The Grammar of Visual Design

Developing a metalanguage to help students discuss the meaning-making resources involved in images
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colonisation
culture
society
war
depression
immigration
belonging
history
environment
YEAR 7
Analyse how **point of view** is generated in visual texts by means of choices, for example gaze, angle and social distance *(ACELA1764)*

YEAR 8
Understand and explain how combinations of words and images in texts are used to represent particular groups in society, and how texts position readers in relation to those groups *(ACELT1628)*

YEAR 9
Explore and explain the combinations of language and visual choices that authors make to present information, opinions and perspectives in different texts *(ACELY1745)*

YEAR 10
Analyse and explain how text structures, language features and visual feature of texts and the context in which texts are experienced may influenced audience response *(ACELT1614)*
Some useful references

Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen
Len Unsworth
Michelle Anstey and Geoff Bull
Lorraine McDonald
Jon Callow
A Functional Model of Language

Field

Tenor

Mode

Visual analysis

Representation
Who/what is involved and what are they doing

Interaction
Roles and relationships

Composition
Where elements of the image are placed in relation to one another
Visual analysis

Representation
- What’s happening in the image?

Interaction
- How do I interact or relate to the image?

Composition
- How do design and layout contribute to meaning?

Callow 2013
Visual analysis

Representation

What’s happening in the image?

Interaction

How do I interact or relate to the image?

Composition

How do design and layout contribute to meaning?

Callow 2013
Visual Resources of Interaction

• What visual resources are being used?

• What roles and relationships are created?

• How do the visual resources affect the way I interact and relate to the image?
  – How does it make me feel?
Visual resources of interaction

- Gaze
- Distance
- Angle
- Colour
Gaze
- to viewer

demand

How does this affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Gaze
- to viewer

How does this affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Gaze
- between participants

Roles and relationships

How does this affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Gaze
- between participants

Roles and relationships

How does this affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Angle - of viewer

high angle

How does this affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Angle
- of viewer

low angle

What roles and relationships are created?

How does this resource affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Angle
- of viewer

eye level

What roles and relationships are created?

How does this resource affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Angle
- between participants

What roles and relationships are created?

How does this resource affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Angle
- between participants

What roles and relationships are created?

How does this resource affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Shot distance

- viewer

close shot

How does this resource affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Shot distance - viewer

mid shot

What roles and relationships are created?

How does this resource affect the way I interact and relate to the image?

How does it make me feel?
Shot distance
- viewer

long shot
Proximity - between participants

Roles and relationships
Proximity

- between participants
White – purity, virtue, peace, simplicity

Yellow – energising, cheerful, hope, deceit, cowardice

Orange – energy, vibrancy, friendly, autumnal

Red – passion, anger, love, danger

Light purple and pinks – romance, spring

Purple – luxury, royalty, creativity

Blue – calmness, sadness, peace

Dark blue – business-like

Green – envy, jealousy, new life, growth, nature, renewables

Brown – reliability, dependable, dull, earthy, natural

Grey – moody, depressing, formal, conservative

Black – elegance, formality, evil, death, mystery

Callow 2013, p.66
Colour

**Light:**
- ‘hope’
- ‘happiness’
- suggests that the passengers ‘have arrived safely’

**Dark:**
- ‘sad and miserable’ atmosphere
- would make ‘the viewers feel more threatened and scared’.
Visual resources of interaction

- Gaze
- Distance
- Angle
- Colour
mid shot  eye level

demand  lightness
Visual resources of interaction

- Gaze
  - to viewer
  - between participants
- Angle
  - to viewer
  - between participants
- Distance
  - shot distance
  - to viewer
  - proximity
- Colour
  - between participants
Visual Resources of Interaction

• What visual resources are being used?

• What roles and relationships are created?

• How do these resources affect the way I interact and relate to the image?
  – How does it make me feel?