


The Art of Writing


# Composition Made Easy

6 Steps to Better Composition



**1. Stop Correcting...**  
Grammar  
Spelling  
Penmanship


**2. Telling Stories**  
At bedtime  
Have child add to story  
Be creative





run  
street  
fast  
dangerous

**3. Define...**  
Verbs  
Nouns  
Adjectives  
Adverbs


**4. Fun Writing Materials**  
Attractive Journal  
Wide Ruled Paper  
Comfortable Chair & Desk  
Smooth Writing Pen





**5. Describe...**  
What an apple looks like.  
How do you set the table?

**6. Writing Space**  
Where is your favorite spot to sit?  
Make the space creative and relaxing.



Contact me at  
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# VISUAL SECRETS FOR COMPOSITION

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# Visual Secrets Activity Cards

The Art of Beautiful Handwriting

## Handwriting Made Easy

6 Steps to Better Handwriting

**1. Proper Position Includes**  
Feet flat  
Proper desk and chair height  
Slanted work surface

**2. Pencil Grip Includes**  
Pointer and thumb pinching pencil  
Soft grasp

**3. Up and Over**  
Make letters round  
Move pencil up and over

**4. Breathing**  
In through the nose  
Out through the mouth  
No holding the breath while writing

**5. Feather Touch**  
Don't push hard  
Write as lightly as possible  
No broken pencil tips

**6. Eyes Guide Hand**  
Look ahead of pencil tip  
Grasp pencil so you can see tip

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Learn to Spell Well

## Spelling Made Easy

6 Steps to Better Spelling

**1. Vowels**  
a e i o u sometimes y  
At least one per syllable

**2. Syllables**  
Each one has a vowel.  
How many in word?  
How many letters in each?

**3. Letters in Word**  
How many total letters?

**4. Assign Number to Letters**  
What is first letter?  
Last letter?  
What is #4?  
What is #2? etc.

**5. Spell Word**  
Forward  
Backward  
With no hesitation

**6. Practice Test**  
Give test like it's done in class  
Relearn ones not in right sequence

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Understanding the Language of Math

## Math Made Easy

6 Steps to Mastering Math

**1. Count Steps**  
Space between numbers is equal.  
Foundation for understanding math.  
Engineers like to count steps.

**2. Number line**  
Visual representation of how far apart each number is.

**3. Count By Sets**  
Do 2s, then 5s, then 10s  
Next do 3s, 4s, 6s,  
7s, 8s, 9s

**4. Fractions**  
Which is larger, 1/3 or 1/2?  
How big are the pieces if you are sharing with 7 friends?  
How about with 3 friends?

**5. Measuring**  
How high is the door? = Height  
How wide is it? = Width  
How big if it was cut in half?  
Calculate the area (Height x Width)

**6. Timed Tests**  
Avoid flash cards. Learn sets first.  
Do verbal call out.  
Ex. Multiples of 6.  
Say 1, answer is 6  
Say 3, answer is 18

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Reading Can Take You Anywhere

## Reading Made Easy

6 Steps to Enjoying Reading

**1. Comfortable reading posture**  
Center reading material at a slight slant  
Keep reading material about 16" from eyes

**2. Interesting Material**  
Student's favorite area of interest...  
Sports? Horses? Hunting? Friends?

**3. Build Vocabulary**  
Define words prior to seeing them.  
Use new word in a sentence.  
Then show the written word.

**4. Silent Reading**  
Avoid lip reading.  
Ask questions after first paragraph.  
Watch eyes move along print.

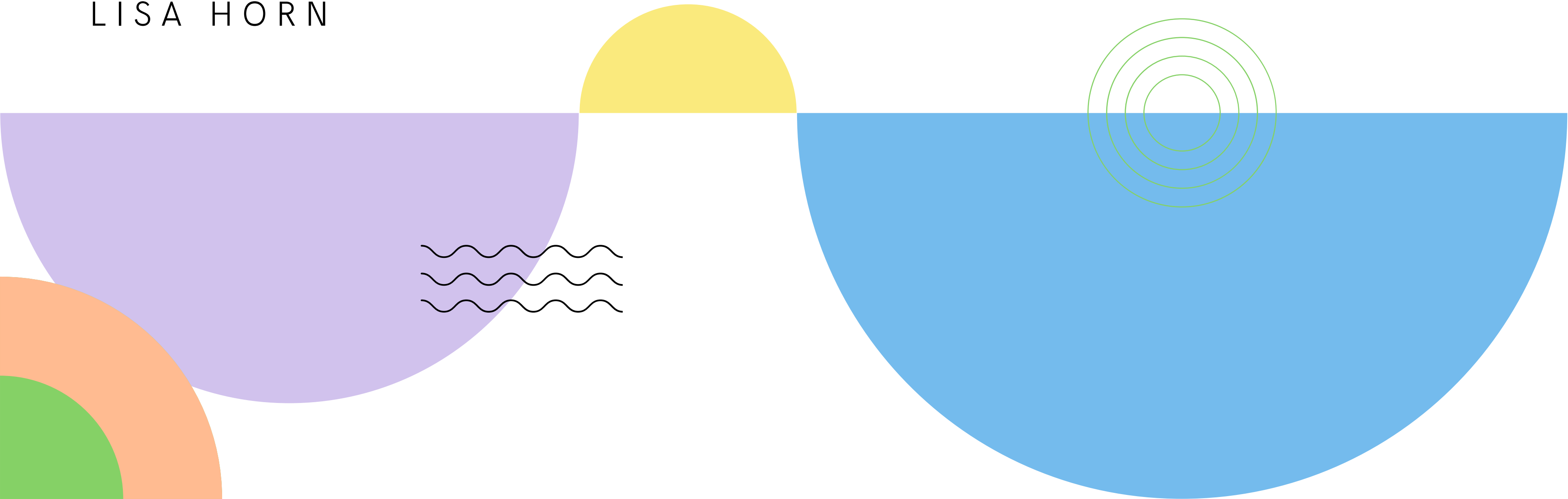
**5. Upside Down**  
Minimizes the habit  
of sounding  
out each word.

**6. Describe...**  
Characters in detail.  
What might happen next.

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**Good writing is clear, concise and correct. Great writing captivates, engages and motivates.**

LISA HORN



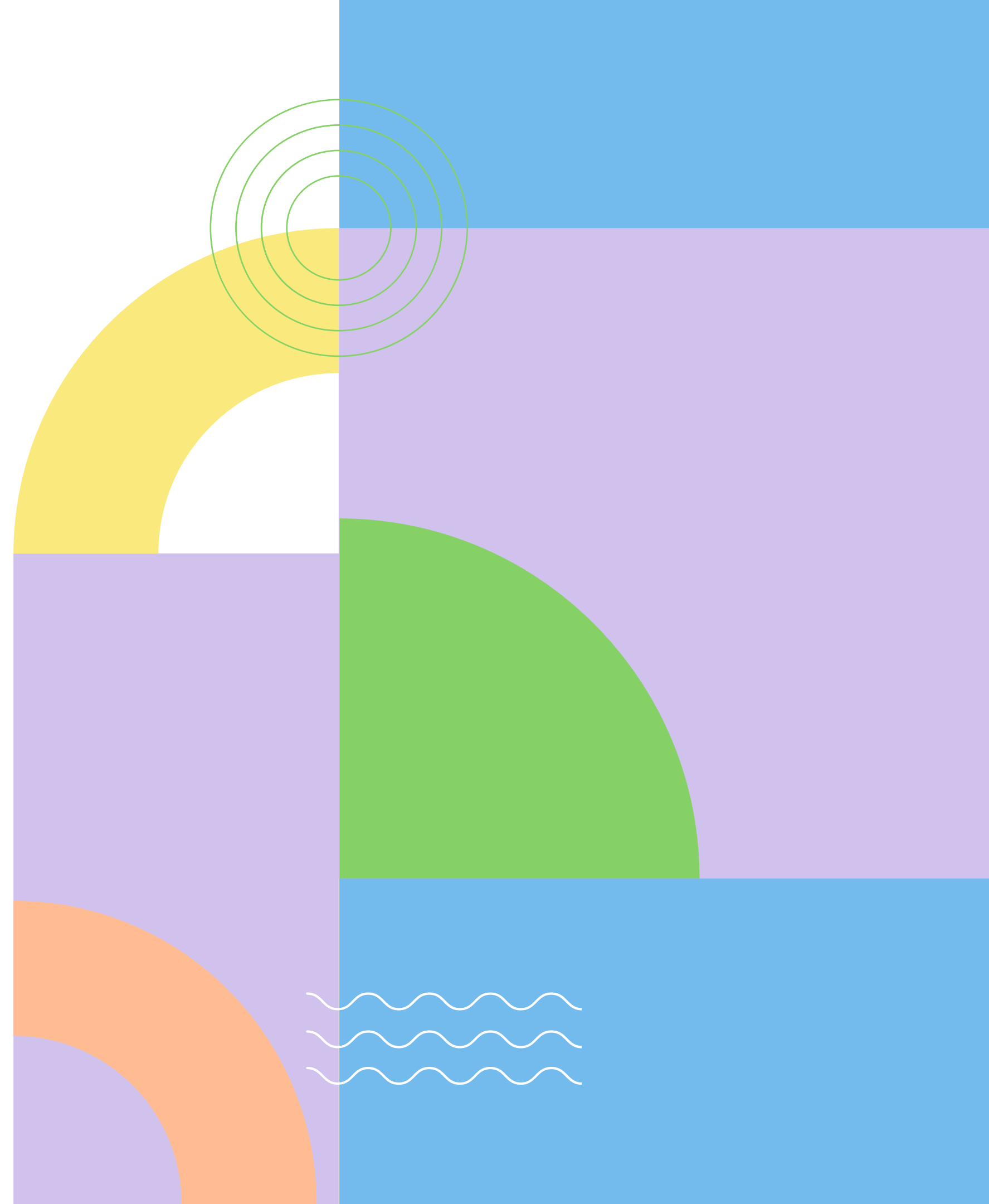
# Why Write?

## COMMUNICATION

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Writing...

- is an important skill for accurate communication of thoughts & ideas.
- lasts longer than the spoken word.
- allows for easy review.
- ideas down keeps them from being lost.

