

Week 5: Beyond the Pixel

Class 1	Class 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Vectors→ Pen tool→ Shapes→ Logo Tracing Activity→ Image as Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ MINI CREATIVE BRIEF:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create own ID brand vector logo OR• Own book cover illustration OR• Own series of creative photos

Class 1:

In week one we mentioned that most digital images, and certainly all photographs are **Raster** images, which means they are made from pixels. We also mentioned an alternative that is much more flexible for rescaling without losing quality. These are called **Vector Graphics** and provide an alternative to pixels when working in digital graphics. Vectors allow the computer to store images as a series of equations, as opposed to fixed blocks of colour. This means they can be expanded and reduced with a great deal more flexibility as the computer can calculate the relationship between different points and generate a smooth line. The Pen and Shape tools in Photoshop use vectors. One benefit of vectors is that they allow saved transparency, which can be far more flexible than a default white background. Inform students to take care with file formats when saving as standard image file formats (such as Jpg) with rasterise the image so they will become uneditable as vectors. Saving as PSD or AI (Adobe Illustrator) file formats will preserve editability.

→ Vectors

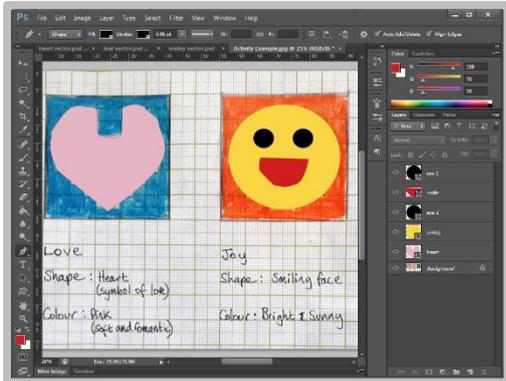
Demonstrate use of these tools by tracing over your own examples of the simple shapes designs from week 1. You can work with your existing Photoshop files but if students do not yet know how to scan images, now would be a good time to teach this. You could demonstrate using their original designs on graph paper and work with these instead. This step may not be necessary though, if your students are already comfortable with using a scanner.

→ Pen tool: Make sure you cover:

- Shape/path selection, fill and stroke settings
- Changing the colour of a shape layer
- Linking back into the last anchor point of an incomplete shape
- Reactivation of anchor points on a 'finished' shape (ctrl + click)
- Adding or deleting anchor points (hover mouse)
- Moving existing anchor points (ctrl + drag)
- Adjustment of line curve using vector arms (alt + click)

