can also affect how colors are perceived when printed. For instance, more absorbent surfaces may cause colors to appear darker than they do on coated surfaces. Therefore, understanding the characteristics of the chosen paper type helps in predicting how colors will translate from the digital design to the final printed product. The other factors, though relevant in different contexts, do not directly influence color choice as significantly. While the light source can affect the perception of color, it is not a factor that impacts the press-ready decisions like paper stock does. Image resolution pertains more to the quality of detail than color representation, and file format affects how images are saved and transmitted rather than how colors will appear when printed. Hence, recognizing the difference between coated and uncoated stock is a key part of ensuring accurate