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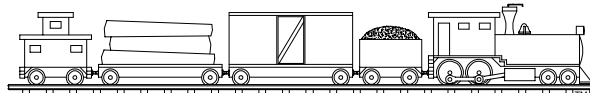This sample is covered by Copyright and ALL rights are reserved.

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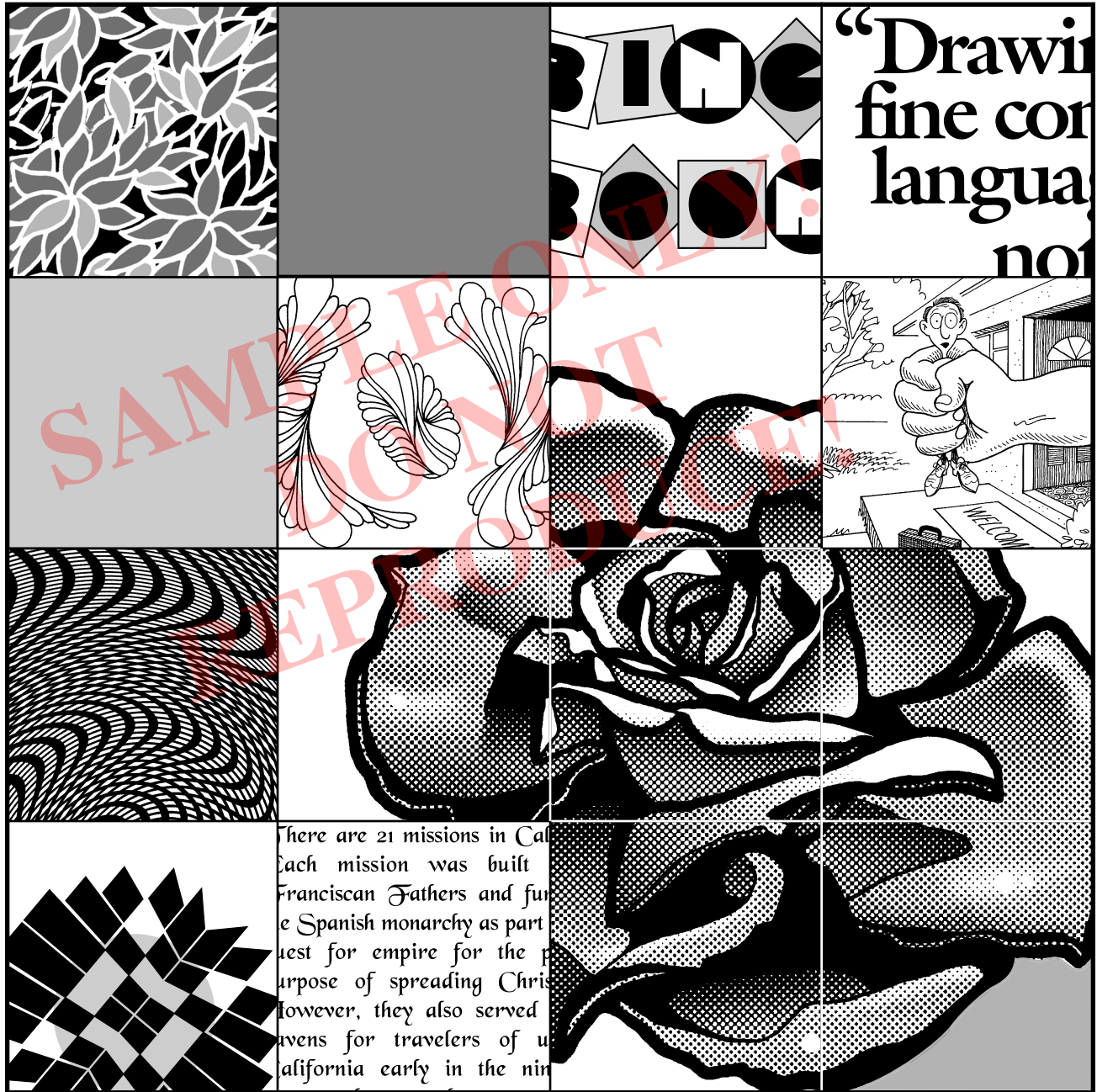
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Insight™ Technical Education

Written by Paul Bunch and Melvin G. Peterman

3 THE PAGE

Some graphic designers have a fear of a blank page or sheet of paper. That's because they equate the vast expanse of absolutely nothing on the blank page with the lack of ideas in their mind. But if you understand at the outset that each blank page has an underlying invisible structure with certain page elements inherent to that page, then you can see that there is already something on the page. It's just a matter of you going on a hunt outside of your mind (thinking "outside of the box") to discover elements and ideas and choosing which of these elements and ideas you are going to bring into play as you combine them with your subject matter and text. As you hunt, you gradually bring that hidden structure of the page to the surface where everyone can see it clearly.

