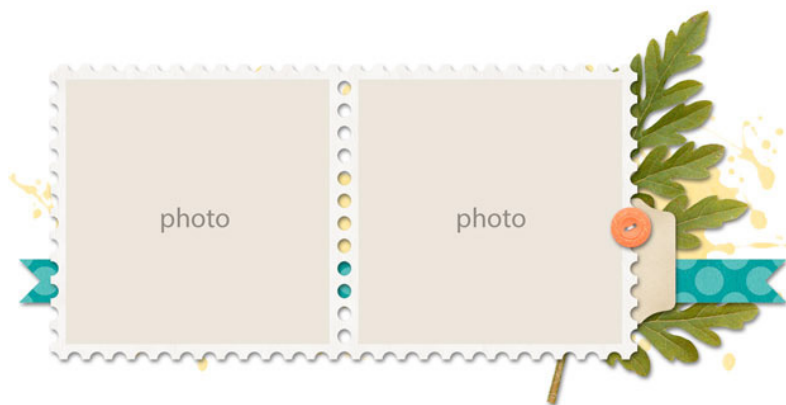




Class by Jen White

## Cluster Queen

### Lesson 08 Part 2: Dependent Linear Cluster



#### Drop Shadows

No - paint

Low - button,  
frame, leaf,  
ribbon, tab

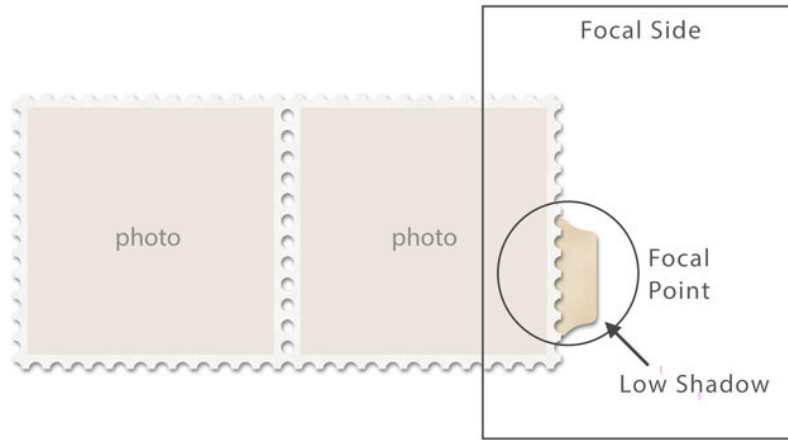
Here is one possible example of a dependent linear cluster using the photo/frame and the five elements provided.

#### Evaluate My Cluster—Here's What I Did

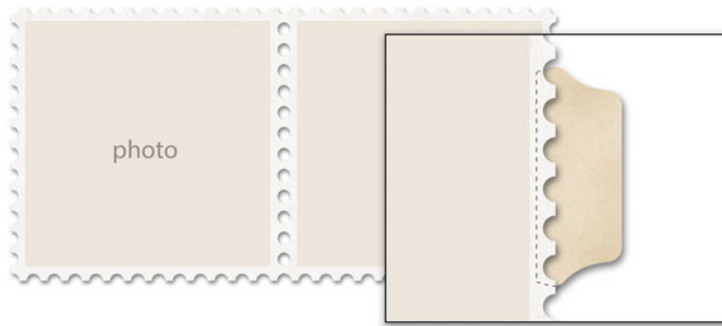
Remember, it's okay if your process of cluster creation is different than mine.



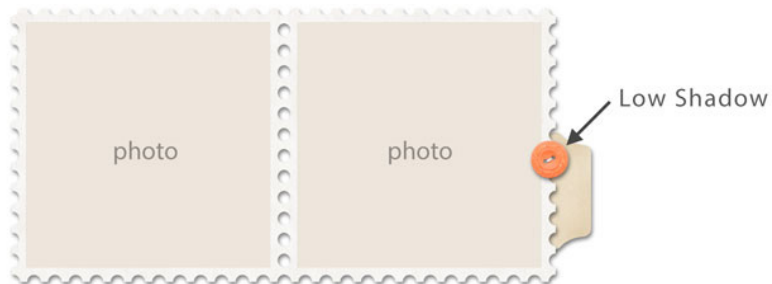
- As instructed in the lesson, I started with the flattened photo/frame combo.
- I decided to use a landscape orientation, but a vertical orientation would have worked exactly the same way.
- Since this class is not about photos, I did not add them.
- Because the frame around the photos is meant to look like paper, I added a low drop shadow.