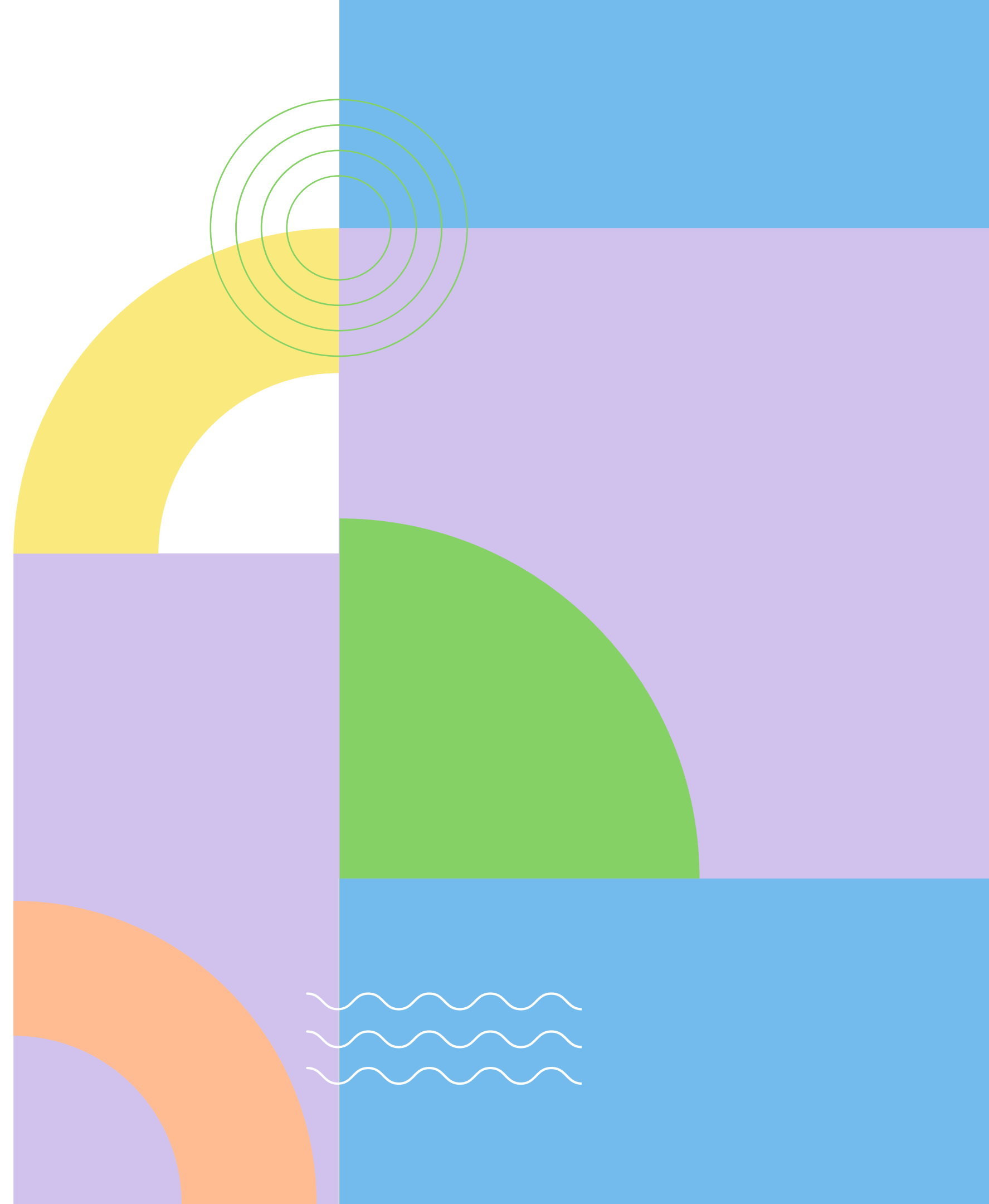


# Why Write?

IMPRESSION

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- HOW YOU EXPRESS YOURSELF SAYS MUCH ABOUT WHO YOU REALLY ARE AND WHAT YOU CAN DO.
- CREATIVE WRITERS GET MORE SCHOLARSHIPS.
- IT IS REWARDING.







# **Creativity**

To think creatively, you must  
develop new neural pathways  
and break out of the cycle of  
experience-dependent  
categorization.

Iconoclast, by Gregory Berns, Copyright 2008 Harvard  
Business School Publishing Corp.



# **Creativity**

“Education consists mainly in  
what we have unlearned.”

Mark Twain



# Creativity

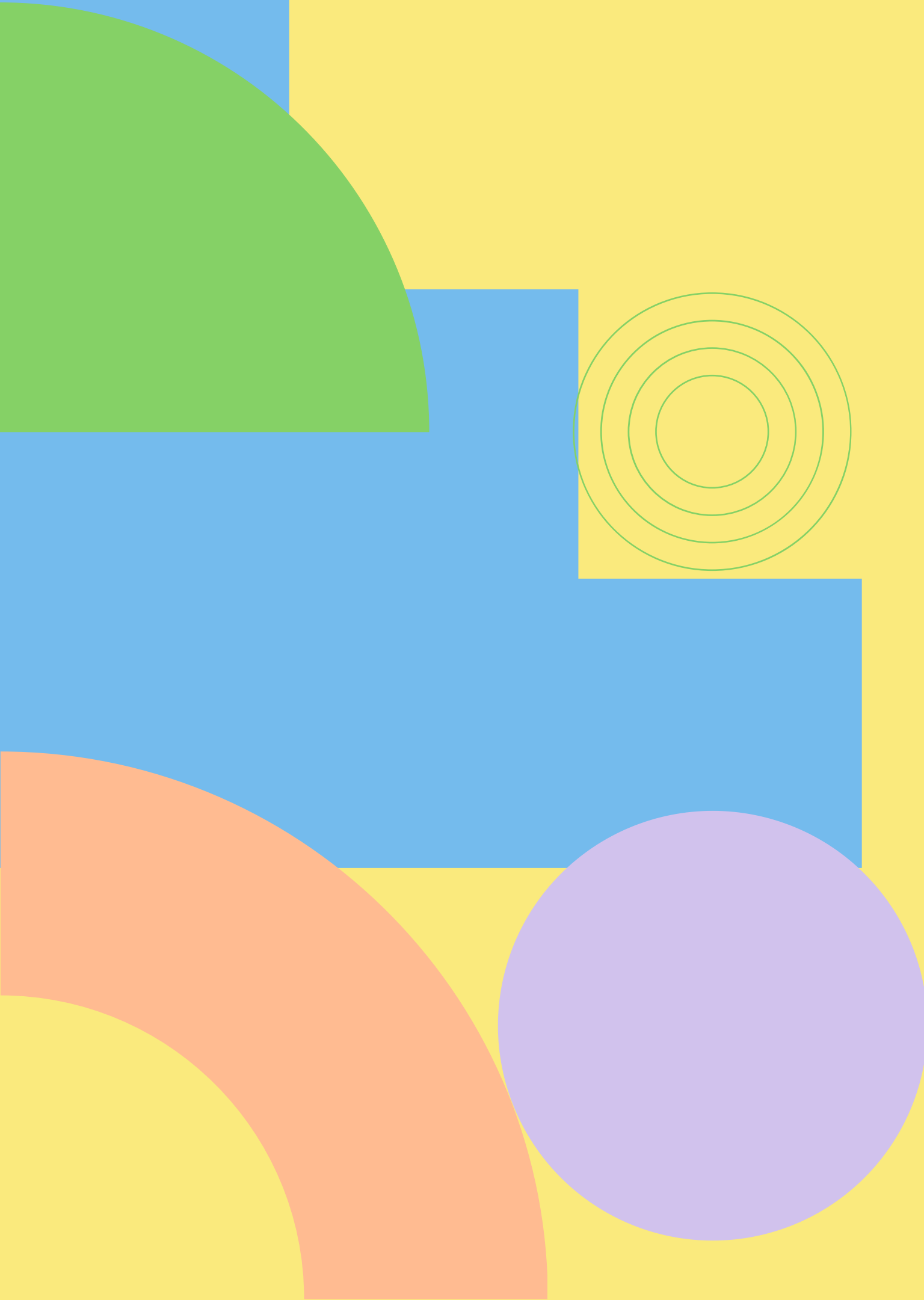
For many,  
this does not come naturally.  
Often, the harder you try  
to think differently,  
the more rigid  
you become.






# **Creativity**

Perception and imagination  
are linked because the brain  
uses the same neural circuits  
for both functions.



# Short Cuts

The reason it's so difficult to  
imagine truly novel ideas has  
to do with how the brain  
interprets signals  
from your eyes.

The background features a series of overlapping geometric shapes. On the left, there is a large green quarter-circle at the top, followed by a blue L-shaped block, and an orange quarter-circle at the bottom. To the right of the blue block is a purple circle. In the upper-middle section, there are four concentric green circles. The entire composition is set against a solid yellow background.

# Short Cuts

This efficiency or automaticity,  
can interfere with creativity  
because creativity needs a  
novel or non-automatic  
experience to kick in.

# Example

Many corporate offsites are ineffective idea generators, because they're scheduled rather than organic.



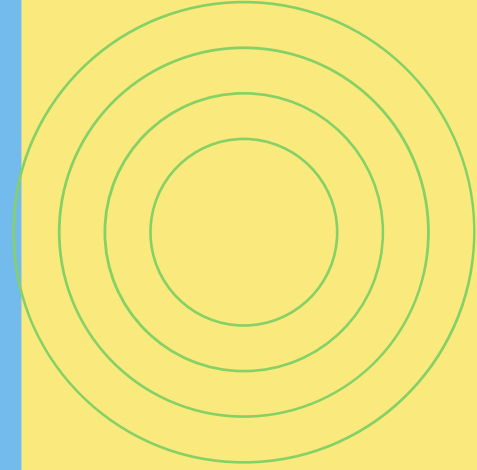
# Example

The brain has time to predict the future, which means the potential novelty is diminished.





# Example



Putting the same mix of people in a different location, even an exotic one, then dropping them into a conference room much like the one back home, doesn't create an environment that leads to new insights.



