LITERACY

TEACHING STRATEGIES TO BUILD VISUAL LITERACY

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There is a wealth of visual resources available to engage and integrate contemporary issues into the Geography classroom. Using specific strategies to help students apply and interpret visual content, rather than just having them watch a video and take notes is a great addition to the teaching toolkit!

A few of the strategies that we have used at St Scholastica's to build literacy skills when using visual platforms are described below. The following strategies that have been developed by teachers at the College, both past and present.

- Right angle thinking diagram
- Description from videos using screen shots
- Guessing description – from images
- Photo analysis

Strategy 1: Right angle thinking diagram (See Figure 1)

The right angle thinking diagram (Figure 1) can be adapted to use with articles or videos and goes beyond simply writing notes from a source. Whilst the first part of this activity is to write out key points from the video, it goes further by having the students come up with a series of questions that they would ask to find more about the topic or to seek further clarification. The first few times you use this with a class you may need to help prompt the class and model suggestions; however, the students will quickly become familiar with this strategy and it will help them build critical thinking skills. Initially, when using the right angle thinking diagram, it helps to model the note taking content for the students. I like to show the students the key statistics that they should include, as this can then be used as evidence in a written response. **Figure 2:** shows how you can pause the video so that students can get the points down. Watching videos with **captions on** helps students to record statistics and the correct spelling of names and or locations.

Figure 2: Watch the video with captions on to help take notes

Source: Worlds Biggest Lockdown Foreign Correspondent ABC May 2020 https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-22/the-worlds-biggest-lockdown/12278678

The diagram can easily be modified and adapted depending upon the year group and or visual content you are using. The source analysis section is a great way to teach relevance, reliability, and bias from visual sources. Including a 'perfect paragraph' as part of this diagram shows students how to include specific evidence from a source in a simple paragraph response. You can adapt this to your preferred paragraph writing method (TEEL / PEEL etc). As the students have key points and facts recorded on the sheet you can get them to highlight the points of evidence they will use in their paragraph response. This right-angle thinking diagram can easily be adapted to use when interpreting choropleth maps / infographics and or data sites.

Figure 1: Right angle thinking diagram

Case Study: Migration and Covid-19 in India

QUESTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Right angle thinking diagram Video Review worksheet

KEY CONTENT

Title: World's Biggest Lockdown

Source: ABC Foreign Correspondent, www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-22/the-worlds-biggest-lockdown/12278678

Date (if known): 19 May 2020

Note down the five Key Ideas / Concepts / Facts of the video

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Note down questions requiring greater research or clarification that this video shows about urban places.

1. E.g. *What has changed since this video was released?*

2.

3.

Source evaluation
Critically evaluate the video as to its level of relevance, accuracy, reliability, and bias.

Reflection activity
What did I learn about urbanisation from this video?

Perfect Paragraph
 Examine how internal migration in India has impacted upon the concentration of people in urban places?

Strategy 2: Description from videos using screen shots

This is a very useful strategy to show students different ways to use visual content from videos. It also helps reluctant readers / writers to engage as they do not seem as threatened about completing a task when it involves writing about an image. There are several ways that you can use this strategy, essentially you have students take screen shots from a video and for each image provide a caption describing the key content shown. This also teaches students to give each image a figure title and the need to specifically refer to this in the written description.

Example: Watch the clip Why Australia's suburbs are so hot (12 mins) as a class
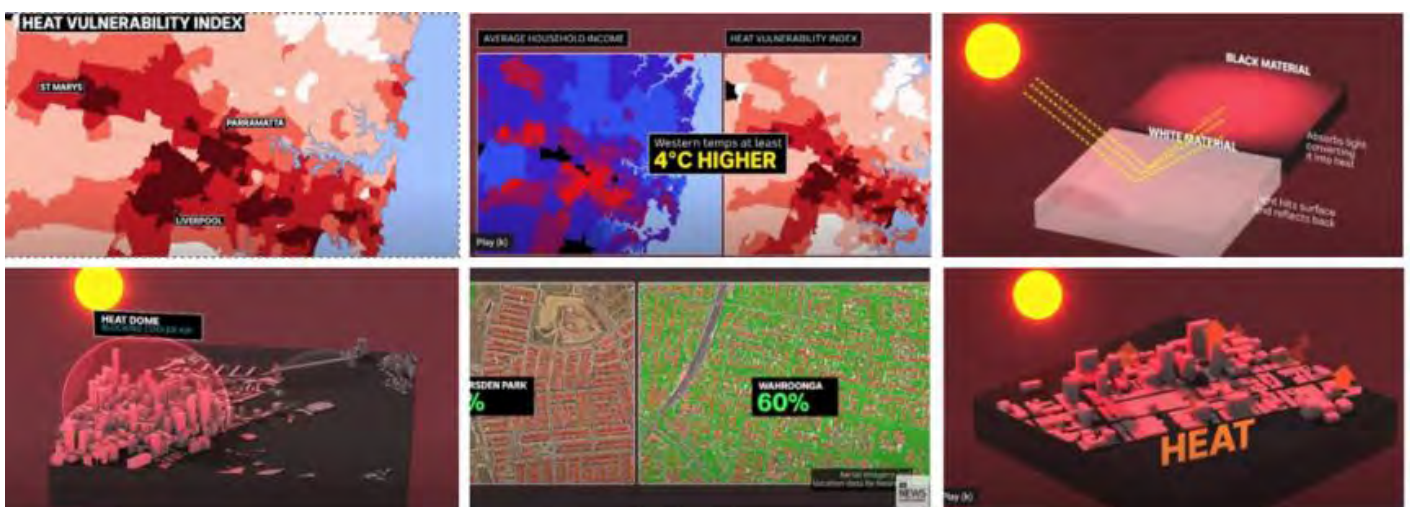
Figure 3: Why Australia's suburbs are so hot

