A Critical Visual Literacy Inquiry Model
for Pre- and In-Service Teachers

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Abstract

Critical visual literacy is an important skill set for current and future educators, as well as preschool to 12th-grade students. It emphasizes critical analysis of visuals in their sociocultural context to evaluate power dynamics and plan for change. A team of three education faculty developed and implemented a critical visual literacy inquiry model in three graduate-level courses during the 2022-2023 academic year. The flexibility of this model allowed for the adaptation of different visuals and activities based on each course's specific needs and its students. This paper explains the process of developing and implementing the model, offering insights and recommendations to enhance the teacher education curriculum. It aims to improve the knowledge of critical visual literacy for both pre-service and in-service teachers, empowering them to design culturally responsive learning experiences that cater to diverse student populations effectively.

Keywords: critical visual literacy, inquiry model, curriculum design, culturally responsive teaching and learning

Introduction

The increasing presence of visuals in education and everyday life has created a need to improve teacher and student visual literacy skills generally and critical visual literacy skills specifically (Brown, 2022). Each visual sends a message from a particular perspective. However, it can be challenging for students to identify this message as visuals are subjective and incomplete by nature. Thus, readers need to possess the visual literacy skills not just to read, but also to analyze and assess them.

In this regard, teachers have to be able to develop effective learning experiences that help students study visuals critically so that they understand how visuals work. Students also need to be able to assess the message regarding power and authority, reliability and accuracy of content, bias, distortion, and omission. They need to be able to assess the impact on viewers and possibly society at the time of publication and over time and place. Whether it be a map, photograph, cartoon, video, or multimodal display, each visual reflects personal and cultural beliefs, attitudes, and ideas, among other things. As a result, the visual can send explicit or implicit messages regarding race, ethnicity, gender, political opinion, or socioeconomic class. These messages often support ideas of the dominant members of society to the detriment of others.

Critical visual literacy imparts a specific perspective to investigating the sociocultural contexts of visual texts to assess power relations (Chung, 2013). It deepens the analysis by exploring the political, social, economic, cultural, and other aspects to assess how and why the visual depicts a society's power and authority relationships. Critical visual literacy also stimulates inquiry. It prompts students to raise questions about the origins of the attitudes and beliefs that stimulated the creation of the visual's message and regarding the response of the targeted group. In addition, critical visual literacy encourages viewers to take actions to advocate for change (Costa & Xavier, 2016; Kim & Serrano, 2017). In education, critical visual literacy not only provides marginalized students with key academic skills and access to the core curriculum, but also empowers them to serve as change agents for equity and social justice.

In this paper, we describe the project and introduce an inquiry model specifically developed to enhance the critical visual literacy skills of pre- and in-service teachers. Then, we delve into comprehensive details about each course, explaining how each researcher adapted and implemented the inquiry model to cater to the

unique characteristics of their course. Lastly, we present the project's findings, discussing insights and offering suggestions to help improve teacher education programs.

About the Project

Three researchers from different disciplines in education (Social Studies Education, ESL/Bilingual Education, and Curriculum and Instruction) collaborated on the critical visual literacy project to support a diverse group of pre- and in-service teachers in their graduate-level courses. This group of students represents a good cross-section of individuals in the teaching profession at various career stages. The overall goal of this project was to enhance the ability of pre- and in-service teachers to implement critical visual literacy skills to advance equitable outcomes of their students. To achieve this goal, the researchers developed a critical visual literacy inquiry model and implemented it in their courses, adapting the model to their course content and needs of their students.

Methods of Teaching Social Studies in Secondary School enrolls pre-service social studies teacher education candidates. In this course, the candidates learn how to use an essential triad of social studies education—inquiry, primary sources, and literacy—in a high school classroom. Critical visual literacy is included as a basic component of teaching and learning. The candidates learn to plan inquiry-based learning using primary sources as texts to improve content knowledge while building literacy skills, in this case critical visual literacy.

Methods and Materials for Teaching English as a Second Language enrolls pre-service teacher education candidates and in-service classroom teachers. This course prepares teachers to examine and apply conceptual and pedagogical tools for teaching English as a second language and supporting students' bilingualism. Visuals serve not only as tools to enhance comprehension but also as texts and cultural artifacts that carry meaning, perspectives, and biases. They are used in the ESL context to ensure equal access to the core curriculum and enhance students' multimodal literacies. Therefore, it is critical for teachers in the course to learn how to thoughtfully select culturally relevant visuals and critically examine the power relations embedded in them.

Implementing and Assessing Content Area Curriculum enrolls in-service classroom teachers from various levels and subject areas. This course guides in-service teachers to identify biases and gaps in their existing curricula and develop ideas to overcome those issues. For this project, as one way to address biases that may exist in their teaching contexts when using visuals, they are asked to consider how the visuals they use in their classrooms can influence their students.

