

The Importance of Visual Aids in Learning and Teaching

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ABSTRACT

This article attempts to study the importance of visual aids in learning and teaching. It introduces the methods and skills of visual learning and teaching to become students active visual communicators.

KEYWORDS: *visual, pictograms, hieroglyphs, ideograms, communication, observing, looking closely, analyzing images, visual learning*

INTRODUCTION

Visual aids are tools that help to make an issue or lesson clearer or easier to understand and know (pictures, models, charts, maps, videos, slides, real objects etc.). There are many visual aids available these days. We may classify these aids as follows, visual aids are which use sense of vision are called Visual aids. For example :- models, actual objects, charts, pictures, maps, flannel board, flash cards, bulletin board, chalkboard, slides, overhead projector etc. Out of these black board and chalk are the commonest ones. The challenges of classroom instruction increases when prescribed a course to the class while course books (textbooks) are constituted with too many interactive expertise activities. Most significantly, it has convert a common phenomenon to integrate textbooks with audio visual aids as additional or supplementary resource for classroom course learning activities. Visual aids are important in education system. Visual aids are those devices which are used in classrooms to encourage students learning process and make it easier and interesting. Visual aids are the best tool for making teaching effective and the best dissemination of knowledge.

The Benefits of Visual Learning and Teaching

Introducing a consistent visual component to the curriculum can:

- help students better engage with the materials
- increase retention by 29-42%
- develop higher-order thinking skills
- hone fundamental abilities that enable students to see and conceptualize visuals clearly
- enhance tactile hand-eye-mind connections that improve the ability to recall facts and retain learning
- serve the unique needs of learners who process information primarily through visuals, as well as increase learning for all students
- provide new opportunities to some students with learning differences and challenge students who are gifted or twice exceptional
- be an integral part of best-practice intervention methods with individuals on the autism spectrum

Defining Visual Terms

To fully understand visual learning and teaching, we need to discuss visual literacy, visual language, and visual communication.

Visual literacy has been defined many ways. The Visual Triad Model describes visual literacy as the ability to do three things:

Decode - to understand and translate communications made with visual imagery

Imagine - to create, interpret, and manipulate mental models of imagery

Encode - external images that we create

In addition, visual literacy includes the ability to be an informed critic of visual information, able to ethically judge accuracy, validity, and worth. For example, when visually literate students encounter graphs and charts in their text, they often have the ability to read and analyze the visual and verbal message, comprehend meaning, question irrelevant or misleading data, and create a visual/verbal response to it.

Visual language is a form of communication that isn't aural, written, or gestural. By excluding the spoken word and signed words, visual language relies on marks, forms, design, color, and shapes to convey messages. Pictograms, hieroglyphs, and ideograms are simple forms of visual language. Signs and symbols for trains, planes, buses, restrooms, restaurants, and more are readily understood visual communications that don't rely on language to comprehend. Basic depicting and doodling are simple forms of visual language; visual language in the classroom can expand to more advanced graphic forms, including: mind maps, one pagers, presentations, picture books, and more. Depicting refers to a broader range of ways to show or to illustrate that includes detailed sketches, illustrations, designs, diagrams, photography, digital content, videos, and more. Doodling and depicting will take center stage throughout this book as important tools on the path to visual literacy. Visual Learning and Teaching presents skills and activities to build upon students' innate abilities to doodle and depict.

Visual communication is something we take part in everyday, both actively and inactively. We actively rely on visual communication to perform day-to-day tasks (for example, driving to work, we follow directions on road signs). But sometimes, we are unaware of our participation in the visual conversation because we receive messages via visual communication constantly: images in advertising, photos in magazines, icons within emails, or colors in the background of product packaging. Visual Learning and Teaching introduces skills to help you and your students become active visual communicators.

It's important to note that visual literacy is not new. As infants, we take in a tremendous amount of information visually and quickly begin learning through the visual mode. For young children, visuals are an important part of how they interact with the rest of the world. Invite a child to share—"Please tell me about your picture"—and a whole story will unfold. In fact, until we become proficient at written and spoken language, most of us rely on depictions to communicate our ideas and wants.

Over time, however, our visual skills – observing, looking closely, analyzing images, imagining, doodling, and otherwise depicting – can sometimes diminish as our focus turns to other forms of communication (verbal and written). But, as noted, the demands of the new century and the rise of technology suggest we need to integrate opportunities to learn, teach, and interact visually within education contexts. This book will help educators re-energize and build upon these innate abilities in both themselves and their students.

Visual Learners and Visual Learning

When educators introduce any new technique of teaching and learning, the goal is to help students better understand the material in an assigned curriculum. Visual teaching and learning are unique methods in that they can simultaneously address the needs of an underserved learner population (those who excel at processing information visually) as well as potentially assist all students increase their learning.

Learners with Auditory-Sequential Strengths:

- Think mostly in words
- Have auditory strengths
- Are step-by-step learner
- Attend well to details
- Follow oral directions well
- Do well at arithmetic
- Learn phonics easily
- Can sound out spelling words
- Learn well from instructions
- Are comfortable with one right answer
- Tend to be academically oriented
- Can memorize math facts quickly
- Have good auditory short-term memory
- Are well organized

Learners with Visual-Spatial Strengths:

- Think mostly in pictures
- Have visual strengths
- Are a whole-part learner
- See the big picture
- Decode visual depictions well
- Prefer geometry
- Learn whole words easily
- Can spell well by visualizing
- Arrive at correct solutions intuitively

- Like problems with many possible answers
- Often, are creatively, technologically, or mechanically talented
- Can tackle higher level math successfully often before mastering basic facts
- Have good long-term visual memory
- Create unique methods of organization Needs to "see" materials

Conclusion

To conclude, using visuals aids as a teaching method stimulates thinking and improves learning environment in a classroom. Effective use of visual aids substitutes monotonous learning environments. Students develop and increase personal understanding of the areas of learning when they experience a successful and pleasant learning in the classroom. Students find visual aids sessions useful and relevant when it has some direct relation to the course content.

Resources

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