Source: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-01-16/why-australia%E2%80%99s-suburbs-are-sohot/13704522#:~:text=As%20cities%20expand%20outwards%2C%20more,degrees%20on%20a%20hot%20day.

After watching as a class, give the students a question such as, *"Explain the urban heat island effect on Australian suburbs".* As this is an explain question, tell the students that their response needs to use content from the video to show cause and effect. Set the parameters – such as their response must have at least five images with captions.

You can easily differentiate this strategy depending upon the learning needs of your students. Have some groups find other videos or research to support their response. Or simplify by having students just find one image to show cause and one image to show effects. Additionally, you could have the students use this content to create an infographic to answer the question.

Figure 4: Examples of screen shots from the video

Source: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-01-16/why-australia%E2%80%99s-suburbs-are-sohot/13704522#:~:text=As%20cities%20expand%20outwards%2C%20more,degrees%20on%20a%20hot%20day.

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Strategy 3: Guessing description – from images

This strategy can help develop students' skills in both literacy and interpreting sources. There are a wide range of ways that this can be applied to the classroom and is a great strategy to use at any time. Provide the students with 2- 4 different images that relate to a topic that you are studying, as shown in Figures 5 and 6. Students then write a written description of the Sources. In groups, each student then chooses one of the descriptions to read out loud and see if the others can guess which source they have written about. Students can reflect on their performance and give feedback to their peers on ways to improve the detail provided. Once students are familiar with this strategy, they can then select the images to use, displaying the images to the class or group and reading their description to see if the group or class can guess which image it is they have described. This strategy works well with data sources such as population pyramids or choropleth maps, as it makes the student look closely at the source and interpret the data in their written description.

Figure 5: Sources

Source A:	Source B:
Description of the source:	**Description of the source:**

Task: In small groups choose one of your descriptions (source A or B) and read out loud to your group, see if they can work out which source you have described.

Reflection: What details could I add to my description to improve my response

Figure 6: Source graphs

Source A:	Source B:
Saudi Arabia ▾ 2022 — Population: 35,844,913	United Arab Emirates ▾ 2022 — Population: 10,081,782
Source: https://www.populationpyramid.net/saudi-arabia/2022/	Source: https://www.populationpyramid.net/united-arab-emirates/2022/
Description of the population: *Include at least two statistics from the source*	Description of the population: *Include at least two statistics from the source*

Task: In small groups choose one of your descriptions (source A or B) and read out loud to your group, see if they can work out which source you have described. Tip, make sure when you read your description out loud not to include the name of the country for your population pyramid.

Reflection: What detail could I add to my description to improve my response?

Strategy 4: Photo analysis

A great strategy to use at any time, again to help build the skills of interpreting images. We only have the students choose **four** of the questions in the table (Figure 7) to complete as they can then think about the questions and choose the best questions that relate to the image slected.

Figure 7: Photo analysis table

1. Where could this photo have been taken? Support your answer with geographical information and a map.	2. When might this photo have been taken? What geographical evidence is there to support this?	3. What does this photo tell you about a world environment and issue?	4. What intention do you think this photo has?
5. What emotions or thoughts does this photo evoke in you?	6. Who could have manipulated this image? Think carefully about the process from the photograph being taken to the image's publication.	7. What could have led to or caused the situation depicted in the image (e.g. Environment, conflict, disease)	8. What could the photographer have excluded from the photo? What is occurring outside the frames of the photograph?

Extra: You could place the photo on a large piece of paper and draw the scene occurring outside of the photographer's frame. This scene could continue the story the photograph tells, or completely change what is perceived to be happening in the photo.

Extension: How can the media use or manipulate this image? Create two newspaper headlines expressing different explanations of what is occurring this this photograph.

Sample photo