Critical Visual Literacy Inquiry Model

The critical visual literacy inquiry model is a comprehensive framework designed to guide the incorporation of critical visual literacy activities involving various visuals (see Table 1). The researchers specifically developed this model to offer pre- and in-service teachers a structured approach for implementing critical visual literacy strategies in their instructional planning, aligning it with the Illinois Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading (CRTL) standard G: Content Selections in All Curricula (ISBE, 2022). The CRTL standard G underscores the deliberate approach of culturally responsive teachers in content selection across all curricula. It encourages teachers to curate inclusive curricula and purposefully represent marginalized communities through an equity lens. This standard advocates for fostering balanced perspectives, assessing narratives from multiple viewpoints, and using resources and tools to identify biases. Additionally, it promotes a broader modality of student assessments, emphasizing the alignment with students' diverse identities.

Table 1
An Overview of a Critical Visual Literacy Inquiry Model

Introduction	The critical visual literacy inquiry model described below has a modular structure to facilitate its use in meeting student needs. It can be employed in its entirety to provide a progressive learning experience or one or more of the levels can be implemented independently as stand-alone exercises. In either scenario, the approach is to have students examine a visual more than once to gain deeper understanding.	
Level 1: Single Visual Inquiry	a. Getting started	• activate/build prior knowledge on topic and a visual • provide background information and context as pertinent • scan the visual • identify bibliography (creator, title, publication date, publisher, place of publication) • pose compelling and supporting questions aiming at describing the visual's message
	b. Read for content (What do you see?)	• study the visual for a few minutes • answer supporting questions to describe major items in the visual (people, places, structures, writing, etc.) • summarize what was seen in a single sentence
	c. Read for analysis (What does it mean?)	• review notes and summary to answer compelling question and identify evidence to support answer, communicating findings • pose questions to critically analyze the visual from the perspective of social, cultural, economic, and political aspects that indicate power and authority relationships • synthesize findings to evaluate the visual critically and collect evidence to support findings, communicating findings
Level 2: Comparing Visuals	a. Getting started in pairs	• organize students in pairs so members in each pair review one of two visuals • getting started as above in Level 1
	b. Read for content (What do you see?)	• read for content as above in Level 1 (pairs explore different visuals, each with a different perspective) • share findings within pairs and among pairs
	c. Read for analysis (What does it mean?)	• read for critical analysis as above in Level 1 • pairs compare findings and note different visuals, discussing implications • share findings within pairs and among pairs
Level 3: Single Complex Visual Inquiry	a. Getting started	• get started as above in Level 1
	b. Read for content (What do you see?)	• read for content as above in Level 1
	c. Read for analysis (What does it mean?)	• read for analysis as above in Level 1, but engage in a deeper critical analysis of a complex visual to gain better understanding by uncovering layers of meaning

As noted in the Introduction, the critical visual literacy inquiry model has a modular structure. The model has three different levels designated by numbers and stages within each level shown as lowercase letters, making it adaptable to meet student needs. It can be employed in its entirety, or students can perform one or more of the activities. The underlying idea is that students work with the visual more than once to improve their skills and enhance their understanding. An important point is that authenticating the visual and the site on which it was found is not included in the model. Teachers can add that step as desired. The model moves progressively from examining a single visual to comparing two visuals to exploring a more complex single visual that is subtler in its messaging or open to differing interpretations.

The discussion here focuses on the model as it was used in the Methods of Teaching Social Studies in Secondary School course. To introduce project participants to critical visual literacy and to orient them to the model, they examined cartoons and a postcard on woman suffrage in the United States. After examining a single visual, they compared two visuals and then moved to a more complex visual. The discussion below briefly presents the visuals used to orient participants to all three levels. The process is fully described for Level 1: Single Visual Inquiry (see Figure 1). The other levels are briefly described emphasizing their unique aspects. For orientation purposes, the compelling question for each level focused on the cartoon's message and its implications.

Level 1: Single Visual Inquiry
In the single visual inquiry level, participants explored E. W. Gustin's cartoon *Election Day!* (see Figure 1), working in pairs to go through each stage and summarizing findings as they proceeded. The Getting Started (stage a) opened the examination of the visual. Participants were asked about the woman suffrage movement in the United States in the early 20th century. They scanned the visual to get a big picture of the content and looked at the bibliography to place the cartoon in its people, place, and time context. Getting Started was closed by having participants pose compelling and supporting questions. The compelling question was: According to the cartoon, what are the implications of woman suffrage on home life?

