Sprague Library Scholarship and Creative Works   Sprague Library

2016

Visual Literacy for Libraries: A Practical, Standards-Based Guide

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Visual Literacy for Libraries: A Practical, Standards-Based Guide. Nicole E. Brown, Kaila Bussert, Denise Hattwig, and Ann Medaille. American Library Association. 2016, 187 pp., $70.00. ISBN 978-0-8389-1381-9.

When teaching library instruction sessions, visual literacy is an often overlooked component. As librarians, we can be preoccupied with the evaluation of text in printed and web-based contexts, but as visual resources are increasingly used in scholarly projects, it is essential that those in instructional roles be literate themselves in the visual medium and be able to guide students to make appropriate decisions about how to use images in their work.

In *Visual Literacy for Libraries: A Practical, Standards-Based Guide*, the authors have provided a clear explanation of why visual literacy is important and an outline of how librarians can integrate the evaluation of images into their instruction practices. This book is broken down into six chapters, covering the interpretation and analysis of images, finding and/or creating appropriate images, ethical considerations, attribution, and how images can be used as a basis for further research. It can also serve as a workbook, with each chapter including several example lesson plans, worksheets, and discussion topics that can be used in the classroom context to facilitate discussion and evaluate students' understanding of content.

In Chapter 1, "Interpret and Analyze Images," the emphasis is not just on the images themselves, but also contains examples of how to analyze the context, how to interpret metadata, and how modification of an image can change its meaning. Other visual elements (including different styles of graphs and charts) are also discussed, as well as advice how to use images properly in presentations (such as knowing whether an image will enhance or distract from the text). Chapter 2, "Find the Right Images," not only contains lists of online sources to obtain free-to-use images but also gives an introduction to Creative Commons licensing, and discusses how

to appropriately link to content instead of repurposing it (which can help to maintain context.) Also included is advice on how to adapt search strings for image searching, and guidance on how to choose images appropriately by focusing on the ideas the author is trying to convey rather than the images themselves.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the use of images, from the basics of graphic design to the ethical considerations surrounding the use of photographs (a growing concern in the age of social media). The basics of fair use are also covered, and the authors include checklists which can be used in class to assist students in determining whether it would be appropriate to use images obtained from a particular source. Chapter 5, "Cite and Credit Images" is especially useful, as citations in particular are a challenge for students and instructors alike when there are so many different citation styles and types of visual media to choose from.

The final chapter, "Images and the Research Process," applies what we have learned in the previous chapters to the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. The activities presented in this section are well designed to utilize traditional techniques used in library instruction, but from a visual perspective. For librarians who may have previously been intimidated by or unacquainted with the concept of visual literacy, it shows that the essential components of visual literacy are not dissimilar from those they are already familiar with.

This title would be beneficial to academic reference and instruction librarians, school librarians, and also to researchers who are interested in incorporating more images into their own works.

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