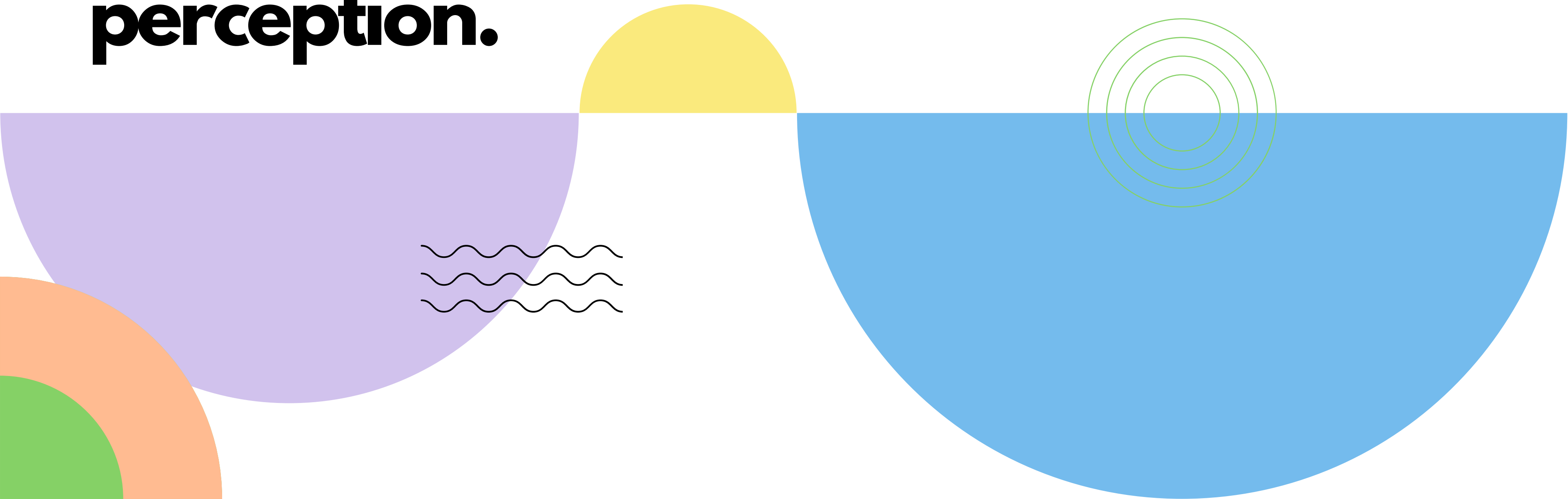




# Example

New insights come from new people and new environments — any circumstance in which the brain has a hard time predicting what will happen next.

**Only when the brain is confronted with stimuli that it has not encountered before does it start to reorganize perception.**





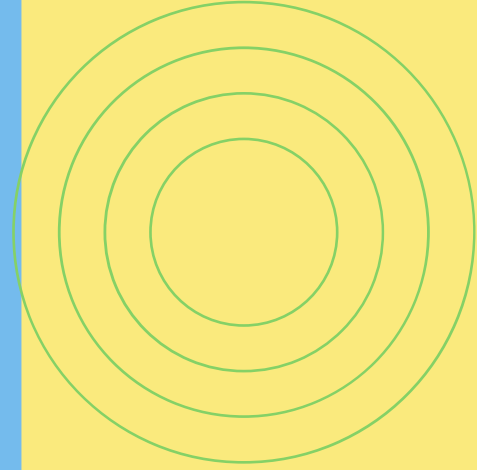
# Novel Stimulus

You need a novel stimulus — either a new piece of information or an unfamiliar environment — to jolt attentional systems awake.

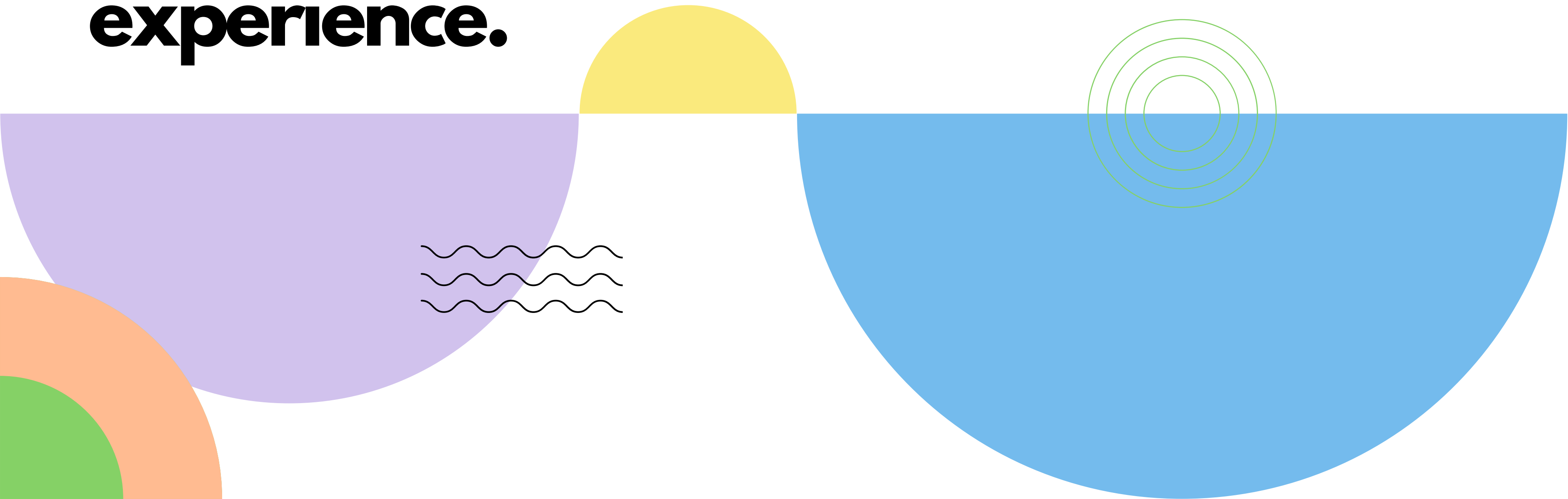
The more radical the change,  
the greater the likelihood of  
fresh insights.

# Novel Stimulus

Novel experiences are so effective  
at unleashing the imagination  
because they force the perceptual  
system out of categorization,  
the tendency of the brain  
to take shortcuts.



**The surest way to provoke the imagination, then, is to seek out environments in which you have no experience.**





# Over-riding Shortcuts



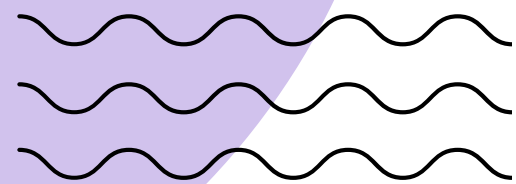
When your brain is categorizing a person or an idea, just jot down the categories that come to mind. Use analogies to aid in this process.

You will rely on the things you are familiar with.



# **A survey on LinkedIn Learning looked at the skills companies need most now and into the future. At the very top of the list: CREATIVITY.**

Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge "Robust prediction of individual creative ability from brain functional connectivity."



<https://artgym.com/neuroscience-and-creativity/>

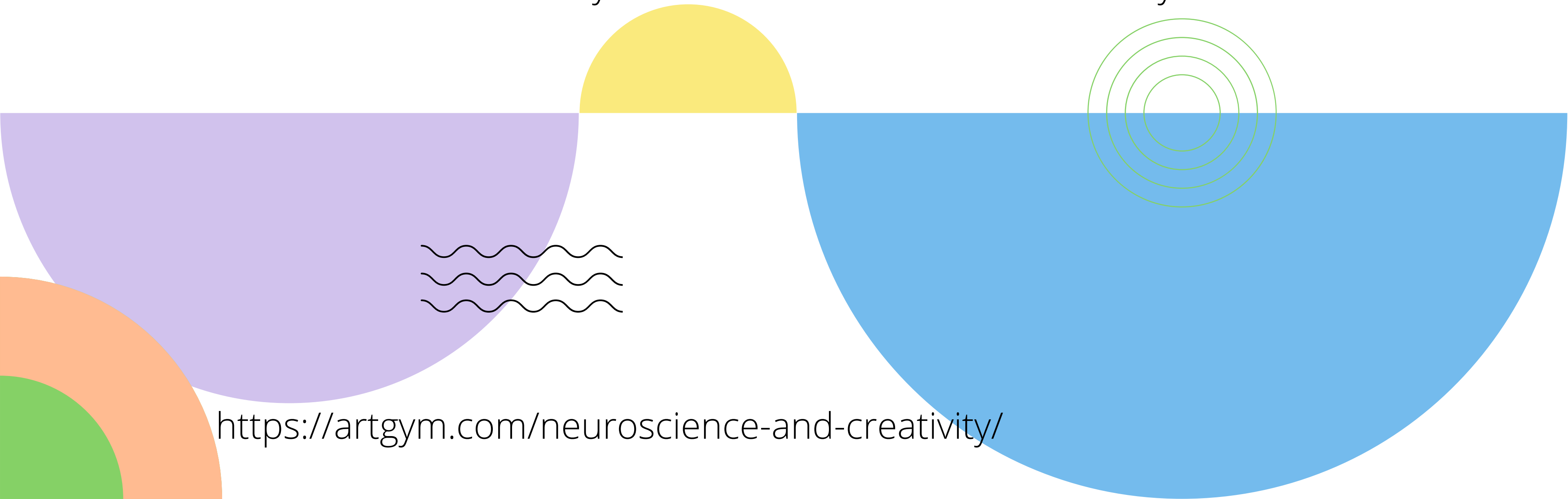
Creativity is the second most in-demand skill in the world, with cloud computing at the top.

Macroeconomic trends suggest creativity will only become more important moving forward. It's no stretch to say creativity is the single most important skill in the world for all business professionals today to master.



# **Creativity doesn't involve a single brain region or single side of the brain.**

Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge "Robust prediction of individual creative ability from brain functional connectivity."



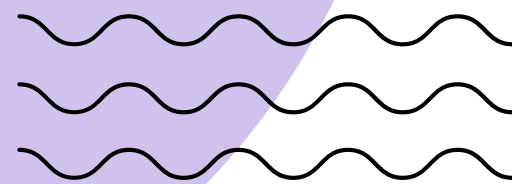
<https://artgym.com/neuroscience-and-creativity/>

Creative thought can be determined by how effectively the brain can communicate between different regions that usually work separately. Three distinct brain networks are key to most creative thinking.



# Harvard researchers have found that highly original thinkers show very strong connectivity between three networks of the brain.

Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge "Robust prediction of individual creative ability from brain functional connectivity."



<https://artgym.com/neuroscience-and-creativity/>

# Visualization

Has a POWERFUL EFFECT ON CREATING  
NEURAL PATHWAYS

Olympic athletes use it all the time – tapping into your mind's eye to mentally prepare for the competition.

Research has shown that the same part of the brain's neural pathways in the cortex is stimulated and activated when you imagine walking as if you had actually walked!





# Visualization

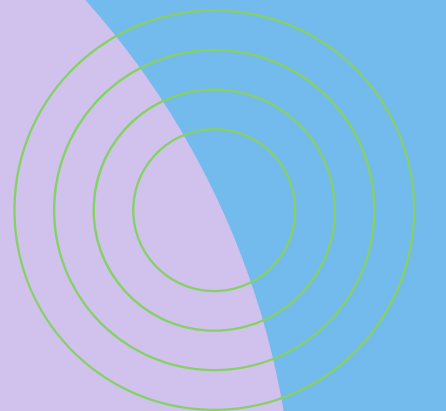
Helps to turn away from logical dominance and access a more abstract and flexible way of thinking.

Begin with harnessing the eye-brain connection.

What does the vision look like, smell like and taste like, and what was the experience that was felt?

This helps to raise the unconscious to the conscious level.

