



SNS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Kurumbapalayam (Po), Coimbatore – 641 107



AN AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTION

Accredited by NBA – AICTE and Accredited by NAAC – UGC with 'A' Grade

Approved by AICTE, New Delhi & Affiliated to Anna University, Chennai

READING AND INTERPRETING VISUAL MATERIALS

Interpreting visual materials can be very specific if you are looking at a chart, graph, diagram or map. Once you understand the key and other factors involved, the meaning should be clear although the significance of the information may be subject to interpretation. However, interpreting visual materials like videos, illustrations and photographs may require you to analyze the material and make inferences in order to make sense of the information presented. We are influenced not only by our own “ways of seeing,” but by the way that the creator of the image “saw” it.

It is universally recognized that the color red indicates that a driver should stop; if you encountered a red sign like the one above (on the left) while driving in a foreign country, you would stop even though you might not decipher the words on it. You would respond by interpreting the image, not reading the text. Similarly, a skull-and-crossbones sticker on a container’s surface indicates that the contents are poisonous. You might not know what the words “sodium hydroxide” connote, but seeing the sticker on a bottle of the stuff, you would not drink it. (By the way, that would be a wise choice: sodium hydroxide is the highly caustic main ingredient in drain cleaner. It is deadly if ingested.)

But beyond receiving important messages via images, the ability to “read” visuals allows us to enjoy experiences as complex as a documentary film and as straightforward as a magazine advertisement. If you are a student, and if you lack the ability to interpret and understand visuals—graphs, maps, diagrams, advertisements, photographs, cartoons, and the like—your studies will suffer. Thus, we read visuals not only to be entertained but also to be informed about products and ideas. Not long ago in academia, all “texts” were written and verbal.

Visuals, if they appeared in a textbook, existed only to supplement the written material. Students read the written work of others (textbooks, essays, poems), and then in turn demonstrated their understanding of the works in written form via research papers, essays, or written exams. However, students today understand that “writing” and “reading” are actions that pertain not only to words but to images as well. Quickly scan your book bag; you’ll find that most textbooks use some form of visual content



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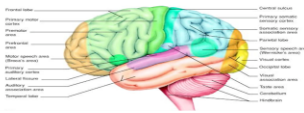
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Four common types of visual aids:



1. Photographs: images recorded by a camera. They help bring information to life, make it concrete, and help you visualize it.



2. Diagrams: sketches, drawings, or plans that show or explain how something works or shows the relationship between parts of a whole.

Four common types of visual aids (con't):



3. Maps: representations of regions or other information presented on a flat surface



4. Cartoons: humorous drawings that may or may not include a caption. They can be used to present a point of view (such as an editorial cartoon) or illustrate a point in a memorable way.

Steps to interpreting graphic aids:

- First, **read the title and any explanation** that accompany the graph. The title tells you what aspect of the author's topic is being clarified or illustrated by the graph or table.
- Next, **check the source of the information** presented in the graphic aid to see if it seems current and reliable.
- Third, **read all the headings and labels** to determine what is being presented or measured. These headings and labels may appear at the top, bottom, and side of a table or graph.

You Tube Links:



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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speed_reading

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmQiOEC8UnM>