



Types of visual aids



Context

Visualization is a key step in learning. Using visuals can play a positive role in engagement and motivation. For students with Specific Learning Disorders, but also blind, deaf, or with visual or hearing impairments, it is crucial to use visuals to ensure understanding. It is therefore not a question of aesthetics, but rather of necessity. Therefore, during online teaching sessions, it is important to maintain a certain level of visualisation to ensure that these learners are not left behind.



Different types of Visual Aids

Using visuals when teaching is not a new concept, nor is specific to online learning. Rather, teachers and educators use visuals throughout their entire courses, whether it be to explain concepts, to demonstrate logical links, to show specific meaning or details, and more. Typical visuals can vary from the blackboard of a classroom to handouts. In online learning, the possibilities are numerous.

A visual aid is any material that gives shape and form to words or thoughts. Types of visual aids include images, photos, graphics, pictures, videos, infographics, posters, etc.



Examples of visuals



Graphics

Visual images or designs on surface, such as a wall, canvas, screen, paper, or stone, to inform, illustrate, or entertain. Images that are generated by a computer are called computer graphics.

Pictures and images

The most general term for any representation of an object, a person, or a landscape.

Infographics

Graphic visual representations of information, data, or knowledge intended to present information quickly and clearly. They can improve cognition by utilizing graphics to enhance the visual system's ability to see patterns and trends.



Photos

Anything taken by a photographer and a camera (digital or not).



Posters

A temporary promotion of an idea, or event put up in a public space. Typically, posters include both textual and graphic elements, although a poster may be either wholly graphical or wholly text.

Mind maps

A diagram used to visually organize information. A mind map is hierarchical and shows relationships among pieces of the whole. Major ideas are connected directly to the central concept, and other ideas branch out from those major ideas.

Videos

An electronic medium for the recording, copying, playback, broadcasting, and display of moving visual media.

Others

Maps, sketches, charts, flashcards and more!



🔑 Practical uses and resources

Images, photos or pictures: Use still visuals to illustrate concepts, ideas and more.

- <https://pixabay.com/>
- <https://www.freepik.com/>
- <https://unsplash.com/t>

Graphics: Graphics are more than image, use them to illustrate specific concepts, chronology or step by step processes.

- <https://genial.ly/>
- <https://www.canva.com/>
- <https://crello.com>

Videos: Videos are perfect mediums to allow students to understand concept in interactive ways.

- <https://ed.ted.com/>
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/>

Mind maps: Use these maps to guide students in their understanding of lessons, to provide a structure or definition of key concepts.

- <https://www.xmind.net/>
- <https://www.mindmup.com/>
- <https://www.mindmeister.com/>

Map: Use maps to teach students about historical events, geography, places and more. This can help students situate themselves in time, but also pay attention to name, directions, details etc.

- <https://www.google.com/maps/about/mymaps/>
- <https://mapchart.net/>
- <https://www.scribblemaps.com/>

Sketch: Use sketches to illustrate concept on the spot, or to present step by step process that a still image might not convey properly.

- <https://sketch.io/sketchpad/>
- <https://www.autodraw.com/>
- <https://kleki.com/>

Graph: Use graphs to demonstrate numerical, statistical or calculable information.

- <https://www.visme.co/graph-maker/>
- <https://www.rapidtables.com/tools/line-graph>

Flashcards: Use flashcards to assign homework, or help students review lessons.

- <https://quizlet.com/>
- <https://www.brainscape.com/>
- <https://flashmind.eu/>