- Next, I decided to use the tab to determine the focal side and focal point of the cluster.
- Since the tab is paper, I applied a low drop shadow to it as well.



- I chose to position the tab slightly behind the frame.
- Since the tab is not a linear object, it will only show on the focal side.



- The next element I added was the button.
- Since the button is not a linear element, it's going to stay only on the focal side of the frame.
- Then, I added a low drop shadow.

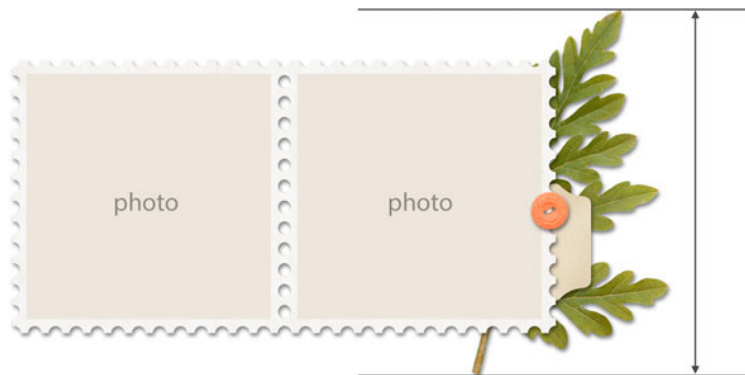
**Tip:** You want to try and avoid symmetry when working with clusters.



- The position of the button is visually connecting to the focal point that was originally defined by the tab.
- To give the cluster more variety, I placed the button on top of the frame instead of beneath it.
- In real life the button is in good proportion to the tab.



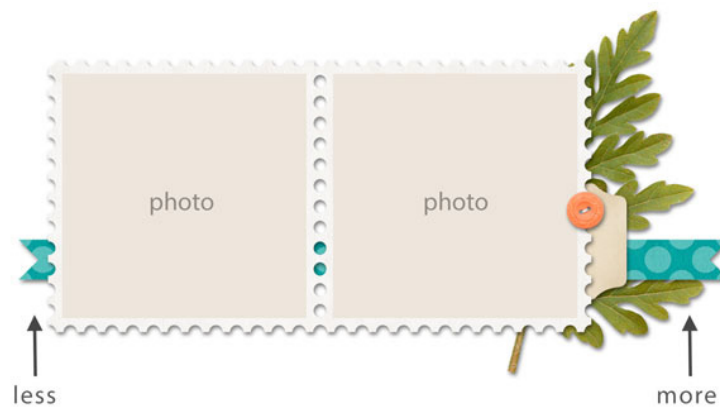
- Working down, I added the leaves next.
- Since the leaves are pretty flat looking, I gave them a low drop shadow.
- The position of the leaves is visually connected with the focal point of the cluster, but extends well out of it.



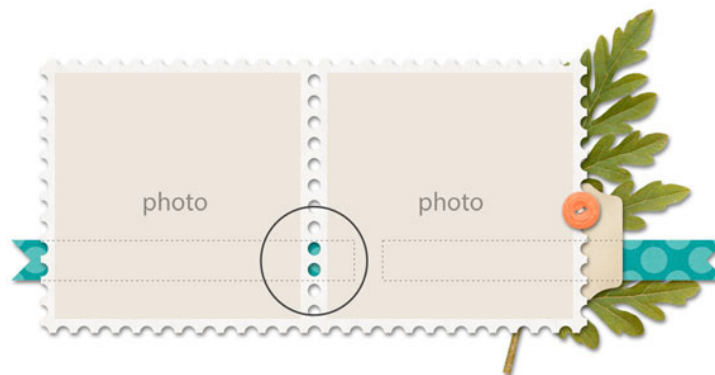
- In order for the leaves to be in good proportion to the tab and the button, they needed to be fairly large, but I made sure to not make them much larger than the frame.
- If the leaves were too big, they would totally sideline the entire cluster and steal attention away from the photos that will eventually be there.
- And again, since the leaves are not a linear element, I kept them only on the focal side of the cluster.



