



Class by Jen White

Cluster Queen

Lesson 03 Part 1: Word Art Cluster



Why These Five Elements?

Each of the elements provided comes from my personal stash. The element set is not specific to any particular designer or kit.

- **Style.** Because my goal was to create a word art cluster, I started by finding word art I love. I chose a word art sticker so that I could place other elements behind and in front of it.
- **Variety.** Texture variety will help make any cluster beautiful. Three of the elements (word art, dragonfly stamp, paint splatter) have no texture to the touch, but they are visually different. The leaf and bow provide the cluster with nice depth and texture.
- **Color.** The most popular color of word art is black. It's classy and goes with everything. The red of the bow and paint provides a nice splash of color.

Step One: Create a Cluster

- Create a word art cluster using the five elements provided.

What is a cluster?

- A cluster is a group of elements positioned close together.

What is word art?

- Word art is a word or phrase artfully designed and/or arranged.

What is a word art cluster?

- A word art cluster is one that focuses on word art. All other elements are secondary.
- Imagine a paperclip clipped to a word art sticker. Some of the paper clip is in front of the word art and some of the clip is behind the word art. The paper clip represents the group of secondary elements.



- The word art is visually dominant in relation to the rest of the cluster.
- If using the Shape Starter Method, build your secondary elements around a shape that complements the word art.



Determine the Focus

In a word art cluster, the word art is the focus. All other elements should support the word art.

- The word art should be the focal element of the cluster.
- Typically the focal element of a cluster would be the top layer in the Layers panel. But, in a word art cluster the word art is often in the middle of the stack of layers because it's a sticker, and stickers have small shadows.
- The focal element (word art) should be the largest element in your cluster.
- In all clustering methods, start with the word art.
- If using the Top Down Method, then continue adding elements based on shadow size, starting with the largest shadow and working your way down.
- If using the Bottoms Up Method, then continue adding elements based on shadow size, starting with the shadowless elements and working your way up.
- If using the Shape Starter Method, then continue adding elements to fill the complementary shape of your choice.

Tips, Tricks, and Inspiration

Having trouble getting started? Cannot seem to think outside the box? Here's a little help from a friend.

- When creating a word art cluster, you are actually creating a cluster (with the secondary elements) that complements the word art.
- Keep all the secondary elements closely connected, as if they are a cluster of their own.
- Look at the shape starter ideas for help positioning the secondary elements.
- Try flipping or rotating an element for interesting looks and combinations.
- Always resize elements as you add them to your cluster. The more variety of size, the better your cluster will look.
- Vary the horizontal centers of each of the supporting elements so they don't look piled on top of each other.
- If you don't especially care for the provided elements, think of how you might arrange them for a friend.



Is your confidence growing?

Is it getting a little easier to read my instructions and then see a cluster start to form in your imagination?

If you are not feeling even the tiniest bit more confident, that means you need to spend more time in Step One and Step Two.

Do This—Chart Your Confidence. Make a physical note about your confidence level at the start of this lesson. Where are you on the scale? Any different than last lesson?

Additional Challenges

You will find some lessons easier than others. If you feel like you breezed through Step One, here are some prompts and ideas to get you thinking like a Cluster Queen and challenge you to take it to the next level.

- Look at the shape starter images.
 - Try arranging the secondary clusters in the form of a triangle.
 - Try arranging the secondary clusters at both the beginning of the word art and at the end.
 - For a more minimal look, see how many clusters you can create using just the word art and one or two other elements.
 - For a fuller look, try duplicating the secondary elements (like the leaf).
 - Which of your word art clusters do you like the best?
 - Which do you like least? Do you know why you don't like it?
-



ATTENTION: Please do not post your results of Step One 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 One, 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 Two; take time to experiment and find your own solution.