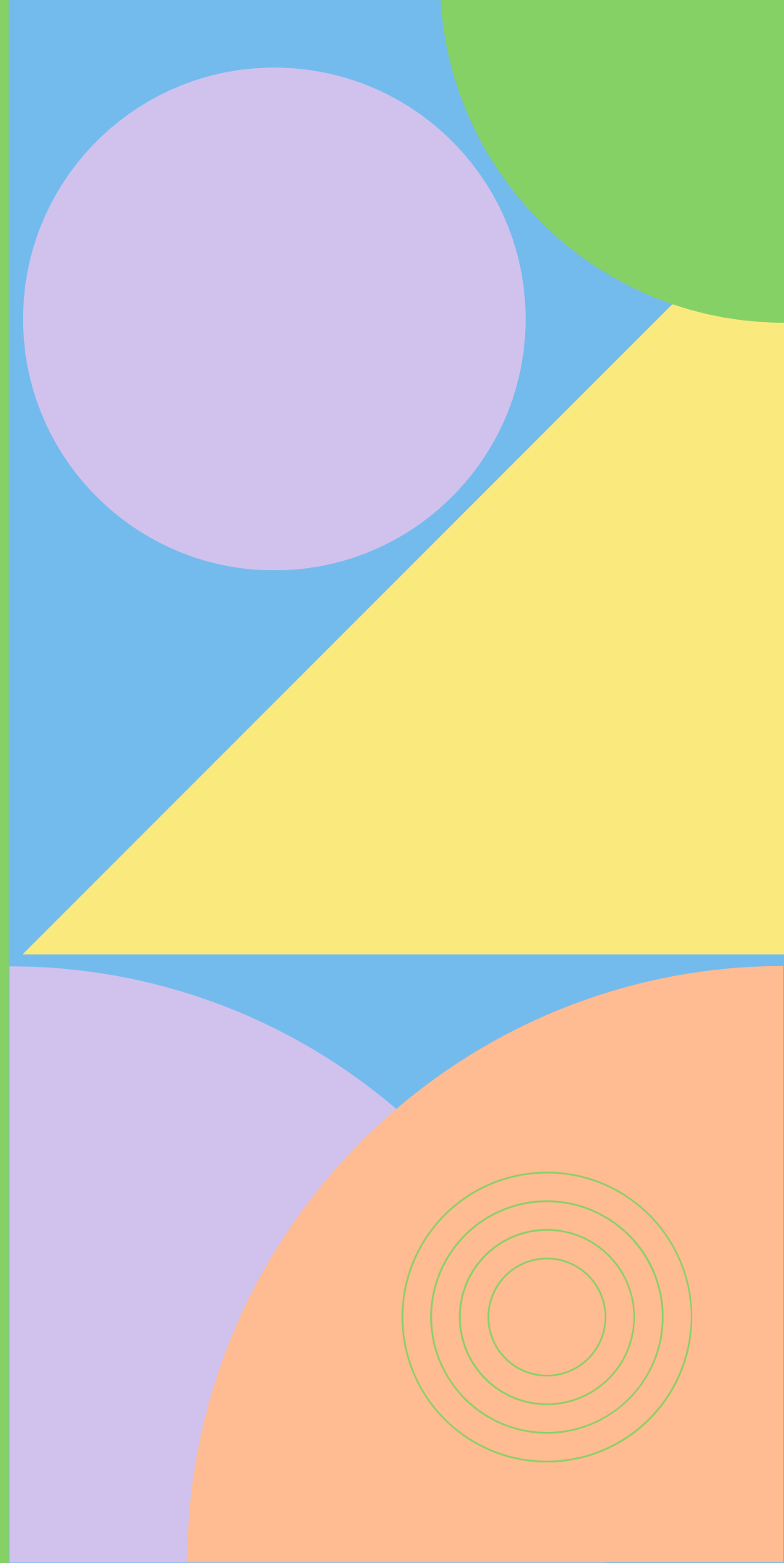
Extracts from Dr. Tara Swift – The Source



# Original Thinking

Neuroscience research suggests that we are able to consciously influence ourselves to have greater creativity by...

- practicing and doing exercises which require creativity
- using our executive network to invoke our salience network to scan actively for more divergent thoughts
- disinhibiting our suppression of divergent thoughts





# **Stress & Anxiety**

## **Decrease Creativity**

If you have a mindset that is positive, you are helping your brain protect itself and decrease the activity in the amygdala, which processes fear.



# **Stress & Anxiety**

## **Decrease Creativity**

Long-term stress can shrink the size of your temporal lobe and increase the size of the amygdala, which processes fear.



# **Stress & Anxiety**

## **Decrease Creativity**

More recently it has been proven that the hippocampus is critical for long-term memory, creativity and imagination.



# **Stress & Anxiety**

## **Decrease Creativity**

Retraining the brain to become more positive, and discovering different associations to banish negativity, encourages activity in the hippocampus.





# Hippocampus

Allows us to think about the past  
and to imagine the future.



# Stress & Anxiety Decrease Creativity

Exercise has a powerful effect by releasing key neurotransmitters associated with good mood and long-term memory.

**Long-term stress** kills cells in the hippocampus, contributing to the deterioration of memory.

Taken from an article in Forbes 2019 – media LLC by Dr Wendy Suzuki

# Identifying writing challenges. The student...

DOES NOT USE FULL SENTENCES  
WHEN SPEAKING

WRITES SHORT SENTENCES

WRITES WITH SMALL WORDS

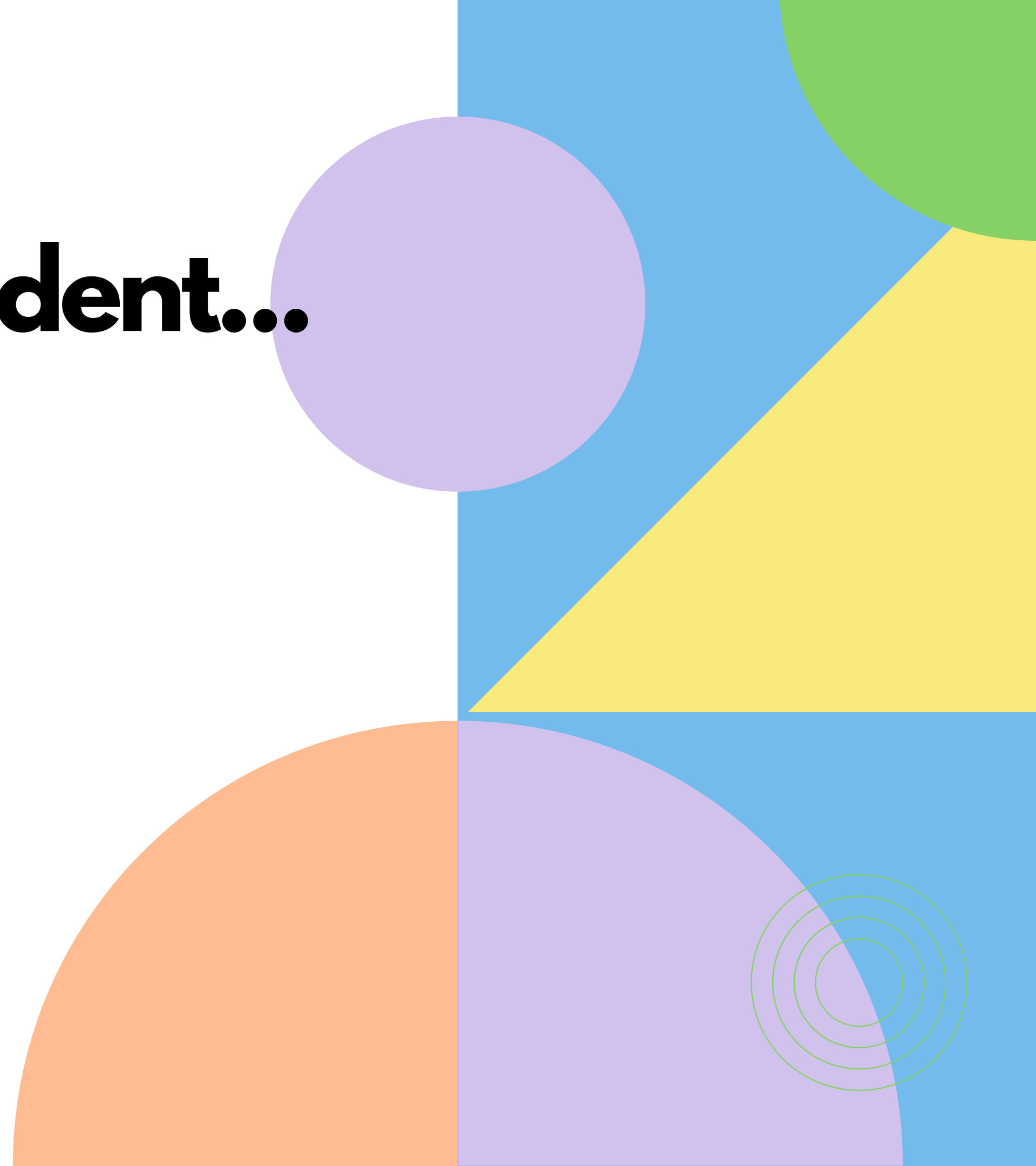


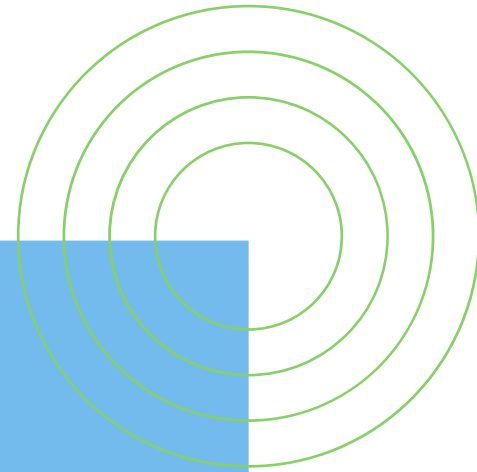
# Identifying writing challenges. The student...