Figure 1
Election Day! (Gustin, 1909)

Next, participants in pairs completed the read for content (stage b) and shared their findings. During this stage, they observed the visual and caption closely. The importance of following up questions on what was seen with the query "How do you know?" was emphasized. Questions focused on the caption and setting to get a time and place perspective. The people also were scrutinized for appearance, gestures, facial expressions, and clothing, as was the overall scene. The father's distress at taking care of the children crying in his arms and the well-dressed woman getting ready to walk out the door were noted.

After summarizing findings, participants moved to reading for analysis (stage c). There are three tasks for this stage. The first task involved describing the message of the cartoon and providing a draft answer for the compelling question. An example of a draft answer is voting rights for women would disrupt the efficient running of the home. The second task critically analyzed the cartoon posing questions to examine social, cultural, and political aspects of the cartoon related to power, authority, bias, and omission. For example, regarding power and authority, among other things, participants noted the emphasis on how the cartoon suggested women voting would profoundly alter the traditional gender relationships and status in the home. The third task involved synthesizing findings to answer the compelling question with pertinent evidence.

Level 2: Comparing Visuals

In the comparing visuals level, participants compared Figures 2 and 3. The compelling question was: According to the cartoons, how might woman suffrage impact the home and society? Participants in groups first examined one of the two visuals.

Figure 2

I Want to Vote, But My Wife Won't Let Me ("Suffragette Series No. 11," 1909)

Figure 3

The Home or Street Corner for Woman? Vote No on Woman Suffrage (Thomas, n.d.)

After their examination, they shared their findings before jigsawing into groups that included participants who had collectively reviewed both visuals. The activity concluded with groups sharing and synthesizing their findings. Among other things, they concluded that the visuals suggested women voting threatened traditional power relationships for the worse in the home and society.

Level 3: Single Complex Visual Inquiry
The complex visual inquiry level follows the same steps as the single visual inquiry but requires deeper critical analysis to gain better understanding. Participants examined a complex cartoon related to women, voting, and World War I (see Figure 4). The compelling question was: What does the cartoon tell us about the status of women in U.S. society in World War I? The participants worked in pairs to go through the stages of analysis.

Figure 4
Uncle Sam as "Public Opinion" Embracing Nurse "American Womanhood" (Morris, 1917)

The deeper critical analysis of the cartoon was most important here. The answer to the compelling question suggested participation in war was changing the status of women regarding voting rights. Looking closely at the cartoon, layers of meaning were uncovered regarding the social, cultural, and political aspects of the cartoon related to power, authority, bias, and omission. For example, among other things, participants noted the size, placement, and facial expressions of the two figures, the posture of Uncle Sam, and what the caption suggested. They observed that Uncle Sam towered over the woman and was much larger. The words "public opinion" on his sleeve underscored that power and authority resided with older white males. Women were personified as nurses in a dependency role under men. The dependency aspect was strengthened by the caption. It suggested that only the largesse of white males was granting women the vote, ignoring the ongoing activism of women that dated back to the Revolutionary Era.

The orientation activities showed participants the distinction between visual literacy and critical visual literacy. It also highlighted how a model can help students move progressively to higher levels of competency. Initially, students might start with simpler visuals, but as they gain confidence and expertise, teachers can also ask them to compare two or more visuals, helping students practice thinking critically and noticing differences and similarities. They also can progress to more nuanced and complicated visual images. This progression allows students to take on more responsibility for their learning, promoting a deeper understanding of visuals.

Project Design and Implementation

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the implementation spanned three phases corresponding to different graduate-level courses in distinct disciplines. The first phase occurred in the Fall 2022 synchronous and asynchronous online secondary education social studies methods course. The second phase was in the Winter 2023 online asynchronous ESL/Bilingual education method course. The third phase took place in the Spring 2023 curriculum and instruction program course, which was also an online asynchronous course.

The researchers designed the project in three phases for two primary reasons. Firstly, each phase of the course where the research was conducted was offered in a different modality to a distinct group of students. The researchers aimed to investigate how the Critical Visual Literacy inquiry model could be implemented and adapted across diverse course modalities and student groups. Secondly, conducting the research project in three phases provided several benefits. It enabled the researchers to reflect on the process iteratively, leveraging strengths and strategically addressing potential issues as they arose. In addition, during each phase, the researchers conducted the same pre- and post-surveys to assess participants' understanding of critical visual literacy and the CRTL standard G, as well as the impact of critical visual literacy learning experiences, using quantitative and qualitative indicators (5-Likert scale questions and short answer questions).

