

**Title of Session:** ArtsSites - Visual Literacy

**Moderator:** BJ Berquist

**Title of File:** 20050505artssitesvislit

**Date:** May 5, 2006

Room: After School Online

**BJB2:** Welcome to tonight's ArtsSites discussion. The topic is going to be Visual Literacy unless anyone has any other suggestions or questions

**JulieGer:** Sounds good to me.

**BJB2:** a reminder to go to the ACTIONS menu in the top right of your chat window and DETACH

**BJB2:** can you please give a short intro telling me where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach and what brings you to the discussion.

**BJB2:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and am the leader of this discussion

**MichaelRu:** Williamsville, NY (suburb of buffalo), technology integration teacher, looking for ideas for my art teachers

**BJB2:** cool, Michael

**BJB2:** anyone else?

**BJB2:** we're going to start off with the International Visual Literacy Association  
<http://www.ivla.org/>

**EmilyW:** I am in Dallas, TX, I am a web designer and recent college grad, hopes to be integration technology in the classroom in the future

**BJB2:** . o O ( you may need to hold down the ctrl key on your keyboard as you click on the url )

**BJB2:** thanks, Emily

**SusanR** joined the room.

**BJB2** waves to Sue

**EmilyW:** (sorry that did not make sense, I typed fast)

**BJB2:** Sue, can you please introduce yourself?

**DavidWe:** I'm David Weksler. I'm in Pennsylvania and I work with math and science teachers

**BJB2:** thanks, David

**SusanR:** Greetings from Ottawa, Ontario Canada

**BJB2:** Sue, I just showed International Visual Literacy Association <http://www.ivla.org/>

**SusanR:** Thanks

**BJB2:** the next site is Reading Online - New Literacies

**BJB2:** <http://readingonline.org/newliteracies/muffoletto/>

**BJB2:** this url is a lot of reading, but gives some interesting perspectives on visual literacy

**BJB2:** Is anyone familiar with the visual literacy exercise using Japanese woodcuts?

**MichaelRu:** not me

**JulieGer:** don't think so

**BJB2:** Visual Literacy Exercise <http://www.csuohio.edu/history/exercise/vlehome.html>

**BJB2** lets everyone take a few minutes to browse the site

**SusanR:** for middle school students, Bj

**BJB2:** I think it can be used for high school and up too, Sue

**BJB2** . o O ( many adults will be chagrined to realize how they don't notice details )

**JulieGer:** a lot of students have gotten interested in Japanese culture due to anime

**BJB2** agrees with Julie

**BJB2:** a site that the students also might relate to is this Graffiti page

**BJB2:** Graffiti Archaeology <http://www.otherthings.com/grafarc/>

**BJB2** . o O ( takes a while to load )

**BJB2:** another graffiti site is <http://www.graffiti.org/>

**BJB2:** the next couple of sites are more for your age kids, Sue...

**BJB2:** Visual Literacy and Picture Books <http://falcon.jmu.edu/%7Eramseyil/picture.htm>

**SusanR:** wonderful, Bj

**BJB2:** one of the links on Visual Literacy and Picture Books is Picturing Books  
<http://picturingbooks.imaginarylands.org/>

**BJB2:** This is also about picture books but may be more for the classroom teacher to help him/her understand the illustrations Readings About Children's Literature-Analysis of Art Elements <http://www.uwstout.edu/lib/irs/art.htm>

**BJB2:** some of you are familiar with a project I completed recently on cultural identity boxes. The students designed symbols that represented their cultural identity.

**SusanR** . o O ( just what I needed for my Looking at Pictures classes I am doing next Friday with grades 1 to 3 )

**BJB2:** good, Sue

**BJB2:** my lesson was based on the Emerson quote, What lies behind us, and what lies before us, are tiny matters compared to what lies within us

**BJB2:** the last site I have to share is a wonderful resource for finding symbols

**BJB2:** <http://www.symbols.net/>

**BJB2:** I think that although symbols are a rather abstract concept, the early primary grades can understand symbolism

**MichaelRu:** nice quote - most any age can reflect and learn from that one

**SusanR** agrees; can easily be adapted

**BJB2:** Now that I've given you a crash course on visual literacy...why do you think it is something that should be taught in all classrooms?

**BJB2** . o O ( or do you think that? )

**EmilyW:** I am still not exactly sure what visual literacy is

**EmilyW:** I think it can be used for younger grades

**BJB2:** The ability to construct meaning from visual input, Emily

**JulieGer:** students are considerably more visual in their activities outside of school and many are visual learners. however, they don't necessarily know how to filter or understand how to interpret what it is that they see.