In this chapter we'll show you what all those elements are. Then, when you're confronted with the vast stretches of a pefectly white and blank sheet of paper, you won't panic, because you'll see all those elements hiding just under the surface, waiting for you to put them together. Plus, you and I both know that there is NOT a vast expanse of absolutely nothing between your ears.

When you look at most "blank" pages, you'll envision a grid composed of:
- Margins
- Columns of text
- Headers
- Footers
- Mastheads
- Headlines
- Subheads
- Captions
- Graphic Objects
- White Space

See, there's already something on the page. Now let's see what some grids and those elements look like.
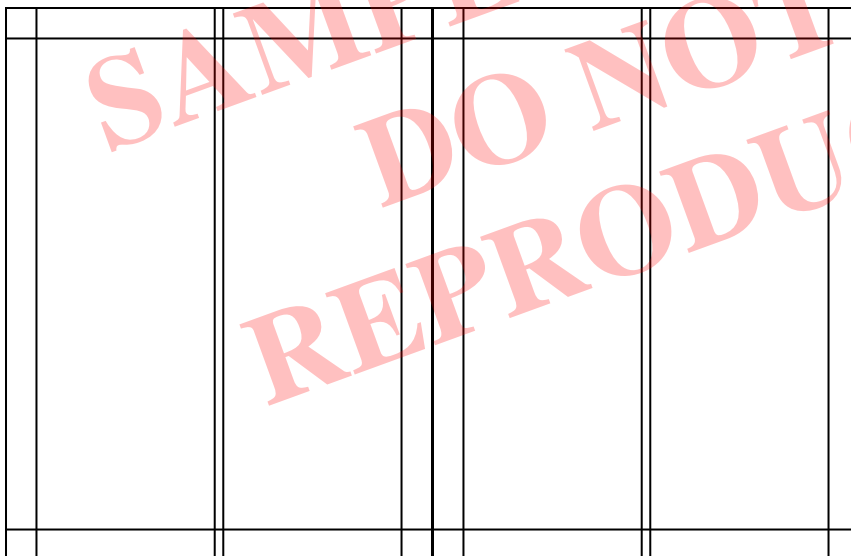
The Grid

The first thing you will see just under the surface of the blank page is the "Grid" of the page. Over the years magazine and newspaper designers discovered that having an established invisible grid pattern to hang all their page elements on helps speed up layout production. Grids also contribute to a uniform appearance of a publication. And even if you are not laying out an article in a magazine, newspaper or newsletter, if you have many visual elements and pieces of text that have to come together into a pleasing layout, a grid can help organize everything.

Grids range from simple to very complex. There isn't room to show you all the different variations, so we'll show you the most well-known ones.

Remember "The Lurking Loch Ness Monster" high school research paper we started out with in chapter 1? All we could do there was type it, using only a few limited design options. Now let's take it and create a magazine layout for it, using some grids and some other page elements.

We could format it into a common 2-column grid like this:

Here's how the grid lines look in relation to the article layout. Below you can see how many of the page elements mentioned earlier were treated in this layout. Notice how even a simple rectangle of gray can be utilized as a graphic object and suggests the water the monster is swimming in.

Another eye-catching technique is to have the text of your article flow around the shape of a graphic object. In this case the type "runs around" the curved neck of "Nessie."

Margin Graphic Object Graphic Object

Header Margin Margin

Headline White Space Caption

White Space Subhead Graphic Object Margin

Graphic Object Caption

Column of text Footer Graphic Object

The Lurking Loch Ness Monster

by Paul Bunch

The legendary Loch Ness monster does not exist in medieval legends anymore. Instead, its large shadowy form inhabits the depths of Loch Ness along with others of its kind. A controversy does exist, however, as to whether the monster is a mythical animal or whether it is a real flesh-and-blood creature. To the scientists the Loch Ness monster is no laughing matter. Spurred on by irrefutable evidence, they are hot on the tail of the mysterious creatures.

Legends

In the beginning it was hard to get scientists to come within throwing distance of the subject, but after a while, some of them consented and research started developing. First, the scientists have looked suspiciously into the legend of the Loch Ness monster. They have discovered that it originated during medieval times amidst a deluge of similar legends. Tales of monsters in deep lakes come from Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Lake Victoria in Africa, and Lake Bikal in the Soviet Union.[1] Also, the Scottish and Irish people had a habit of placing a terrible mythical monster in every lake of their country, making "Nessie," the Loch Ness monster, seem even more transparent.[2]

Secondly, the scientists have analyzed reports of eye-witness sightings of Nessie. Well-known reports about sea serpents in general date back more than a thousand years to Scandanavia.[3] But Nessie was first sighted, according to written record, 1,400 years ago,[4] and she did not create too much of a rustle until 1933 when a road along the lake from Fort Augustus to Inverness was blasted out of the rock. Immediately there was a rash of sightings of the monster.[5] Since that time well over three thousand sightings have been reported.[6] At this point the scientists hesitate. If there have been well over three thousand sightings of the monster since 1933, the single creature must be quite aged by now. This idea has a strong penchant for the ancient legend of the "terrible mythical monster at the bottom of the lake."