Phase 1 – Fall 2022

Phase 1 was implemented in the 11-week course Methods of Teaching Social Studies in Secondary School during the Fall 2022 term. Sixteen pre-service social studies teacher education candidates seeking to teach in high schools enrolled in the course. While eight candidates agreed to participate in the project, all candidates completed the project activities. Those who did not participate in the project and did not complete the surveys did not have their work included in the research project. Project activities extended across the entire course and were divided into two stages. Because all candidates completed the activities except for the surveys, the term candidate is used below.

Table 2
Project Activities for Phase 1

Stages	Project Activities
Stage 1 (weeks 1-4)	Orientation introduced candidates to the project. They learned about the project and project activities; completed the pre-survey; were introduced to visual literacy, critical visual literacy and the CRTL standards through relevant readings and, for critical visual literacy, a handout (see Appendix A). They also identified their peer teaching topic from the course text, Takaki (2008), *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*[1].
Stage 2 (weeks 5-10)	2-3 candidates taught their critical visual literacy activity to their peers and completed the post-survey.

Methods specific to Phase 1

This course was different from the other two courses in the project in several important ways. First, it was the first iteration of the research study. Second, the course met in eight synchronous Zoom sessions and two asynchronous online sessions, and the final class was a Zoom exit interview conducted individually with each candidate. This course format allowed candidates to extend beyond planning a critical visual literacy activity to teaching it to their peers. Also, their content area and school level imparted a homogeneity to the group. Because all candidates were in the same subject area, the content for the critical visual literacy activities was taken from the course text.

To orient participants to the project, they were introduced to critical visual literacy through readings and an introductory handout that included a description of the critical visual literacy model. In a Zoom class, the candidate completed the above exercise that applied the various levels of the critical visual literacy model to a cartoon on women suffrage.

In addition, candidates had a peer teaching assignment that differentiated Phase 1 from the other phases. Using a selected level of the critical visual literacy model, candidates taught a 20-minute interactive critical visual literacy activity that met standards in the CRTL standard G. In consultation with the instructor, each candidate identified a topic related to the group and time period that connected to a chapter or excerpt from a chapter in the Takaki book. No overlaps were allowed, although it was possible to have more than one candidate choose the same group but focus on a different time period. Each peer teaching activity was evaluated in two ways. First, the formal assessment was an assessment checklist completed by the instructor. Second, a more informal open-ended format had the instructor, the candidates acting as students, and the peer teacher evaluate each peer teaching activity. The instructions were to identify the strengths, the areas needing improvement, and to provide ideas for improvement.

Phase 2 – Winter 2023
Phase 2 was implemented in the 10-week online course Methods and Materials for Teaching English as a Second Language during the Winter 2023 term. Out of the 17 students who were enrolled in the course, five students participated in the pre-survey and six completed the post-survey (two did not complete the pre-survey). Four students participated in both the pre- and the post-surveys. Students who did not volunteer to participate in the project completed the project activities except the surveys. This report draws data from the five participants' critical visual literacy activity plans, peer-review documents, and surveys.

Table 3
Project Activities for Phase 2

Stages	Project Activities
Stage 1 (weeks 1-4)	Background building: Students were introduced to the project before they took the pre-survey. They were provided with relevant readings and multimedia resources about the CRTL standard G, visual literacy, and the critical visual literacy framework (see Appendix B). In addition, they participated in a visual literacy activity through discussion.
Stage 2 (weeks 5-8)	Designing the critical visual literacy activity: Students were presented with a sample critical visual literacy activity created by the instructor and a video with the instructor modeling how to implement the activity. They then drafted their own critical visual literacy activity, participated in the peer review, and finalized the activity. The project was concluded with the post-survey.

Methods specific to Phase 2
This course was unique in three ways. Firstly, the students enrolled in the course included both pre- and in-service teachers. Their teaching experiences, content areas, and grade levels varied significantly. Secondly, the course was 100% asynchronous online. Students interacted with the course content on a learning management system and participated in the course through module discussions, reflections, and assignments. Thirdly, this course focused on methods and materials aimed at supporting multilingual learners. As a result, there was a heavy emphasis on activating or building sociocultural contexts, fostering academic language, providing comprehensible input, and facilitating multimodal communication.

To cater to student needs, the course instructor curated readings, multimedia resources, and discussion topics for students to better understand the CRTL standard G and critical visual literacy. Adapting the critical visual literacy model from Phase 1, the instructor tailored it to align with the course learning outcomes. The model had four major steps for working with a single visual, which were: 1) previewing academic vocabulary, pre-reading, and providing context if needed; 2) reading for content; 3) reading for analysis; and 4) engaging in critical examination, redesign, and reflection. Further, the model incorporated a progressive critical visual literacy learning sequence, demonstrating how to guide students towards higher levels of critical visual literacy. For example, as the task becomes increasingly sophisticated (e.g., transitioning from analyzing a single visual to analyzing two or more visuals), the level of scaffolding decreases. Additionally, the model included special considerations for supporting multilingual learners while designing and implementing the

critical visual literacy activity. The instructor shared a video on the learning management system explaining the steps in the model and showing how to implement a sample critical visual literacy activity using a political cartoon in a mock classroom setting.