- Next, I added the ribbon with the flags pointing right.
- The ribbon is in front of the leaves but behind the tab.
- It has a low drop shadow.
- I made sure the ribbon visually connected to the focal point.



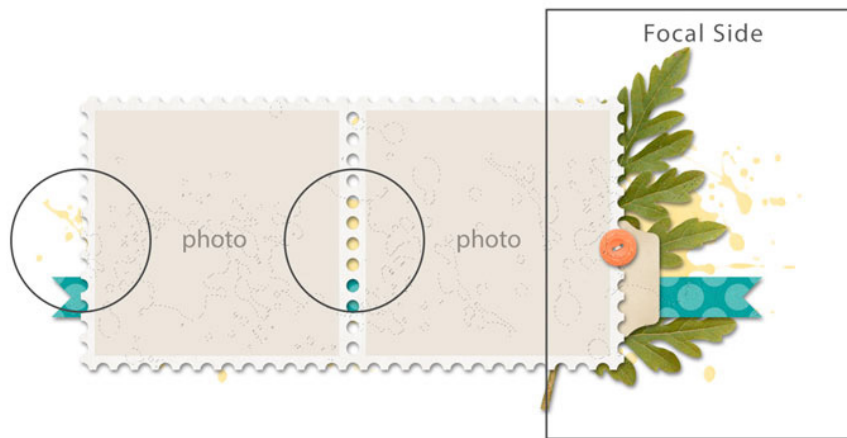
- Because the ribbon is a linear element, I used it to span the photo/frame combo.
- There is more of the ribbon showing on the right than on the left, because I chose the right to be the focal side.



- To achieve this look, instead of stretching the ribbon or transforming it much larger, I created a duplicate, flipped the duplicate horizontally, and then moved it over to peek out from behind the left side of the frame.
- It's also important that the ribbon showed between the two photos.



- Finally, I added the paint behind all the other elements.
- Paint is one of those things that does not get a drop shadow.
- Paint is also one of those things that will look nice spanning the width of the frame.
- In Step Three of this lesson I'll talk more about what kinds of elements will look good spanning the width.



- Just as with the ribbon, in order for the paint to span the distance, I had to duplicate it. In fact, I duplicated it twice, once to show in the middle and then once to let some of it peek out on the left side.
- You can see the position of the three paint splotches from the selection outline here.
- In order to maintain a focal side and a supporting side, there is more of the paint showing on the right than on the left.

### Illustrating the Meaning of Dependent

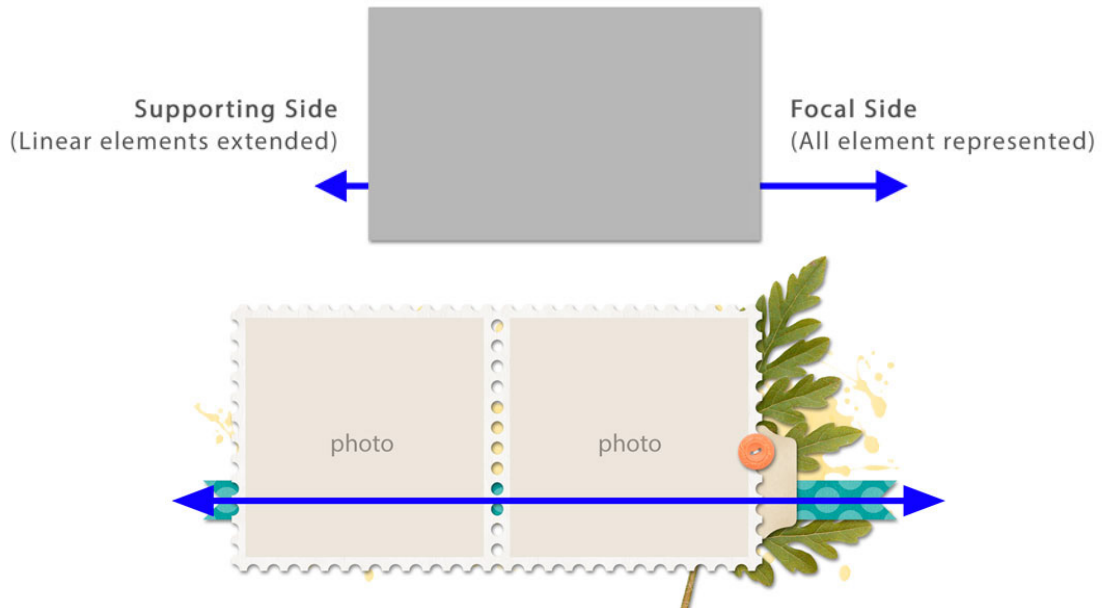
If I were to take away the photo/frame combo from my cluster (below), the cluster looks odd and incomplete. It cannot stand alone. It's dependent upon the photo/frame in order to be complete.