DOES NOT USE ADJECTIVES  
AND ADVERBS

CAN'T MAKE UP IMAGINARY  
STORIES

CAN'T DESCRIBE FAMILIAR  
OBJECTS





# Correcting

NO NEGATIVE  
COMMENTS



Grammar

Spelling

Penmanship

Poor sentences





# Be Encouraging

POSITIVE  
COMMENTS

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Use of language  
Being creative  
Storytelling  
Embracing novel  
experiences



# Visual Skills for Composition

## VISUALIZATION & VISUAL IMAGERY

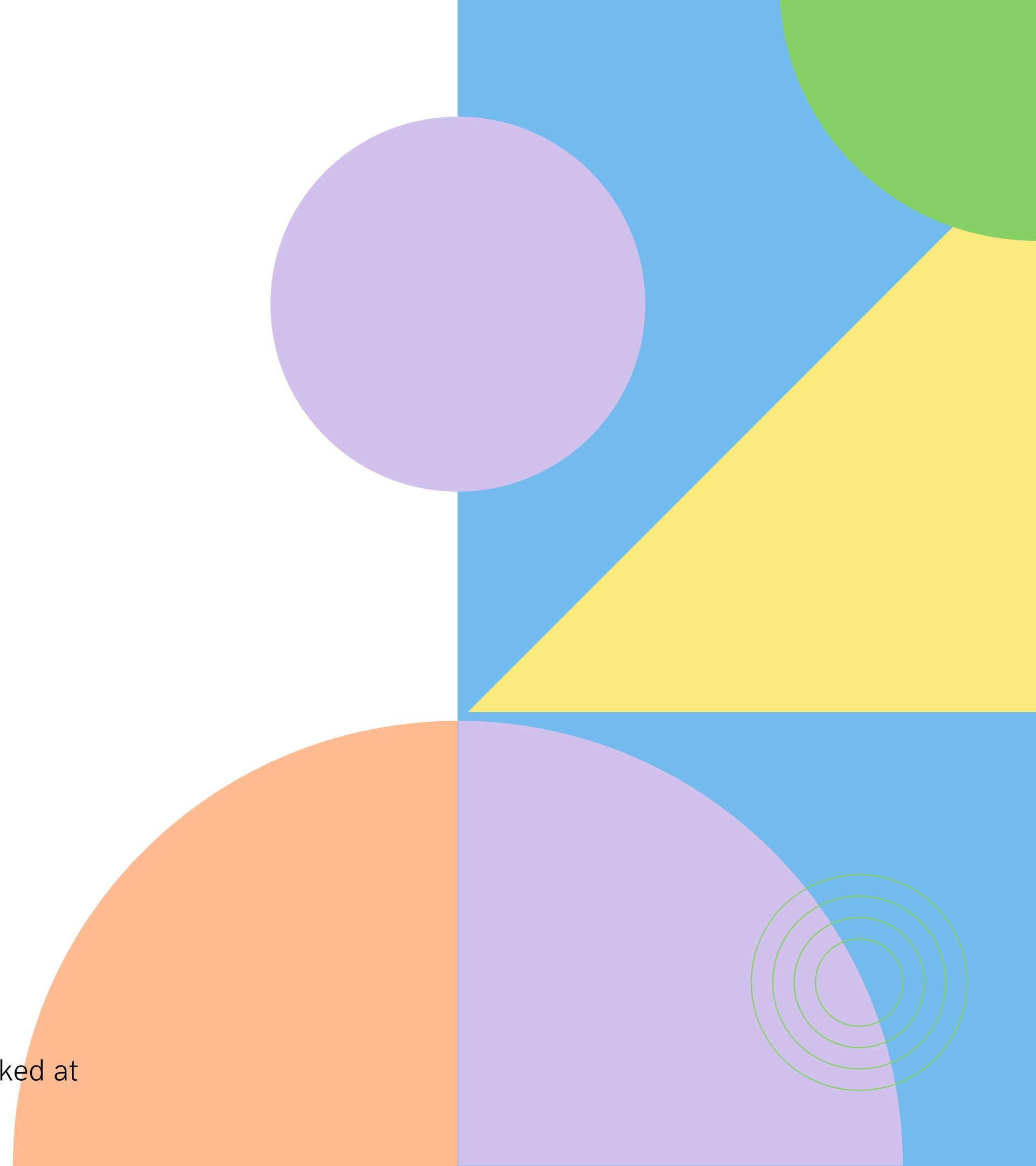
The ability to see or imagine with the mind's eye