Phase 3 – Spring 2023

Phase 3 was implemented in the 10-week course Implementing and Assessing Content Area Curriculum during the Spring 2023 term. Out of the 13 enrolled students, eight students participated in the pre-survey. In the post-survey, permission was gathered from the non-participating students to use their activity plans for the project. Of the nine students who completed the post-survey, four agreed to provide permission despite not completing the pre-survey. However, one student who completed both surveys declined to provide permission, and that student's data were excluded from the analysis. Consequently, data from eight students' critical visual literacy activity plans and peer-review documents were collected for this report.

Table 4
Project Activities for Phase 3

Stages	Project Activities
Stage 1 (weeks 1-5)	Students were introduced to the project, completed the pre-survey, and learned about visual literacy, the critical visual literacy framework, and the CRTL standard G through relevant readings and materials, including a handout for critical visual literacy (see Appendix C). They brainstormed ideas for their activity plan, selecting a unit from their current curriculum and a visual for their critical visual literacy activity plan.
Stage 2 (weeks 6-8)	Students planned their critical visual literacy activities, participated in peer reviews, and revised their plans based on feedback. Lastly, they submitted their final activity plans and completed the post-survey to reflect on their learning and experiences.

Methods specific to Phase 3

From the previous two implementations, insights were gained about the challenges encountered while implementing this project in an asynchronous online course working with in-service teachers who have different teaching experiences and backgrounds. Drawing upon those insights, the course materials and activities related to this project were designed to enhance the support in developing critical visual literacy activities. A series of discussion board postings provided feedback from peers and the instructor. Starting from week two, students engaged in weekly discussion board activities specifically designed to guide them in their learning and planning of critical visual literacy activities. During these discussions, they were encouraged to reflect on the concept of critical visual literacy and its implications for classroom teaching and learning. Then, they moved on to the selection of visuals, the drafting of critical visual literacy activity plans, and concluded with a peer-review process.

The approach allowed students to review and provide constructive feedback on each other's ideas as they began their planning. In addition, the course instructor adopted and used the critical visual literacy model from Phase 2. However, considering the diverse backgrounds of the students, who were in-service educators from various grade levels and content areas, the model was presented with various readings and visual examples. These examples included social media posts, real-life images, and illustrations from picture books. Additionally, the instructor created a video demonstrating a critical visual literacy activity, utilizing social media posts and photographs from news articles as examples, which was then shared with the students on the learning management system.

Conclusions and Implications

In a world increasingly driven by visuals, educators need to be equipped with critical visual literacy knowledge and skills to create engaging and equitable learning experiences for a diverse student

population. To address this need, we developed an inquiry model, serving as a tool for pre- and in-service teachers. A model provides a framework for integrating various strategies into the flow of teaching and learning. The inquiry model explored here facilitated the teaching of critical visual literacy skills. It also advocated for equity and social justice by guiding the assessment of messages related to power, authority, reliability, bias, and impact represented in visuals. The pre- and post-survey results demonstrated the effectiveness of this model in enhancing our pre- and in-service teachers' knowledge and understanding of both critical visual literacy and the CRTL standard G. In addition, this model encourages educators to promote visual literacy and critical visual literacy, ensuring they can adeptly apply their knowledge in real-world teaching scenarios.

As demonstrated in the three different implementation phases, an important virtue of a well-designed model is that it is adaptable to different subject areas and grade levels. This flexibility supports educators in using and adapting the model to their current or future classroom settings based on their students' prior knowledge and sociocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Participants' reflections from the post-survey also showed that their learning from this project was effectively transferred to their own teaching practices in their respective classrooms.

The emphasis on critical visual literacy in this curriculum design project carries several implications for teacher preparation and education programs. It calls for intentional efforts in curriculum design and professional development to integrate and enhance critical visual literacy skills among educators. By fostering a deeper understanding of critical visual literacy, teacher educators can empower educators to navigate complexities of visuals and contribute to more inclusive and equitable educational experiences for their students. This approach also goes beyond traditional teaching, encouraging students to become agents promoting social justice and equity.

In addition, the use of the inquiry model facilitates progressive learning and differentiation, creating a strategically plotted path of practice for greater competency over time. As students practice the skills, they progress to higher levels of difficulty. The various levels also facilitate meeting individual student needs. Student progress is based on competency. They need to be able to gain critical visual literacy skills to examine a single visual before progressing to comparing visuals and to exploring more complex visuals.