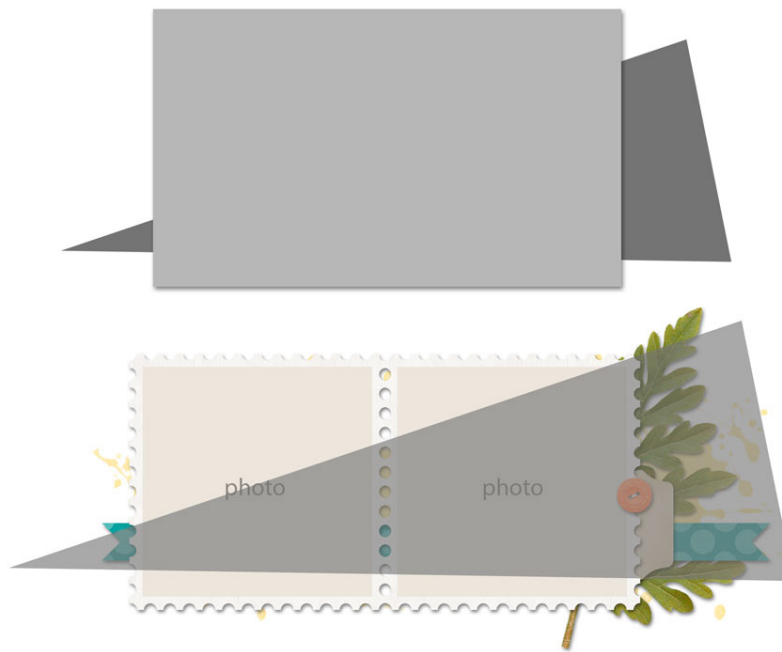
## Putting the Cluster to the Test

When creating my dependent linear cluster, I tried to keep the illustrations from step one in mind.

Here is what my cluster looks like when compared to the Focal Side illustration.



And, here is what my cluster looks like when compared to the Shape Starter illustration.



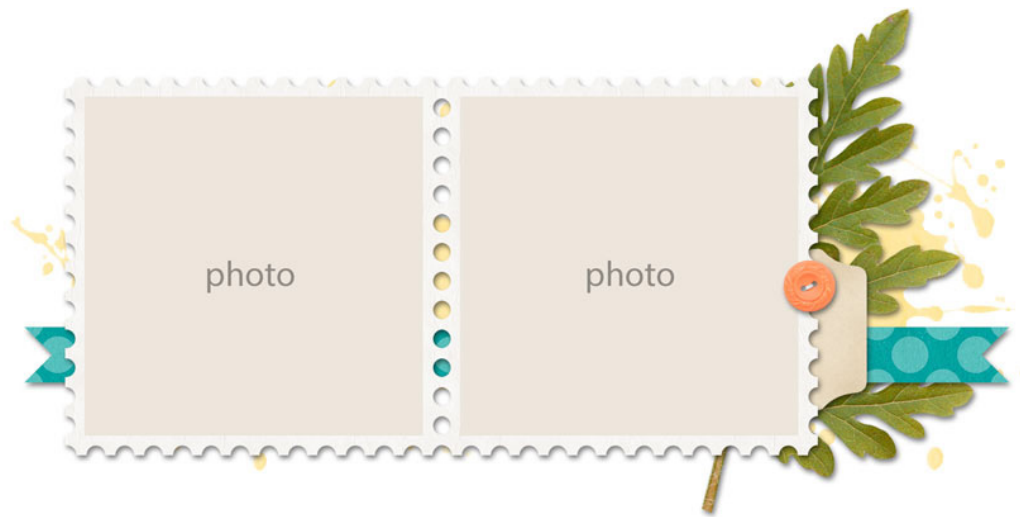
## So, how does my cluster rate?