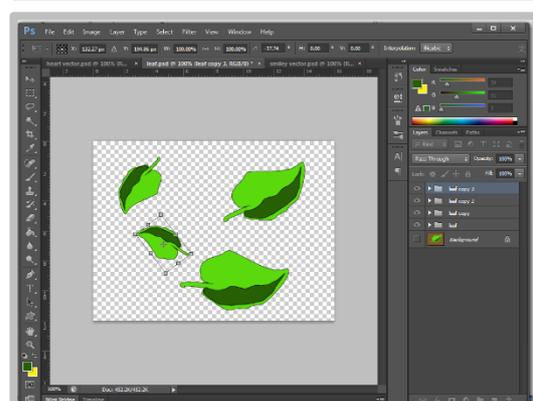
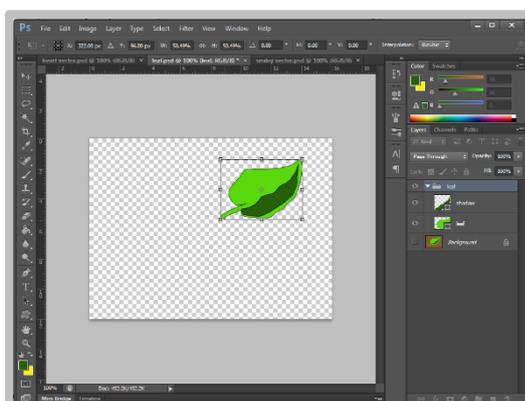
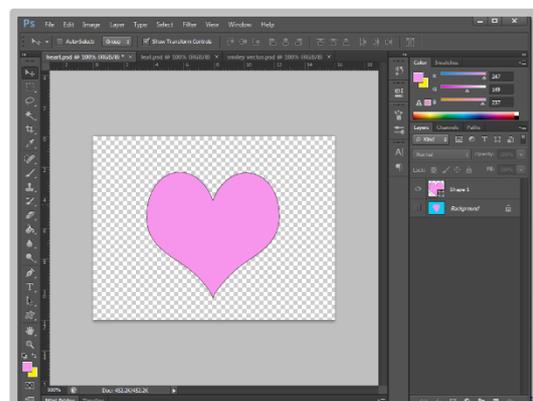
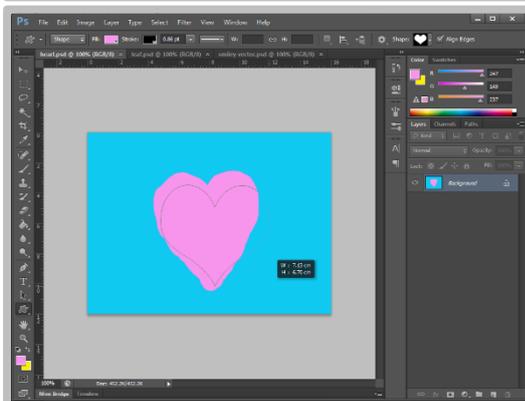
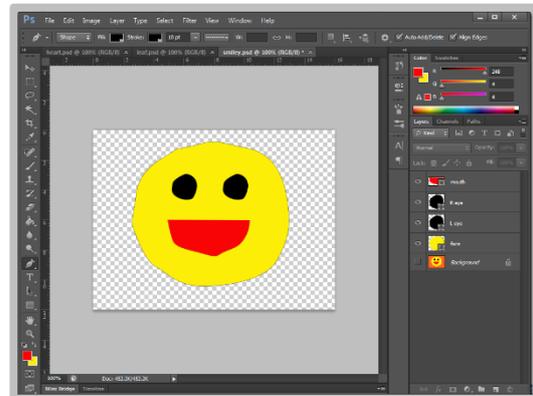
→ Shapes:

Show students how to select different shape sets. Recap good layer management at this point and conduct a group discussion on the importance of **renaming** layers and how to **group** them. Using a grouped set of layers, demonstrate **resizing**, **copying** and **transforming** multiple layers.