The critical visual literacy project underscores the importance of creating a learning environment where pre- and in-service teachers can actively participate in learning. They can apply critical visual literacy to practice, reflect on their experiences, and continually grow using the inquiry model. The reflections of our candidates highlighted the significant value they placed on the experience of learning about critical visual literacy through the inquiry model:

> "*I think that critical visual literacy is extremely valuable, as it teaches students to think critically about the media they consume, both inside and outside the classroom. I would like to continue to integrate critical visual literacy into my teaching.*"

> "*I believe I will devote a significant amount of time in the classroom employing critical visual literacy strategies. I intend to make it an integral part of my teaching methodology.*"

> "*I am excited to teach during Black History month as African-Americans are a small, but present, minority in my placement school. I am very interested in how the much larger Latinx population will relate to the stories I intend to present in images. I think the process will also help me grow (as an older white woman) in my understanding and relationships with my students' cultures.*"

Candidates expressed a clear intention to apply what they had learned in their classrooms to foster culturally responsive teaching and learning for their students. This positive response not only highlights the perceived importance of critical visual literacy but also demonstrates a commitment to applying these newly acquired skills in professional settings.

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Appendix A
Phase 1 Critical Visual Literacy Introduction Handout

NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Introduction to Critical Visual Literacy

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The Need for Visual Literacy

The increasing presence of visuals in education and everyday life have created a need to improve teacher and student visual literacy skills generally and critical visual literacy skills specifically. Each visual sends a message from a particular perspective.

Teachers need to be able to develop effective learning experiences that help students study visuals critically so that they understand how visuals work. They also need to be able to assess the message regarding

- power and authority
- reliability and accuracy of content
- bias, distortion, and omission
- impact on viewers and possibly society at the time of publication and over time and place.
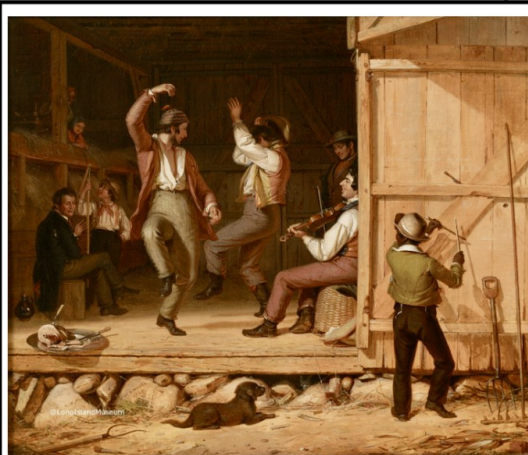
From Visual to Critical Visual Literacy

Visual literacy can be defined as the ability to read, analyze, and communicate with visuals.

Whether it be a map, photograph, cartoon, video, or multimodal display, each visual reflects personal and cultural beliefs, attitudes, ideas, etc.

As a result, the visual can send explicit or implicit messages regarding race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic class. These message often support ideas of the dominant members of society to the detriment of others.

Critical visual literacy imparts a specific perspective to studying visuals. It deepens the analysis by exploring the political, social, economic, cultural, and other aspects to assess how and why the visual depicts a society's power and authority relationships.

How Critical Visual Literacy Works

A critical visual literacy perspective stresses identifying how a visual shows the power and authority of a dominant group in society to the detriment of a group with secondary status.

Typically, the visual highlights either the dominant group's superiority, the secondary group's inferiority, or both. Explore the visual to the left. Look at who is included and how they are depicted. Examine the placement of the figures, how they are dressed, what they are doing.

What does the visual tell you about race in the 1840s

Mount, W. (1845). Dance of the Haymakers. Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=dance+of+the+haymakers&title=Special:MediaSearch&go=Go&type=image

Critical Visual Literacy Teaching and Learning

Critical Visual Literacy Model

The critical visual literacy inquiry model has a modular structure to facilitate use to meet student needs. It can be employed in its entirety to provide a progressive learning experience, or one or more of the activities can be implemented independently as stand-alone exercises. In either scenario, the approach is to have students examine a visual more than once to gain deeper understanding.

Goals

1. To design a modular critical visual literacy inquiry model that can be applied in varied ways.
2. To provide the means for teachers to plan a progressive critical visual literacy learning experience that helps students move to higher levels of critical visual literacy proficiency.
3. To help teachers and students improve their critical visual literacy skills.

