

How to Read Visual Aids

0:00 **Owl:** Welcome to How to Read Visual Aids, an instructional video on reading comprehension brought to you by the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab.

0:19 Are you having trouble understanding visual aids?

0:22 Well, you're not alone!

0:24 Don't fret.

0:25 Let's talk about what visual aids are and how to read them.

0:30 Visual aids are images or graphics used to display information.

0:35 Visual aids can be found in just about every kind of print and electronic media.

0:40 They can appear within the body of the text, in boxes or sidebars, or in appendices.

0:46 Each visual aid has a title and caption with a brief explanation.

0:51 They are often referred to as "tables" or "figures" and numbered to keep track of them.

0:58 There are several types of common visual aids.

1:01 They are tables, graphs, charts, diagrams, maps, pictures, and photographs.

1:14 Let's take a closer look at each one of these to see how they work.

1:18 Tables are text-based graphics that display information using words and numbers arranged in columns and rows.

1:25 For example, in this table, the first column lists bone classifications, while the first row looks at just one type of bone classification—long bones.

1:37 Graphs display information on a grid using an x/y axis.

1:42 There are different types of graphs, such as line graphs and bar graphs.

1:46 Here's an example of a line graph.

1:49 The x-axis is the horizontal axis.

1:52 In this case, it measures age in years.

1:55 The y-axis is the vertical axis.

1:58 In this case, it measures bone mass in grams.

2:01 By following the two lines, you can find out the bone mass for males and females at different ages.

2:07 For instance, the average bone mass of a 30-year-old male is 1500 grams, whereas the average bone mass of a 30-year-old female is just under 1250 grams.

2:20 Charts use shapes to convey information, such as percentages, timelines, or processes.

2:27 There are different types of charts, such as pie charts and flow charts.

2:31 Here's an example of a pie chart.

2:33 This pie chart shows the different types of video game players by age group, broken down by percentage.

2:39 For instance, the 'Under 18 Years' group is only 27%, while the '18-35 Years' group is 29%.

- 2:49 Diagrams are schematic drawings that show how something works, such as a physical structure, a process, or even a concept.
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- 2:58 For instance, this diagram shows the structure of spongy bone.
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- 3:03 Maps are used to describe a territory or identify a location.
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- 3:09 There are different kinds of pictures that can be used as visual aids, such as political cartoons and drawings of people, places, things, and events.
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- 3:19 Here's an example of a British eighteenth-century political cartoon by James Gillray that you might find in a history textbook.
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- 3:26 Gillray satirizes the decline in manners brought about by the French Revolution.
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- 3:31 The cartoon depicts a deposed aristocrat bowing humbly and saying, "I am your very humble servant," while the revolutionary rudely replies, "Kiss my butt."
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- 3:44 Finally, photographs are also used as visual aids to convey information about people, places, things, and events.
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- 3:52 The types and uses of photos can vary greatly because of the different types of devices used to take them, such as cameras, telescopes, microscopes, and even MRI machines.
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- 4:04 Here's an example of a micrograph of cells and tissue in the human body.
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- 4:08 The different parts are labeled for clarity.
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- 4:12 I hope I've given you a better sense of what visual aids are and how they work.
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- 4:16 By understanding visual aids, you can greatly improve your comprehension of the many different kinds of texts that use them.
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- 4:24 Thanks for listening to this instructional video on How to Read Visual Aids!
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- 4:29 Visit the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab for more support with reading and writing skills.