→ Logo Tracing Activity

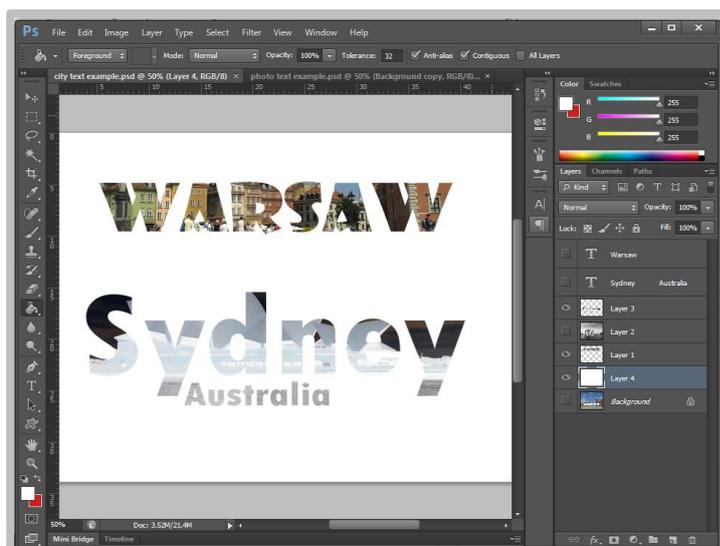
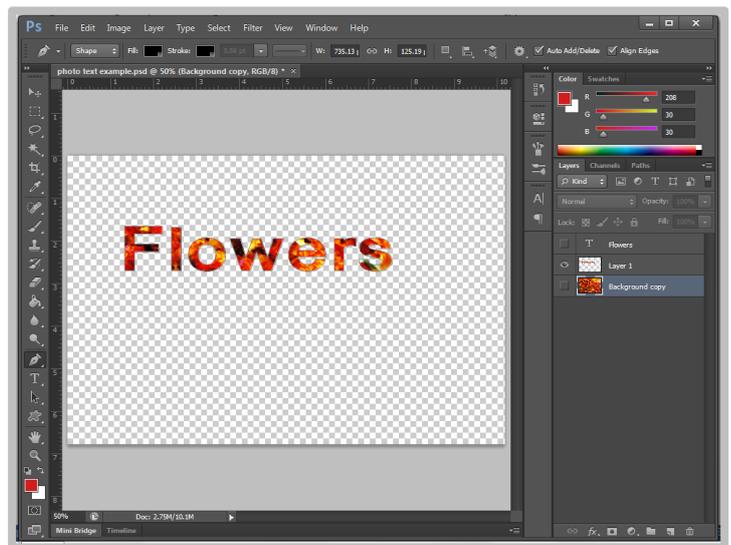
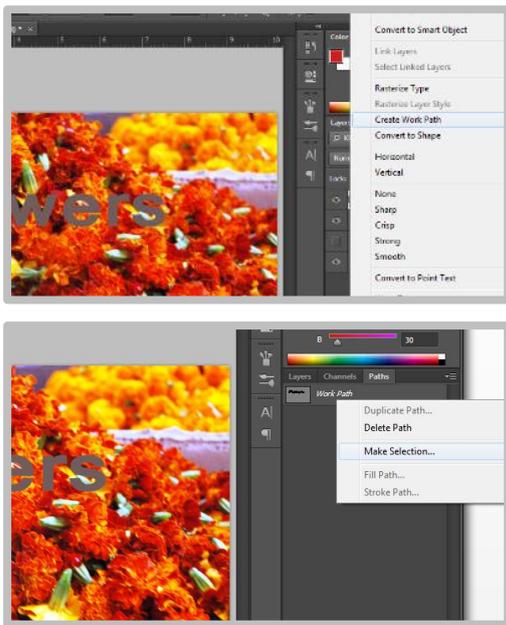
Ask students to follow your demonstration and create vector logos from their simple designs. Get students to practice resizing the original, raster (pixelled) image and resizing the new vector to see the difference in quality.



→ Image as Text

Demonstrate to students how to select and use a font (text is a vector tool) to create a work path and selection, which can then be used to cut from a photograph to generate creative text:

- Open a photo
- Select, and create a text layer
- Create a work path by right clicking and selecting from the pop up menu
- Navigate to the Paths menu
- Right click the work path layer and choose to make a selection
- Activate the photo layer to transfer your selection, then cut or copy and paste.



→ Image as Text Activity

Ask students to return to the cityscapes source images and select one or two. Their task is to create graphics using the name of the city and the photographic image:

Class 2:

→ MINI CREATIVE BRIEF:

As you move to the end of the course, it is good practice to give students some creative freedom to put their new skills into practice in a less prescribed way. Give them some loose themes to choose from and ask them to generate a creative response. This will give them some practice in ideas management and creative problems solving, as well as giving them the opportunity to decide for themselves how best to utilise the programme to meet their needs. You can run this as a work simulation by giving them a deadline and asking them to pitch their ideas to a panel if it is appropriate to their situation and you have the flexibility with your time to allow for this.

Creative Brief Ideas:

Students should choose only one of these to begin with but you may find particularly advanced students are able to manage two and you could set another for homework or an independent practice session. If you have time, it would be ideal for their skills development if they could create all three!

- Create a 'brand logo' that communicates your own identity. You might use initials or your whole name. Try and include things that represent your interests or values. Sketch this out roughly, then generate a final outcome in vector graphics.
- Create an illustration for a publication of one of your favourite stories when you were a child. You may need to begin by sketching your idea out on paper first and scanning this in to work on digitally. Think carefully about your audience. How will you use appropriate visual language (see week 1!) for your young readers?
- Create your own series of creative photos on a topic that interests you. You could choose fashion photography or natural forms and landscape, pet portraits, a favourite sport or hobby or urban scenes. Make sure you use appropriate and legal sources if you are unable to take your own photographs. You could also include scanned drawings or patterned overlays to be really creative! Your series should include a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 final digital images.