Model Overview

Single visual inquiry exercise:
 a. Pre-read, provide context (may be optional)
 b. Read for content
 c. Read for analysis and findings
 d. Pose additional questions connected to critical visual literacy
 e. Revise inquiry model to address critical visual literacy questions
 f. Read for critical analysis to synthesize findings, develop answer and supporting evidence
 g. Communicate findings
 h. Reflection, including taking action by identifying a different visual with different more critical perspective from initial example; creating visual with different more critical perspective

Comparison of two visuals with different perspectives:
 a. Pre-read, provide context (may be optional)
 b. Pairs explore different visuals, each with a different perspective (read and analyze as above using critical visual literacy inquiry model
 c. Compare findings, note different visuals discussing implications
 d. Reflection, including taking action by designing activity using both visuals or something else

Single complex visual inquiry:
 a. Pre-read, provide context (may be optional)
 b. Pose critical visual literacy questions
 c. Read for critical analysis to synthesize findings, develop answer and supporting evidence
 d. Communicate findings
 h. Reflection, including taking action by identifying a different visual with different more critical perspective from initial example; creating visual with different more critical perspective.

Appendix B
Phase 2 Critical Visual Literacy Introduction Handout

NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
Introduction to Critical Visual Literacy
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The Need for Visual Literacy

Visuals have been a common medium of communication in education and everyday life. While working with multilingual students, educators acknowledge that visuals are an effective way to provide access to content and support comprehension. However, there is a critical need to improve teacher and student visual literacy skills generally and critical visual literacy skills specifically. Each visual sends a message from a particular perspective.

Teachers need to be able to develop effective learning experiences that help multilingual students study visuals critically so that they understand how visuals work. Students also benefit from assessing the message regarding

- power and authority
- reliability and accuracy of content
- bias, distortion, and omission
- impact on viewers and possibly society at the time of publication and over time and place.

From Visual to Critical Visual Literacy

Visual literacy can be defined as the learned abilities to read, analyze, and communicate with visuals. Whether it be a map, photograph, cartoon, video, or multimodal display, each visual reflects personal and cultural beliefs, attitudes, ideas, etc.

As a result, the visual can send explicit or implicit messages regarding race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic class. These messages often support ideas of the dominant members of society to the detriment of others.

Critical visual literacy imparts a specific perspective to studying visuals. It deepens the analysis by exploring the political, social, economic, cultural, and other aspects to assess how and why the visual depicts a society's power and authority relationships. It enhances critical thinking for all students, as a result, empowering students to promote equity and social justice.

How Critical Visual Literacy Works

THE ONLY ONE BARRED OUT.
ENLIGHTENED AMERICAN STATESMAN.—" We must draw the line *somewhere*, you know."

A critical visual literacy perspective stresses identifying how a visual shows the power and authority of a dominant group in society to the detriment of a group with secondary status.

Typically, the visual highlights either the dominant group's superiority, the secondary group's inferiority, or both. Explore the visual to the left. Look at who is included and how he is depicted (e.g., how he is dressed and what he is doing). Examine how symbolism is used through the depiction of different items in the visual.

What does the visual tell you about the social status of Chinese in the 1880s?

Frank Leslie's illustrated newspaper, vol. 54 (1882 April 1), p. 96. Wikimedia. Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_only_one_barred_out_cph.3b48680.jpg

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Critical Visual Literacy Teaching and Learning

Critical Visual Literacy Model

The critical visual literacy inquiry model has a modular structure to facilitate use to meet student needs. It can be employed in its entirety to provide a progressive learning experience, or one or more of the activities can be implemented independently as stand-alone exercises. In either scenario, the approach is to have students examine a visual more than once to gain deeper understanding.

Goals

1. To design a modular critical visual literacy inquiry model that can be applied in varied ways.
2. To provide the means for teachers to plan a progressive critical visual literacy learning experience that helps students move to higher levels of critical visual literacy proficiency.
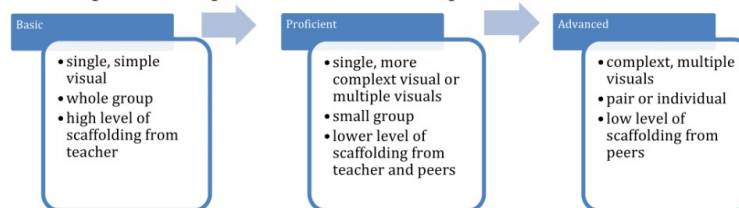3. To help teachers and students improve their critical visual literacy skills.

Model Overview

Single visual inquiry exercise:
   a. Preview academic vocabulary, pre-read, provide context (if needed)
   b. Read for content
   c. Read for analysis and findings
   d. Pose additional questions connected to critical visual literacy
   e. Synthesize findings, develop answer and supporting evidence
   f. Communicate findings
   g. Reflection, including taking action by identifying a different visual with a more critical perspective from initial example or creating a visual with a more critical perspective

Progressive critical visual literacy learning:
As students gain more proficiency through the visual literacy continuum, teachers can lower the level of scaffolding by having students work in small groups/pairs and/or individually. The task complexity can also increase from a simple to a complex visual, and/or compare two or more visuals.