**BJB2** agrees with Julie..excellent!

**EmilyW:** I guess that is my problem, I can't interpret what I see

**BJB2:** you might want to read through some of the pages I've shown, Emily, to get you started

**BJB2:** is anyone familiar with The Fourth R?

**JulieGer:** ex: Seniors at our high school look at media campaigns and try to see what the advertisers are trying to get people to believe just through images. In our film class, students learn to pick up on color, light, sound, camera angle, etc. so that they learn to see patterns in film and "read it" like they would a book - interpreting, predicting, noticing symbolism, etc

**SusanR:** Visual literacy is the ability to understand and use images.

**JulieGer:** can't recall

**MichaelRu:** I think that sight is the strongest sense we have - kids are bombarded visually everyday - visual literacy is very important

**BJB2:** apparently there is a difference between media literacy and visual literacy, Julie....

**JulieGer:** true

**BJB2:** photos, artwork, landscapes, etc, all involve visual literacy

**BJB2** agrees with Michael

**SusanR** . o O ( to think, learn, and express oneself in terms of images. )

**BJB2:** the 4th R is a concept designed by Jason Ohler

**BJB2:** [http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/teachtech/art\\_the4thr.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/teachtech/art_the4thr.htm)

**BJB2** . o O ( this is just one of many links to his theory )

**BJB2:** Jason was a guest a few years ago in Tapped In and presented his 4th R

**MichaelRu:** wow, this is right on the money with what I see every day...

**BJB2:** Emily, as a web designer, visual literacy is extremely important for you to understand

**SusanR** recalls Jason's excellent session and recommends looking at the archived transcript

**EmilyW:** I am still confused with it

**BJB2:** it's probably in the old archives, Sue

**BJB2:** When you have more time, read Jason's article, Emily

**SusanR:** We are bringing back formal Art instruction in the elementary grades in our school district

**BJB2:** any other comments or questions? Did you find the resources useful?

**BJB2** cheers for Sue...wonderful news!

**SusanR:** along with Music and Phys Ed

**BJB2:** if you have an art specialist in your school, it's a good idea to work with them to integrate the arts across the curriculum.

**BJB2** nods to Sue. All those disciplines are being found to help develop critical thinking skills

**SusanR:** Jason suggests renaming Art

**BJB2** smiles. Think that would help?

**EmilyW:** no

**MichaelRu:** I often find myself using the term design (implying art) when talking to students about creating visually attractive material

**BJB2:** I can see his point. ART is often thought to be stuff you see in museums...like poetry. Only a few people can really understand it

**BJB2:** good, Michael

**EmilyW:** I don't like looking at art that much, but I enjoy creating art

**SusanR:** Perhaps it should be called Visual Literacy.

**BJB2:** Emily, I think Jason describes the process well when he says, The most pressing need right now is to develop design skills, graphic literacy skills, and skills that knit together pictures and words into unified presentations. Once we better understand how video, sound, music, and animation communicate ideas effectively, and once the technology that supports these activities becomes more affordable and less specialized, art will become the fundamental literacy for understanding both old and new media.

**BJB2:** that is much more than visual literacy, Sue...also includes aural literacy

**MichaelRu:** hmmm...art that I like is not art I look at...its art that grabs me...

**BJB2** . o O ( the topic of another discussion )

**MichaelRu:** One of the things that I see all the time is kids over-doing it - combining too many things at once - sound, picture, video - because they can.

**BJB2:** you are able to construct valuable meaning from the artist's creation

**BJB2** chuckles...that has killed a lot of powerpoint presentations!

**MichaelRu:** the most striking messages I see come when no more than 2 diverse medium come together

**JulieGer:** i had to help some students with powerpoint this month . . . had to give them guidelines and explain why a space invader sounds will NOT elicit the right response in their presentations . . .

**BJB2:** I think this is why digital storytelling is becoming so popular

**MichaelRu:** an example from long ago - the movie Platoon I think it was - huge napalm explosions while Barbers Adagio for Strings blared...incredibly effective

**JulieGer:** another interesting effect is a clash between the image and the sound being heard - the dissonance makes a commentary that the image and sound might not necessarily make on its own

**BJB2** nods

**BJB2** . o O ( lack of aural and visual literacy )

**BJB2:** any last comments or questions?

**BJB2:** I hope this discussion has been useful to you

**BJB2** . o O ( or at least gave you something to think about )

**EmilyW:** it gave me something to think about

**MichaelRu:** me too - thanks

**BJB2** smiles. Thanks, Emily.

**JulieGer:** thanks

**BJB2:** great...thanks for joining me this evening.

**SusanR:** we will have to rethink and reshape the curriculum

**BJB2:** there is an outfit in Arizona....let me see if I can find the url

**SusanR:** Jason suggests scheduling one day in the school year when art is infused throughout content areas, when mathematics, language, and science teachers work with art teachers to enhance communication across the curriculum.

**BJB2:** <http://www.omaproject.org/>

**SusanR:** a good start

**EmilyW:** I liked that idea that Jason suggested

**BJB2:** I lead a monthly discussion where I try to offer resources to help educators integrate the arts across all disciplines all year round

**BJB2** . o O ( Arts and Literacy )

**BJB2:** the topic was Social Studies last Monday

**BJB2** . o O ( the transcript will be in the archives eventually...  
[www.tappedin.org/transcripts](http://www.tappedin.org/transcripts) )

**BJB2:** time for me to head out. Thanks again, everyone, for supporting this event.

**MichaelRu:** thank you, BJ!

**BJB2** waves goodnight