This past fall we redecorated our family room. It is the room in our house that has gotten the least attention in the 12 years we've lived here - hand-me-down sofas, 1970s wood paneled walls, dripping with toys (including a large plastic playset at one point.)

When we were deciding on the new look, I knew immediately that I wanted something serene and monochromatic—probably in response to the decade of chaos the room had seen.

We found the flooring first, and I liked that it had both grays and browns in it, so we could go with a range of neutrals. I then selected the gray paint and darker gray sofa, and finally found a dark brown-black furniture from Ikea. I chose the red sofa and pillows to give a pop of color to the now "boring" room. I also like that the wall color allows the prints to be a focus. They both represent events in our family life and meaningful stories of our lives.

I was surprised and tickled this week when I was working on images for the class discussion to see that this palette is so close to the winter beach scene.

I found an generic living room sketch online that I colored with Illustrator, and added photos of actual pieces in the room - the rug, the flooring, the two prints on the wall, and the Bollhagen vases.