Therefore, a logical theory has been proposed stating that instead of one monster there is a herd of them inhabiting the loch; their offspring replenish the lake every generation.[7] They are seen in all parts of the lake usually between dawn and nine thirty a.m.,[8] and they have even ventured out upon land! The latter happened one moonlit night as a young man was riding his motorcycle alongside the lake. Suddenly, one of the monsters bounded out of the shadows across the road ahead of him and lunged towards the lake. After the young man, in pursuit, reached the shore, the monster had vanished beneath the waters.[9]

Many sightings of this nature and a few half-convincing photographs have inspired the scientists to investigate further into this mysterious problem and prove or disprove once and for all the existence of Nessie.

Loch Ness

The monsters' haunt, Loch Ness, is a lake twenty-four miles long and one to one and a half miles wide located in the center of upper Scotland. It could very well harbor a tribe of monsters, for they could survive by preying on the abundant marine life in the lake. Salmon run up to thirty pounds, and trout, eels, and pike weigh up to fifteen pounds. Since the water never freezes and remains at about forty-two degrees yearround at the bottom, they would enjoy a comfortable habitat. But what are the aquatic creatures doing in the lake in the first place? Before the end of the ice age the loch was an arm of the sea,—which the word "loch" means—and after the ice melted, the earth's crust rose and isolated the loch from the North Sea. Occupying the loch on a usual visit, the monsters were unaware that they were cut off from the sea.[10] But through the centuries they have learned how to live in their abode, and now man finds it very difficult to catch them.

The elusive monster is aided in staying hidden from man by the murky waters and the enormous depth of the loch. Peat and mud cloud the water to such an extent that search lights used by divers would only pretrate a few feet, making a search for Nessie, by this means, impossible.[11] The loch also has a maximum depth of 754 feet and more than half reaches down to seven hundred feet.[12] To the scientists trying to effect the capture of the monsters all of this proves to be quite a brick wall.

Ford P. Harrison is one of the many photographers who make sightings and snap pictures of "Nessie" every year. Unfortunately, all of these photos are never very clear.

What Does Nessie Look Like?

It even hides most of the monster's physical appearance. Revealing just enough form in all sightings, the monster gives rise to skepticism and suggested explanations. One explanation proposes that the monster is merely a giant eel. Eel larvae have been discovered at sea large enough to turn into eels the size of telephone poles.[13] Another explanation suggests that a giant salamander haunts the loch. Finally, there is the suggestion that the monster is a plesiosaur, an aquatic dinosaur that supposedly became extinct seventy million years ago.[14] Is this what the mystery monster really is? Listing from one to seven humps on the monster's back, most sightings might agree with the gigantic eel as its pliant coils (seven?) ripple through the waves, but what about the long neck curving out of the water in a lot of sightings?[15] An examination of the plesiosaur, Elasomasaurus, might reveal the answer. Adapted for life in the open sea, it grew to a thirty-foot length. It had a barrel-shaped body, four paddle-like limbs, a long slender neck, and a tiny head with a large mouth.[16]

An Elasomasaurus.

Some theorists think this prehistoric Plesiosaur has survived through the centuries in Loch Ness and is the "monster" known as "Nessie."

Supporting this idea further, a description drawn up by Dr. Antcon Cornelius Oudemans in the latter half of the nineteenth century parallels the one just given. As he was investigating into reports of sea serpents in general, Oudemans sorted through the many reports, came up with 162 he accepted as being true, and pieced together an animal that looked like a brontosaur with flippers instead of legs (or a plesiosaur).[17]

This almost unbelievable explanation would be laughed down by a lot of people. Nevertheless, a great number of thinking people are assuming straight faces as they begin to think about Nessie seriously.

Loch Ness Research

Organizations

Tim Dinsdale is one of these people. Interested in seeing the monster, Dinsdale waited six days by the loch in April of 1960; he saw nothing. Then, as he was leaving, he spotted the monster 1,300 yards out from the shore! Quickly he grabbed his sixteen millimeter movie camera and shot forty feet of the monster swimming away from him.[18] The Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Center (JARIC) studied the film in the greatest detail and released a two-thousand word document concluding that Loch Ness holds an object that is probably alive. This document suddenly gave the Loch Ness monster reality and respectability.[19]

In fact, the monster had such a ring of reality that in 1962 the universities of Oxford and Cambridge sent a summertime expedition

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