## VISUAL MEMORY

Being able to recall previously viewed information or scenes

## VISUAL IDENTIFICATION, MATCHING AND DISCRIMINATION OF SIZE, SHAPE, AND SPACE

Knowing similarities and differences of what is being thought of or looked at



# Visual Skills for Composition

## VISUAL ASSOCIATION

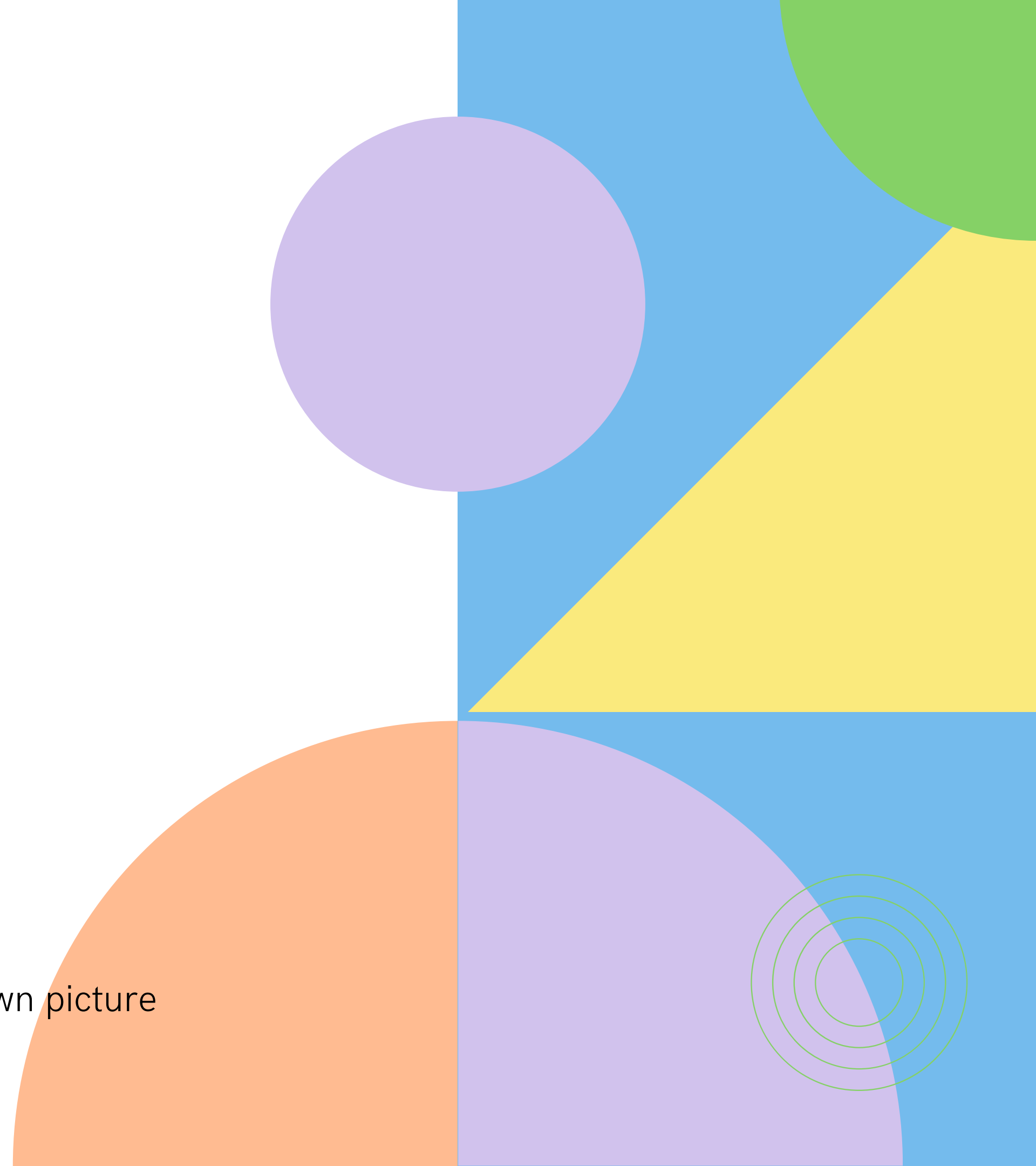
Relating one idea to another

## VISUAL CATEGORIZATION

Grouping similar items or ideas together

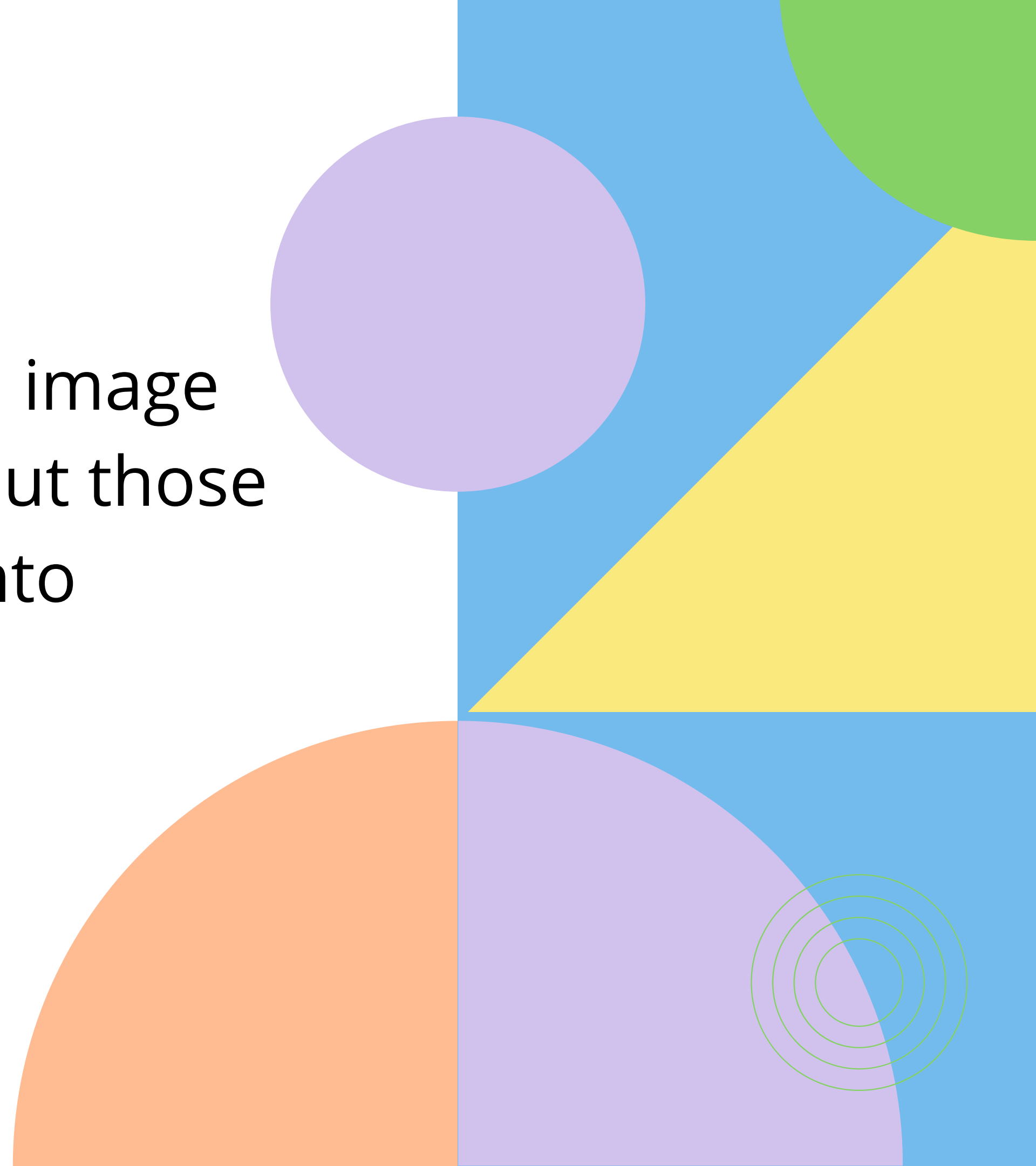
## VISUAL CLOSURE

The ability to finish an idea or to complete a partially drawn picture



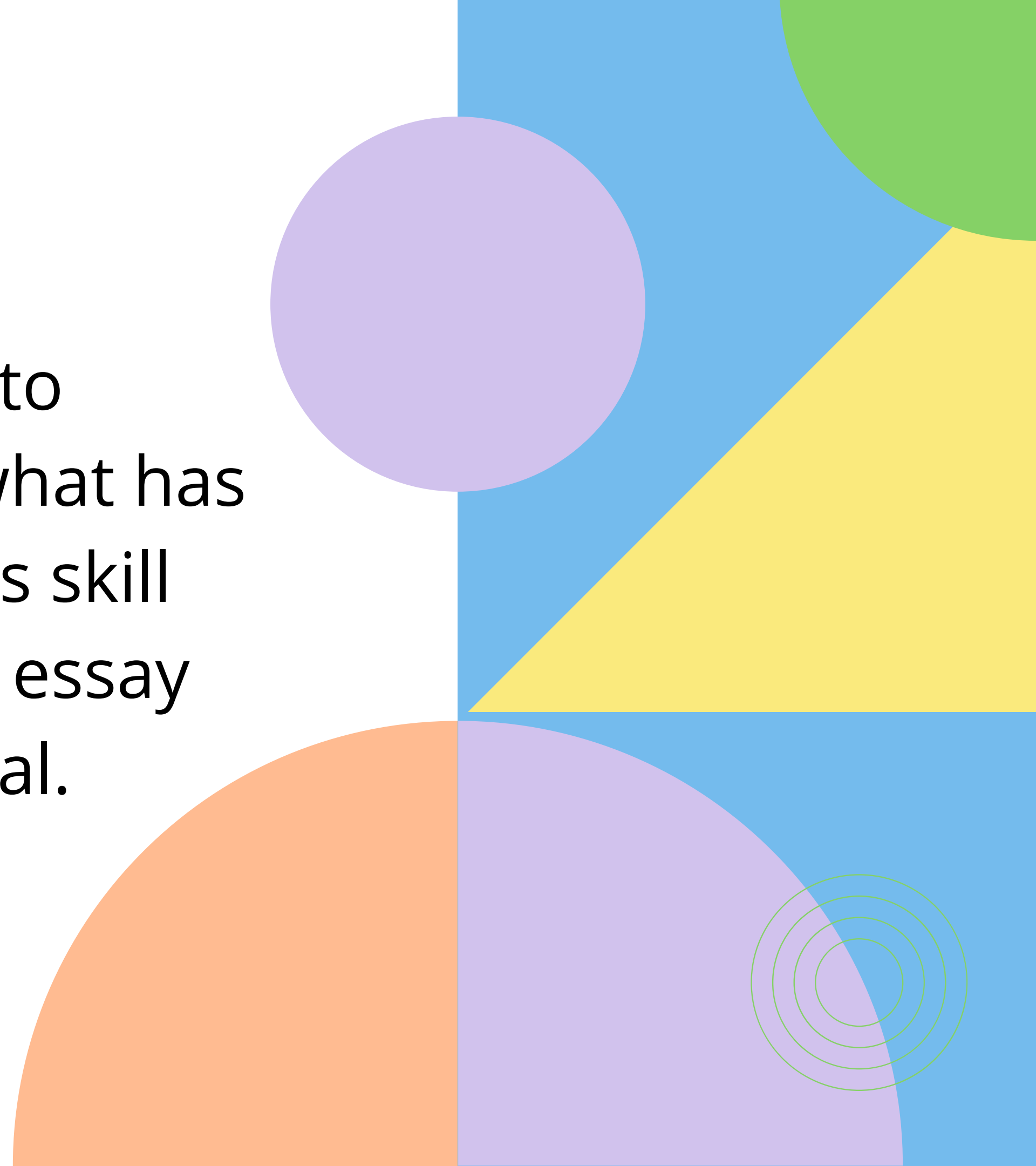
# Visualization

Being able to picture either an image or a scene guides a writer to put those ideas, thoughts, and images into words.



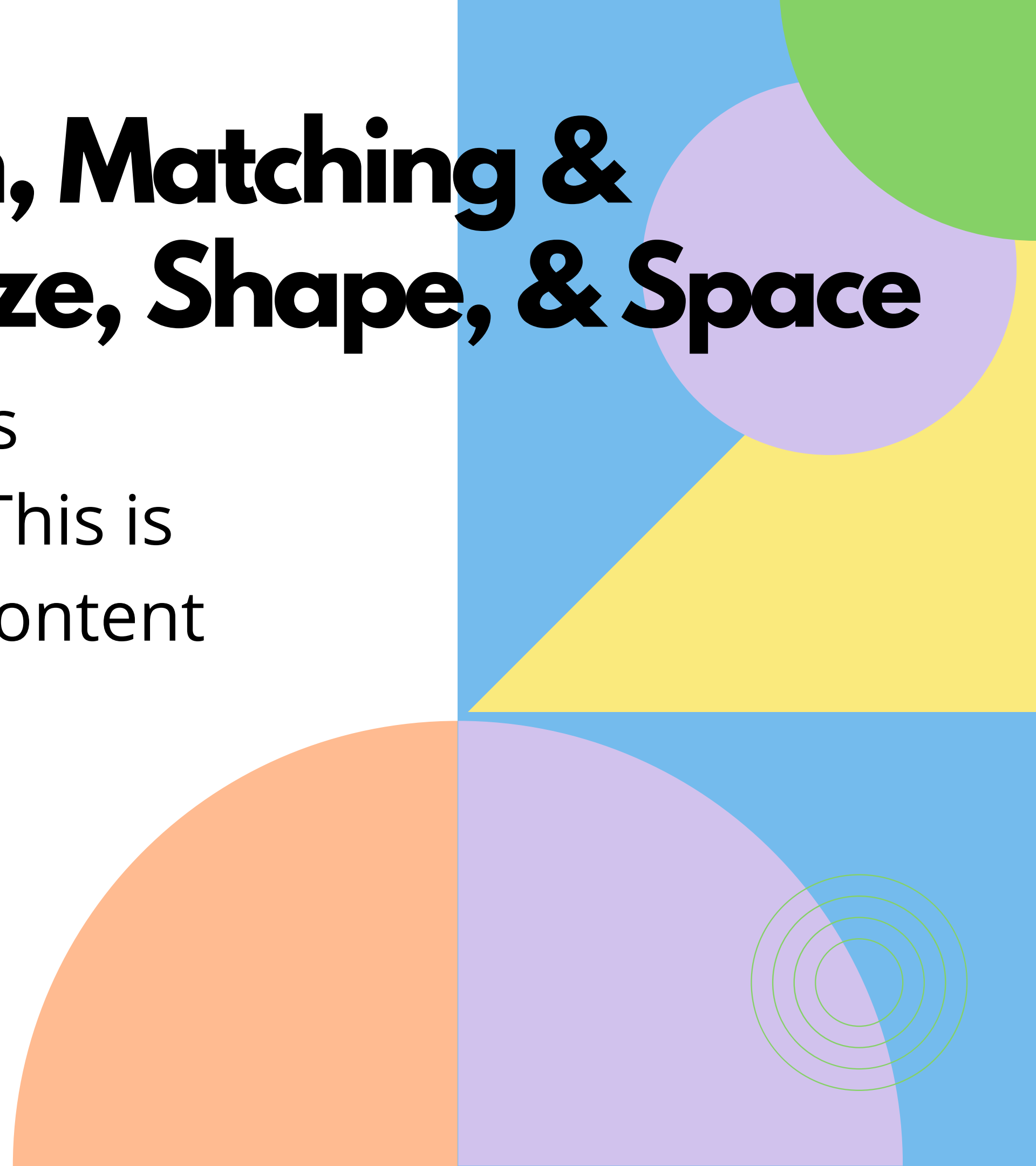
# Visual Memory

Important for when you want to remember the details about what has been read or experienced. This skill also helpful for completing an essay about recently-learned material.



# Visual Identification, Matching & Discrimination of Size, Shape, & Space

The ability to notice what goes together and what does not. This is helpful when organizing the content being written.



# Visual Association

An example is when you flip a light switch and the light turns on. You associate the switch with the light.





# Visual Categorization

Helps the student group ideas.  
This is helpful when composing a  
paragraph so the student's writing  
flows well.



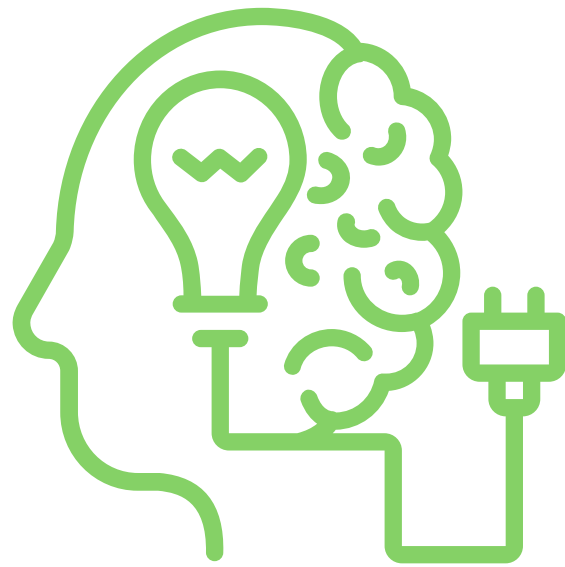
# Visual Closure

If you see a scene, Visual Closure allows you to anticipate what might be next.

