

UDI 204 - Visual and Material Culture Lesson Plan

UDI 204 - Week 7: Visual and Material Culture Part 1

Monday February 25, 9:05-9:55am

Reading Due: Meyer, B., Morgan, D., Paine, C., & Brent Plate, S. (2009). Visual culture and material culture: paradigms for the study of religion. *Material Religion*, 5(3), 355–356.

Learning to Look Activity/Introduction (5 minutes - 9:10)

Look at the image on the screen. Write down 3-5 details you notice, e.g., people, places, things, design, etc (use “keywords”).

What is Visual and Material Culture? (10 minutes - 9:20)

Define and discuss based on bullet point responses to reading.

Personal Ethnography Activity (5 minutes - 9:25)

Answer 1-2 of the following questions:

- What were the core beliefs/values of your family and how were they communicated/sustained through visual or material culture?

- What are the core beliefs and values of your immediate community now? How are they expressed through visual or material culture?

- Are there any specific values you hold that are supported and expressed by the visual or material culture you collect and/or create?

(Hold on to paper. Discuss after next sections)

Examples of Visual and Material Culture in the Marian Library (15 minutes - 9:40)

Chronological show and tell with artifacts, illustrated books, images (15th c. - mid-20th c.).

Personal Ethnography (5 minutes - 9:45)

Discuss answers to Personal Ethnography activity and examples of visual and material culture in our everyday lives.

Introduction to Visual Literacy (10 minutes - 9:55)

Discuss keywords/description from Learning to Look activity and introduce visual literacy concepts.

UDI 204 - Week 7: Visual and Material Culture Part 2
Wednesday February 27, 9:05-9:55

Review visual literacy concepts (5 minutes - 9:10)

Activity #1: Analyzing and Evaluating Photographs (20 minutes - 9:30)

Each student analyzes a photograph from special collections and answers the questions:

1. What interesting things do you see in this photograph?
2. What kind of questions does this image raise for you?
3. Why might this image have been created? Who do you think created it? Who might have been the intended audience?
4. What else would you like to know about this image?

Full class discussion

- Each student describes their photograph and discusses their answers.

Other discussion questions:

- How might have this photograph provide evidence of religious practice and/or belief?
- What are some possible research topics based on this image?
- How might images be used in combination with textual materials? What other resources would you need to interpret this image?
- What is the cultural/social context of the image? Is there bias? What is missing?

Activity #2: Interpreting and Organizing Postcards (15 minutes - 9:45)

Students work in pairs. Analyze a group of 15 historic postcards and organize them logically (purposefully vague).

Each group discusses rationale for organization, pros and cons (geographic, chronological, subject, etc.).

Activity and visual literacy wrap up (10 minutes - 9:55)

Exit tickets

Resources and References

- Blandy, D., & Bolin, P. E. (2018). *Learning Things: Material Culture in Art Education*. Teachers College Press. [Used Personal Ethnography activity](#)
- Bahde, A., Smedberg, H., & Taormina, M. (2014). *Using primary sources : hands-on instructional exercises*. Santa Barbara, California : Libraries Unlimited. [Adapted Postcards and Visual Literacy activity by Joanne Archer](#)
- Grimm, S., & Meeks, A. (2017). Break the Stereotype! Critical Visual Literacy in Art and Design Librarianship. *Art Documentation: Bulletin of the Art Libraries Society of North America*, 36(2), 173–190.
- Accardi, Maria T. (2013). *Feminist pedagogy for library instruction*. Sacramento, California : Library Juice Press.