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Collaborating with Colleagues: Promoting Visual Literacy Across the Curriculum

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Collaborating with Colleagues:
Promoting Visual Literacy Across the Curriculum

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Learning Outcomes

*Understanding* of the need to promote visual resources to patrons.

*Heightened* awareness of visual literacy among information literacy instructors.

*Methods* for the implementation of a visual information evaluation program.
Definitions

VISUAL LITERACY is here defined as the set of learned behaviors allowing a person to locate, evaluate, and effectively use visual information.

INFORMATION LITERACY is here defined as the set of learned behaviors allowing a person to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information.

Multiple Literacies

Why are there so many different literacies?
Visual information is still information, isn't it? If that's the case, why don't most information literacy sessions deal at all with visual information, let alone in the kind of depth textual sources are treated?

**Multiple Literacies, by John Glover (.mp3, 5:39)**

**Seven Relevant Literacies**, from the **National Forum on Information Literacy**

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Current Practice: Literature & Survey

How are
librarians currently integrating visual literacy and information literacy? We looked at the scholarly literature, asked members of ARLIS-L and ILI-L for responses, and examined web sites of twelve randomly chosen ARL libraries.

Current Practice, by Kristina Keogh (.mp3, 4:44)

Databases & Online Resources
One of the important parts of any of the literacies is knowing which resources to use when the time comes to locate information. Resources are constantly evolving, in terms of both what an individual tool has to offer and what those tools have to offer. We believe that they can be usefully divided into two different categories: subscription electronic databases, and freely available online resources. Each have distinctive characteristics that are important to understand if you are going to be showing them to patrons.

Databases & Online
A Sample Curriculum

How can visual literacy and information literacy be integrated? Given how hard librarians often must work to convince faculty and administrators of the importance of library instruction, it is a good idea to keep our goals modest and realistic. We believe efforts will be most effective if we can find ways to incorporate elements of visual literacy into information literacy efforts. This sample
The curriculum suggests ways to do so, focusing primarily on first-year information literacy instruction sessions.

**A Sample Curriculum (.PPT)**

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**Thought Questions**

In keeping with the conference program's goal of exploring the connection between visual literacy and information literacy, here are a few questions. We don't have any real answers to them, but we hope they will help facilitate discussion.
How can we seamlessly introduce visual literacy into introductory library sessions?

What barriers do librarians face in trying to blend elements from multiple literacies?

How can the importance of visual literacy within information literacy be conveyed to faculty?

What types of collaboration can we engage in to better serve our patrons?
Selected Bibliography


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Jean-Leon Gerome, *A Collaboration - Corneille and Moliere*, 1873, from Humanities Web

Francisco Goya, *I Am Still Learning (Aun Aprendo)*, 1824-28, from Web Gallery of Art

Ralph Earl, *Elijah Boardman*, 1789, from The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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