VISUAL HIERACHY

Visual Hierarchy is a system of conventions by which information can be organized and which informs the reader about the order in which multiple pieces of information should be read and which information is more important than another. This system exists in one form or another in any piece of information design in which text is used, be it a recipe (as is the case with this exercise), book cover design etc.

Recipes use a convention of hierarchy in order for readers to follow the instructions. Just about all recipes use the same convention/system including separating the information into two main components – ingredients and cooking instructions.

Using the tools or methods described below, start altering the hierarchy of the following recipe. It must be contained on a single page. The hierarchy must still make sense. You may begin by adding one element, then including multiple new methods to change, or improve the way in which we read or understand the information. Save each alteration you make, collecting a variety of new results. Make at least 5 with your final version incorporating multiple strategies to create a set of instructions that are clear, easy to scan and understand and interesting to look at. You can start by copying and pasting into a word document

* Placement/rearrangement: Where on the page do you place each item or group of items. How does this affect the way we read the recipe? What do we notice first and why?
* Font – How can we define certain types of information by using different fonts. Can we emphasize certain types of information?
* Size and Weight – Altering size and weight can create an entry point for a reader and help define categories of information.
* Colour – to create emphasis on certain words or types of information
* Spacing – can influence the flow of how we read and can visually distinguish different types of information or the relationship between two types.

Beef Wellington

Ingredients

* 400 g mushrooms, roughly chopped
* sea salt and freshly ground pepper
* olive oil, for cooking
* 750g piece of prime beef fillet
* 1-2tbsp English mustard
* 6-8 slices Parma ham
* 500g ready made puff pastry
* flour, to dust
* 2 egg yolks, beaten

To keep the pastry light and crisp, we wrap the beef and mushrooms in a layer of Parma ham to shield the pastry from moisture.

Method

1. Put the mushrooms into a food processor with some seasoning and pulse to a rough paste. Scrape the paste into a pan and cook over a high heat for about 10 mins, tossing frequently, to cook out the moisture from the mushrooms. Spread out on a plate to cool.
2. Heat in a frying pan and add a little olive oil. Season the beef and sear in the hot pan for 30 secs only on each side. Remove the beef from the pan and leave to cool, then brush all over with the mustard.
3. Lay a sheet of cling film on a work surface and arrange the Parma ham slices on it. Spread the mushroom paste over the ham, then place the seared beef fillet in the middle. Keeping a tight hold of the cling film from the edge, neatly roll the Parma ham and mushrooms around the beef to form a tight barrel shape. Twist the ends of the cling film to secure. Chill for 15-20 mins to allow the beef to set and keep its shape.
4. Roll out the puff pastry on a floured surface to a large rectangle, the thickness of a £1 coin. Remove the cling film from the beef, then lay in the centre. Brush the surrounding pastry with egg yolk. Fold the ends over, the wrap the pastry around the beef, cutting off any excess. Turn over, so the seam is underneath, and place on a baking sheet. Brush over all the pastry with egg and chill for about 15 mins to let the pastry rest.
5. Heat the oven to 200C, 400F, gas 6.
6. Lightly score the pastry at 1cm intervals and glaze again with beaten egg yolk. Bake for 20 minutes, then lower the oven setting to 180C, 350F, gas 4 and cook for another 15 mins. Allow to rest for 10-15 mins