Basic	Proficient	Advanced
• single, simple visual • whole group • high level of scaffolding from teacher	• single, more complex visual or multiple visuals • small group • lower level of scaffolding from teacher and peers	• complex, multiple visuals • pair or individual • low level of scaffolding from peers

Considerations for Supporting Multilingual Students:
- Selected visuals represent or connect to multilingual students' lived experience or topics in local community
- Background knowledge
- Content and visual literacy vocabulary and discourse (e.g., word bank, sentence/discourse frames for group discussion and writing; graphic organizers)
- Space for translanguaging
- Multimodal formats to communicate learning

Appendix C
Phase 3 Critical Visual Literacy Introduction Handout

NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Introduction to Critical Visual Literacy

Hyeju Han, Mark Newman, Xiaoning Chen

The Need for Visual Literacy

The increasing presence of visuals in education and everyday life have created a need to improve teacher and student visual literacy skills generally and critical visual literacy skills specifically. Each visual sends a message from a particular perspective.

Teachers need to be able to develop effective learning experiences that help students study visuals critically so that they understand how visuals work. They also need to be able to assess the message regarding
- power and authority
- reliability and accuracy of content
- bias, distortion, and omission
- impact on viewers and possibly society at the time of publication and over time and place.

From Visual to Critical Visual Literacy

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As a result, the visual can send explicit or implicit messages regarding race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic class. These messages often support ideas of the dominant members of society to the detriment of others.

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How Critical Visual Literacy Works

A critical visual literacy perspective stresses identifying how a visual shows the power and authority of a dominant group in society to the detriment of a group with secondary status. Typically, the visual highlights either the dominant group's superiority, the secondary group's inferiority, or both.

Explore the visual to the left (Please scan the QR code or click on the link below to view it). Look at who are included and how they are depicted. Examine the placement of the figures, how they are depicted, what they are doing.

What does the visual tell you about race in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, during and after its outbreak?

Bill Bramhall [@BillBramhall]. (2021, March 24). *Cartoon*. [Political Cartoon]. Tweeter. https://twitter.com/BillBramhall/ status/1396901906694426626

Bramhall, B. (2021, March 25). The Tourists are Back! [Political Cartoon] *New York Daily Times*. https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-bramhall-editorial-cartoons-political-satire-20210525-fk64ztf65vft7dmo6qt5ickpp4-photogallery.html

Critical Visual Literacy Teaching and Learning

Critical Visual Literacy Model

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Goals

1. To design a modular critical visual literacy inquiry model that can be applied in varied ways.
2. To provide the means for teachers to plan a progressive critical visual literacy learning experience that helps students move to higher levels of critical visual literacy proficiency.
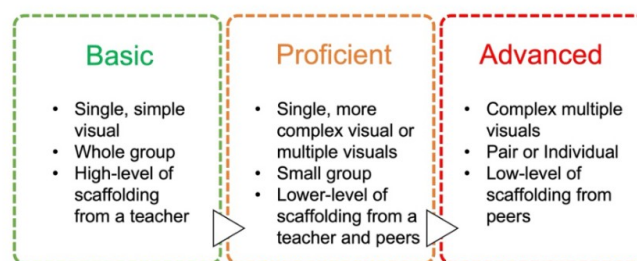3. To help teachers and students improve their critical visual literacy skills.

Model Overview

Single visual inquiry exercise:

a. Pre-read, provide context (may be optional)
b. Read for content
c. Read for analysis and findings
d. Pose additional questions connected to critical visual literacy
e. Revise inquiry model to address critical visual literacy questions
f. Read for critical analysis to synthesize findings, develop answer and supporting evidence
g. Communicate findings
h. Refection, including taking action by identifying a different visual with different more critical perspective from initial example; creating visual with different more critical perspective

Progressive critical visual literacy learning:

As students gain more proficiency through the visual literacy continuum, teachers can lower the level of scaffolding by having students work in small groups/pairs and/or individually. The task complexity can also increase from a simple to a complex visual, and/or compare two or more visuals.

Footnotes

[1] Takaki, R. T. (2008). *A different mirror: A history of multicultural America.* (2nd ed.). Back Bay Books. This book offers a rich exploration of the diverse experiences of ethnic and racial groups in American history. Spanning from colonization to the present, Takaki's book provides a nuanced perspective on the contributions and struggles that have shaped the multicultural fabric of the United States.