ART C111 50 - 2D DESIGN
HANDOUT – LINEAR PERSPECTIVE

> Linear perspective is a method for creating the *illusion* of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional art surface.

BRIEF HISTORY:

Linear perspective was not used by prehistoric and early ancient artists (roughly 30,000 BCE to 50 BCE). These artists rarely attempted to show 3D space and did not often focus on elements of landscape.

In the Western World linear perspective was first developed by the Romans around 50 BCE. They used it to create murals that made the walls they were painted on feel like windows overlooking vast landscapes.

Later during the Renaissance, the technique was canonized into a mathematically precise system of rules by artists like Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519 CE).

Linear perspective is still used by contemporary artists as a valuable tool for constructing and composing their works. The rules and techniques they follow are much the same as those developed and used during and after the Renaissance.
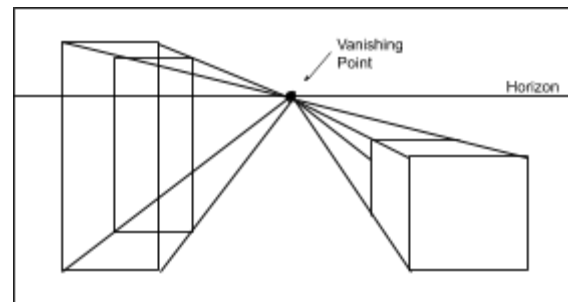
VOCABULARY:

HORIZON: The horizon is the representation of where the earth meets the sky. It is perfectly horizontal in most cases, but it is not usually visible as it will naturally be obscured by landscape or man-made elements.
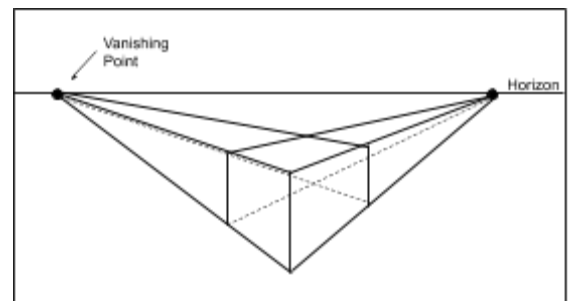
VANISHING POINT: A normal vanishing point is a point placed along the horizon. lines radiating out from it can be used to structure certain objects in an image. Remember that each object can have its own set of vanishing points, they are tools made up by artists, not real things like the horizon can be.

ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE: One point perspective is the use of a horizon and only one vanishing point that an object recedes towards. This can be used when a cube or cube-like object is directly facing the viewer.

TWO-POINT PERSPECTIVE: Two point perspective uses two vanishing points for an object rather than one. This is necessary when an object is rotated and is not directly facing the viewer. As an object rotates, its vanishing points move along with it.

ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE

TWO-POINT PERSPECTIVE