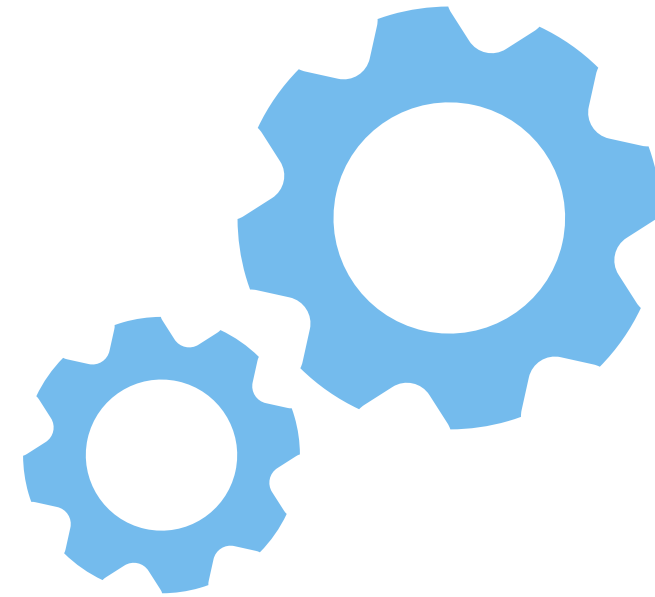
This is helpful in creative writing.



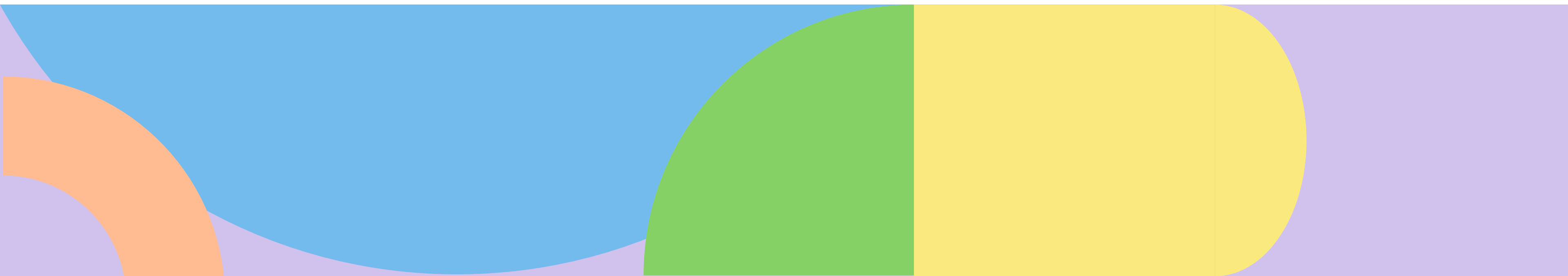
# 2 Categories of Writing



Creative

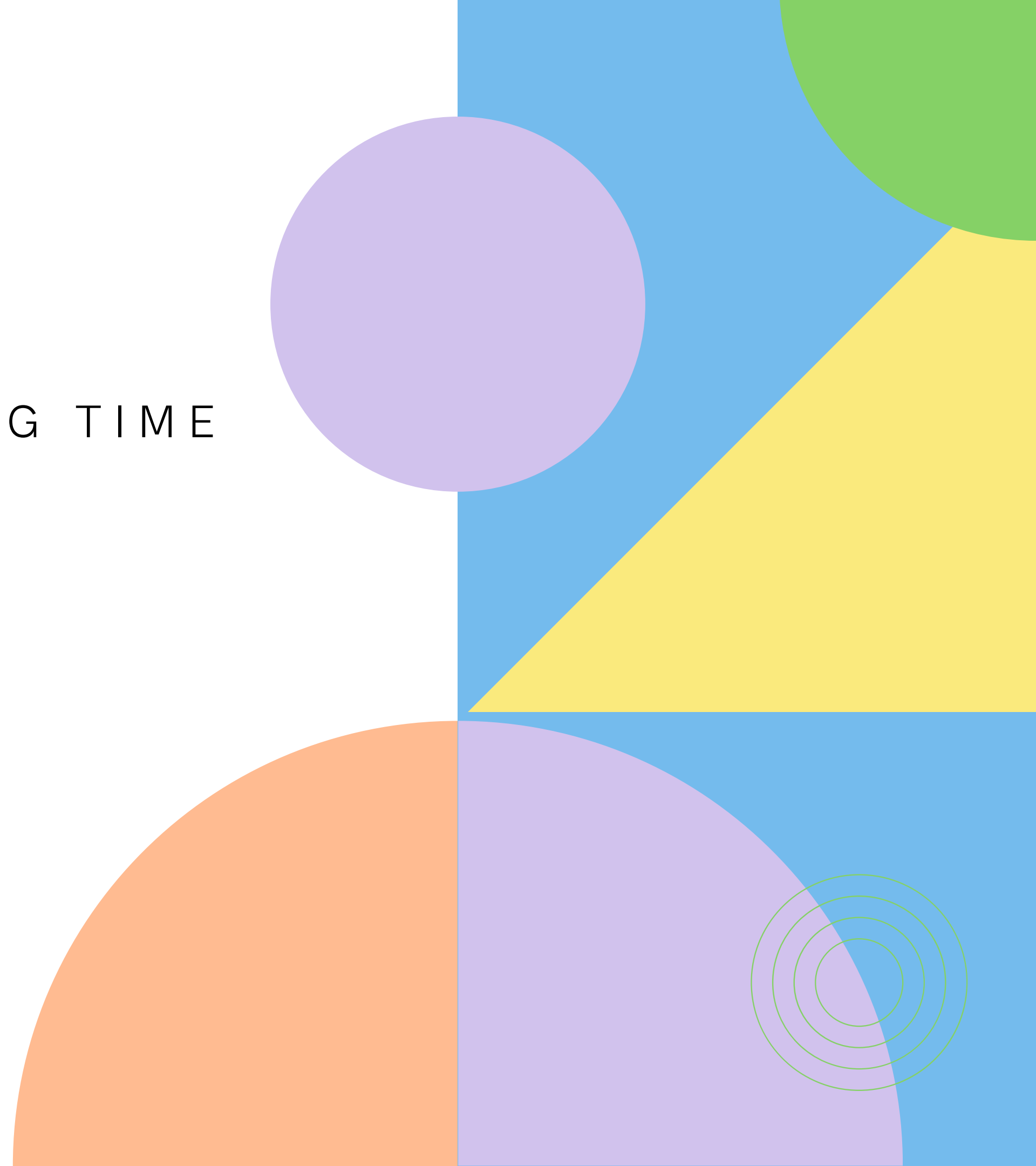


Technical



# Items Needed for Composition

- QUIET DESIGNATED WRITING TIME
- DICTIONARY
- THESAURUS
- FUN WRITING UTENSIL
- QUALITY PAPER
- COMPUTER
- COMFORTABLE CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT
- DESK
- CHAIR
- LIGHTING



# Composition Activity

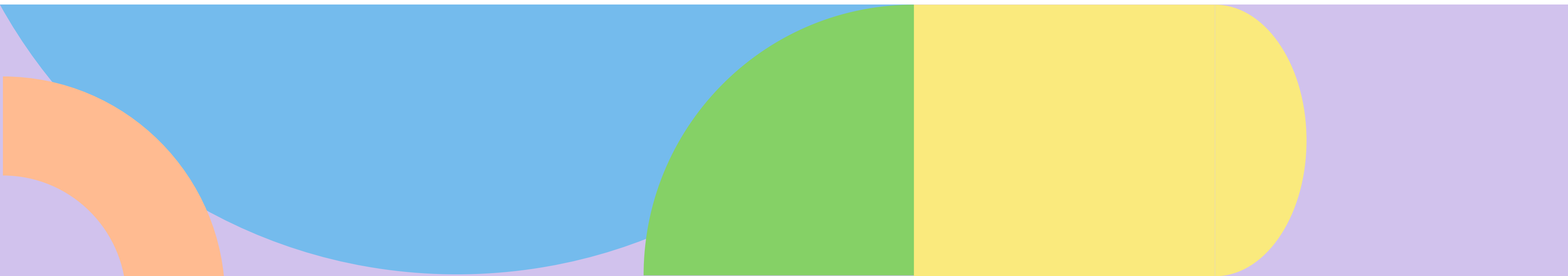
Step 1: Write one sentence every day for one week.

Step 2: Write one paragraph every day for the 2nd week. The sentences and paragraphs do not need to relate to each other.

Step 3: In the 3rd week, write one sentence every day on a subject you know nothing about.

Step 4: In the 4th week, write a paragraph regarding something about which you know nothing.  
Make up ideas, items, or concepts for weeks 3 & 4.

Step 5: For week 5, write a one-page story about something personally important. Be very descriptive.

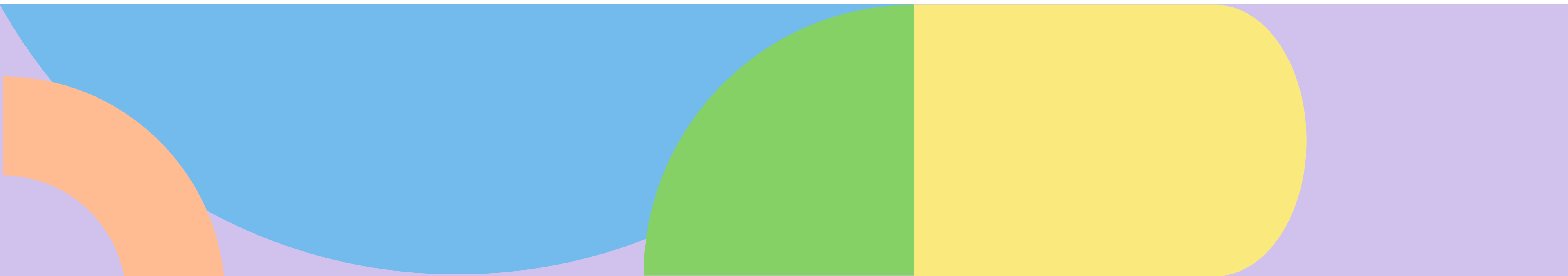


# Composition Activity

Step 6: During week 6, go back and re-write the sentences from week one, making them more interesting by adding descriptive words to the nouns and verbs.

Step 7: For week 7, rewrite the sentences from week six and make them sound scary.

Step 8: On week 8, rewrite the sentences from week 6, making them sound funny.





# Building Composition Skills

## Visual/Verbal Description

DESCRIBE SOMETHING IN THE ROOM.

THE COACH TRIES TO DETERMINE WHAT IS  
BEING DESCRIBED.

BE SURE TO WAIT UNTIL LOTS OF GOOD  
DESCRIPTIVE WORDS ARE USED SO THERE IS  
NO QUESTION OF WHAT AND WHERE THE ITEM  
IS.

ENCOURAGE WORDS THAT DESCRIBE SIZE,  
SHAPE, COLOR, AND LOCATION.



