Visual Studies

overview

More and more today, when we think about writing or composing, we think not only of written text on a page, but we also think of color, shape, and image on pages, screens, and other surfaces.

This workshop will engage participants in not only thinking about visual choices in composing, but in crafting rich visual compositions. We will experiment with working with text and images in slideshow presentations and web pages, with visual arguments and digital movies, and more. We will read about the ways in which other teachers and researchers understand the "work" visuals do in compositions, and we will reflect on our own practices in selecting and integrating visuals in our compositions.

Participants will arrive to a collection of readings, assignment ideas, grading rubrics, and more, and will leave having had lots of experience experimenting, composing, and sharing.

beliefs

it is important to learn how to communicate through visuals

teachers and their students are capable of more deliberately communicating through visuals

it is important to know how to be critical readers of visual communications

teachers are capable of doing some work in this area regardless of available hardware/software/Internet access

teachers can become building/professional advocates for visual studies education

reading and producing texts in our world often requires a visual modality

we believe that 21st Century learning includes reading visual arguments in a critical manner

knowledge

We will explore what it means to be literate, and, specifically, what it means to be "visually literate." We will explore the definition of "visual studies" and why visual studies are important.

We will critically analyze a range of visuals; we will creatively produce a range of visuals.

We will explore how visual studies relate to more traditional English studies (reading, writing, in particular). We will imagine and share different approaches for integrating visual activities into our writing assignments.

We will explore basic concepts related to how pictures, photos, graphics, and type communicate independently and in combinations with one another. We will experiment with a range of document design features, including typography and color. We will experiment with design principles (CARP) and a few photo editing principles of image manipulation.

We will reflect on the work we're doing and explore different ways in which it might infuse our teaching, our practice, and our writing.

We will hopefully return to our schools able to make reasonable technology support recommendations to support the work we want to do.

expectations

We ask that you:

- Think expansively about what "writing" is and what it means to compose.

- Play along—experiment and explore, even if the tools are unfamiliar or even scary.

- Ask for help.

- Brainstorm; share ideas; create notes; make contacts with others; practice with technologies; plan to work with us and others beyond the workshop.

- Reflect upon theory and pedagogy of visual literacy.