- Are all the elements in the cluster represented on the focal side?
- Does the supporting side of the cluster only contain small amounts of the linear elements?
- Did I maintain a focal point on the focal side of the cluster?

**Answer:** Yes, yes, and yes!

Ask yourself these same questions about the cluster you made from Step One.



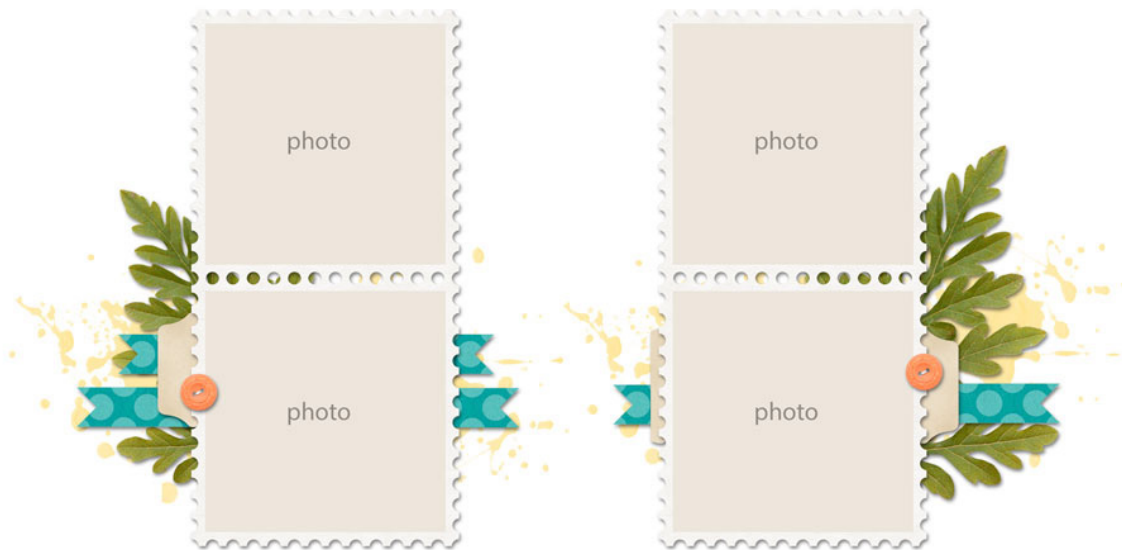


## Step Two: Copy My Cluster Exactly

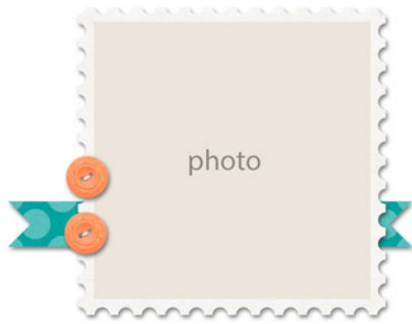
- Take the time to create an exact copy of my dependent linear cluster above. Use the flat photo/frame and elements I provided.
- Pay special attention to the order and position of each layer and element.
- Follow the advice of drop shadow depth for the photo/frame and each of the elements.

## More Inspiration

Did you happen to try the Additional Challenges above? I had a little bit of time to play. For some extra practice, try copying these designs as well.



Here are two variations of my dependent linear cluster. The big difference is that I switched the frame from landscape to portrait. Can you spot any other differences?



These variations are more minimal, using only half the photo/frame and two or three other elements from the ones provided.

### What's Your Preference?

Which of my additional clusters do you like best? Your answer might help you narrow down what your style preference is when it comes to clusters.

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**ATTENTION:** Please do not post your results of Step Two on the class Facebook Group. Doing so may sideline the creative process for your fellow classmates.

If you're mega excited to share your result of Step Two, I'd love to see it. You can email it to me or send it via the Help Desk.

**CAUTION:** Don't rush to Step Three until you've successfully completed Step Two.