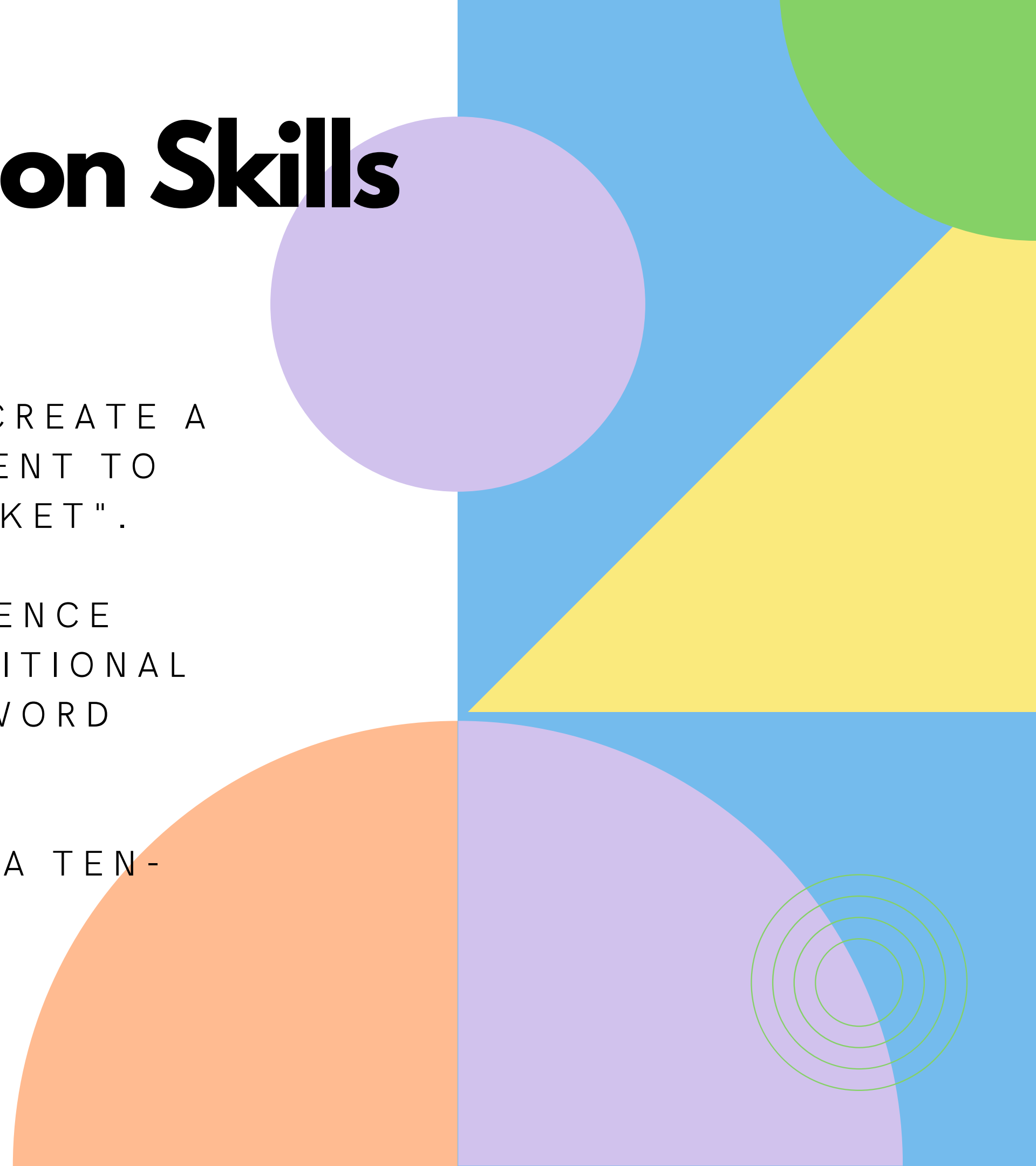
# Building Composition Skills

## Story Telling

CHOOSE A WORD AROUND WHICH TO CREATE A STORY. FOR EXAMPLE, ASK THE STUDENT TO TELL A STORY ABOUT THE WORD "BASKET".

HE GETS ONE POINT FOR EVERY SENTENCE THAT HAS FIVE WORDS, AND ONE ADDITIONAL POINT EACH TIME HE INCLUDES THE WORD BASKET.

HE GETS FIVE POINTS WHEN HE USES A TEN-WORD SENTENCE.



# Building Composition Skills Using Full Sentences

CHOOSE A SPECIFIC TIME FRAME, ABOUT 30 MINUTES, WHEN ALL CONVERSATION MUST BE FULL SENTENCES OF MORE THAN THREE WORDS.

WHEN USING A SENTENCE OR PHRASE OF LESS THAN THREE WORDS, LOSE ONE POINT.

WHEN USING A SENTENCE OF GREATER THAN THREE WORDS, EARN ONE POINT.

AS IMPROVEMENT OCCURS, INCREASE TIME YOU ASK HIM TO USE FULL SENTENCES.



# Building Composition Skills

## Describing an Object

DESCRIBE AN OBJECT IN SUCH A WAY THAT AN ALIEN FROM ANOTHER PLANET WOULD KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS. EXAMPLE: THE OBJECT IS AN APPLE.

THE GOAL IS TO ASK QUESTIONS SO THE STUDENT DISCOVERS HOW TO DESCRIBE THE OBJECT BETTER. QUESTIONS ARE USED TO GUIDE AND MAKE THE EXPERIENCE POSITIVE. AS THE STUDENT GAINS CONFIDENCE HE SHOULD RESPOND IN FULL SENTENCES.

ENCOURAGE THE STUDENT TO USE AS MANY DESCRIPTIVE WORDS AS POSSIBLE FOR EACH SENTENCE. THESE MIGHT BE SPECIFICS ABOUT COLOR, SIZE, OR WEIGHT. THEY MIGHT BE WORDS LIKE INSIDE, OUTSIDE, BRIGHT, OR DULL.



# Building Composition Skills

## Describing an Activity

DESCRIBE AN ACTIVITY IN EXTREME DETAIL SO A STRANGER COULD DO IT EXACTLY CORRECT.

FOR EXAMPLE, "HOW DO I SET THE DINNER TABLE AT YOUR HOUSE?"

THE STUDENT MAY SAY, "I PUT THE PLATES ON THE TABLE." YOUR RESPONSE SHOULD BE, "WHICH PLATES? WHAT COLOR? WHERE ARE THEY? HOW MANY?"

THE GOAL IS FOR THE COACH TO ASK VERY FEW QUESTIONS, BECAUSE YOUR STUDENT'S DESCRIPTION WILL PERMIT YOU TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW TO CARRY OUT THE TASK.



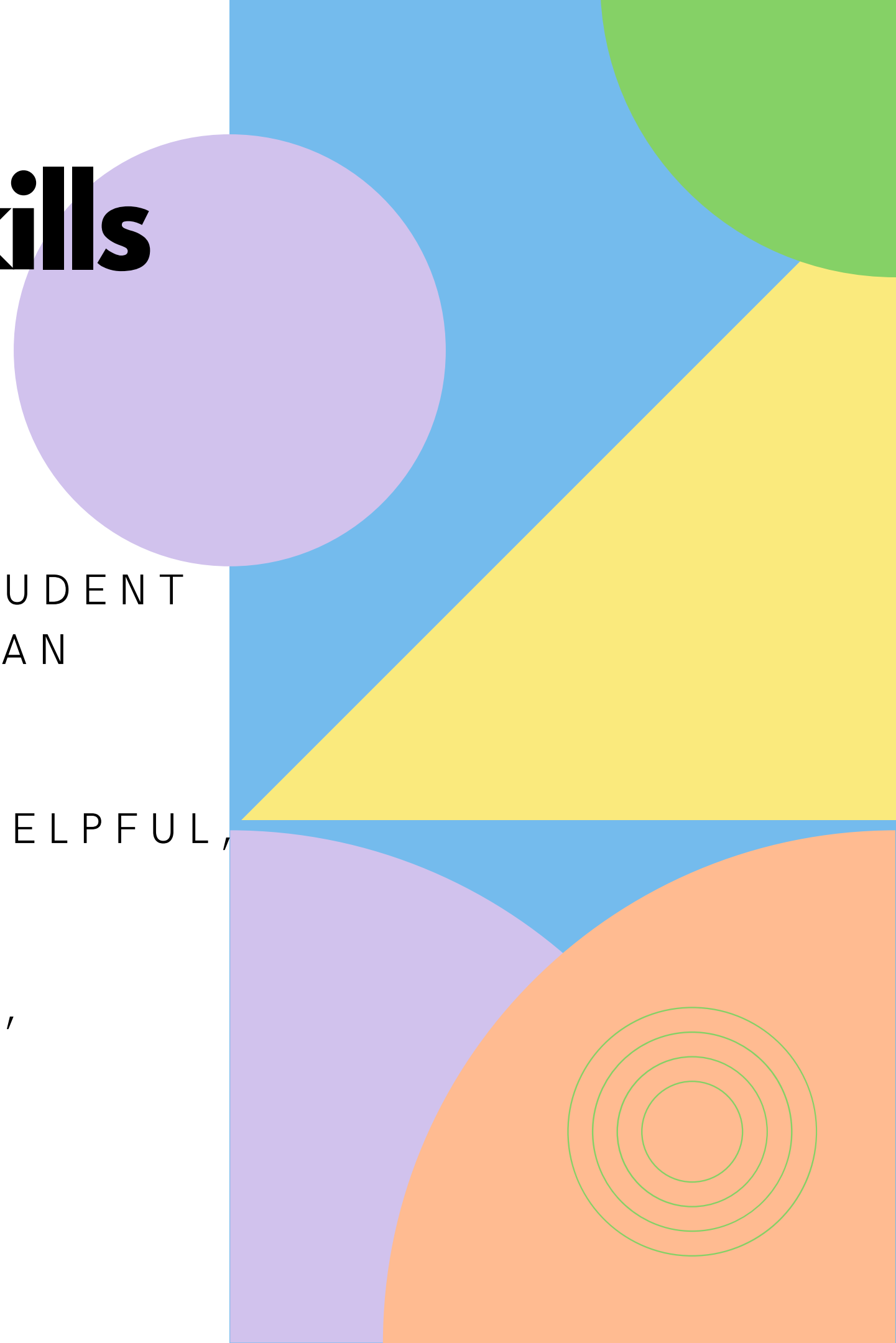
# Building Composition Skills

## Thesaurus Word Game

PICK AN ADJECTIVE LIKE "GOOD". ASK THE STUDENT HOW MANY WORDS HE CAN THINK OF THAT MEAN GOOD.

USE COMMON WORDS LIKE NICE, BEAUTIFUL, HELPFUL, ETC. TO BUILD HIS VOCABULARY.

DO THE SAME WITH ADVERBS SUCH AS SLOWLY, QUICKLY, ETC.







**Thanks for being here!**

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