


3-7-2019

# Leveraging Visual Literacy to Engage and Orient First-Year College Students in the Library

Melissa Clark

Stephen F. Austin State University, [clarkm4@sfasu.edu](mailto:clarkm4@sfasu.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/libfacpres>

 Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), [Information Literacy Commons](#), and the [Other Education Commons](#)

Tell us how this article helped you.

---

## Repository Citation

Clark, Melissa, "Leveraging Visual Literacy to Engage and Orient First-Year College Students in the Library" (2019). *Library Faculty and Staff Presentations*. 23.

<https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/libfacpres/23>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Ralph W. Steen Library at SFA ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Faculty and Staff Presentations by an authorized administrator of SFA ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu](mailto:cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu).

# Leveraging visual literacy to engage and orient first-year college students in the Library

Melissa Clark, MA-LIS, MA-HDEP, Ralph W. Steen Library

## Introduction

Too often incoming students leave library orientation sessions feeling overwhelmed and overstressed, which results in the library becoming one more intimidating obstacle to them. However, this does not need to be the case. Visual literacy and visual culture can be leveraged to engage students and improve library orientation sessions.

In the fall of 2017 and 2018, students in 28 SFA 101 sections engaged in an alternate approach to library orientation.

## Assessment

**Task Completion:** Each of 174 groups was assigned 3 items to find ( $N = 522$ ).

Students found and uploaded a photo successfully 494 times, for an overall success rate of 94.64%.

**Affective Response:** Student photos were also rated according to an adaptation of the PANAS (Figure 3).

Of the photos available for scoring ( $N = 398$ ), students appeared to show significantly more positive ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ ) than negative ( $M = 1.09$ ,  $SD = 0.10$ ) emotions,  $t(397) = -55.28$ ,  $p = .000$ .

1 very slightly or not at all	2 a little	3 moderately	4 quite a bit	5 extremely
_____ interested				_____ irritable
_____ distressed				_____ alert
_____ excited				_____ ashamed
_____ upset				_____ inspired
_____ strong				_____ nervous
_____ shy				_____ determined
_____ scared				_____ attentive
_____ hostile				_____ jittery
_____ enthusiastic				_____ active
_____ proud				_____ afraid

Figure 3. Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS), (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988)

## The Activity

Working as a group, students were assigned 3 items to locate in the library, using visual cues instead of traditional directions, such as title, collection, or call number.

After finding each item, students:

- Took a picture and uploaded it to a cloud-based, multimedia sharing application,
- Returned to the classroom to give a short presentation on what they found,
- Listened and learned from their peers and their experiences.

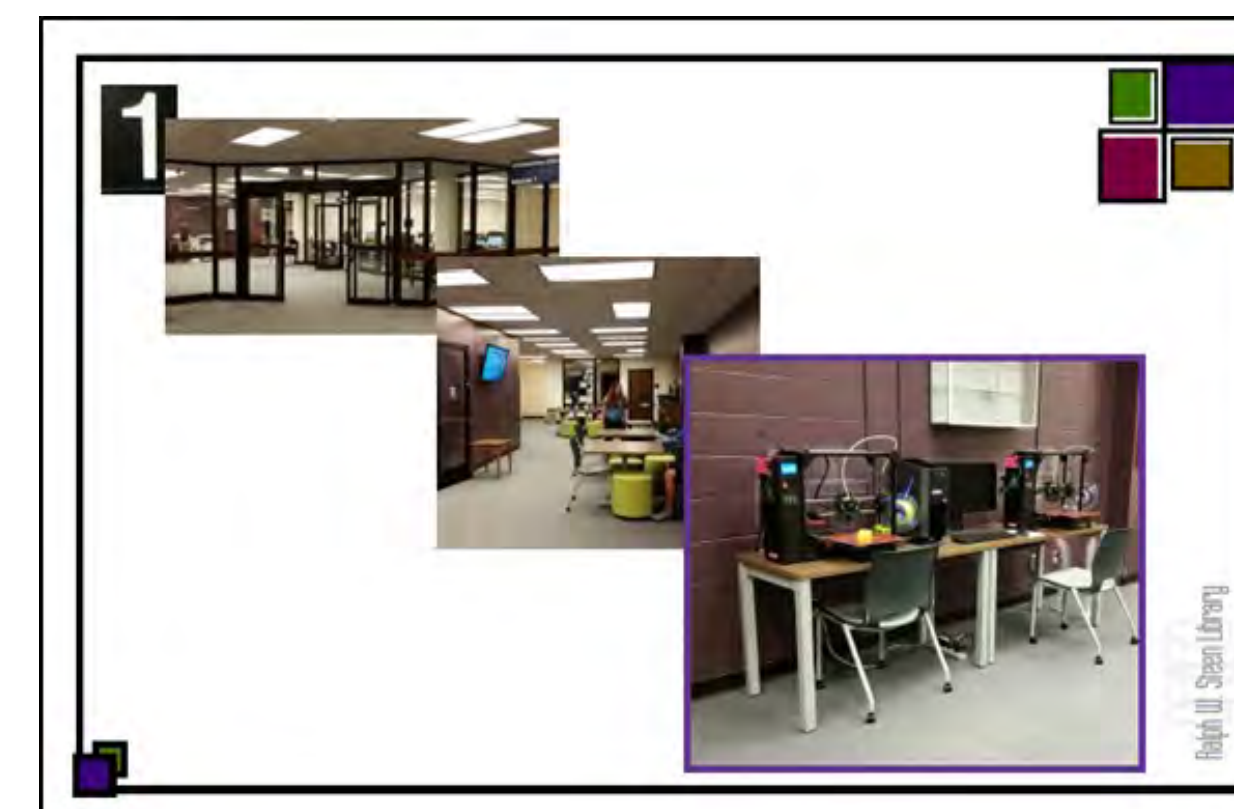


Figure 1. Sample activity card

## Definitions and Theories

**Visual Literacy** — “a group of vision-competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences” (Debes, 1969)

**Social Development Theory (Lev Vygotsky)** — mediators, such as people (e.g., peer teachers) and structured activities (e.g., scaffolding), are required for development of higher-level cognitive skills (Kozulin, 2003)

**Social Cognitive Theory (Albert Bandura)** — skill can only be gained from enactive experience and analysis of the resultant sensory feedback (Bandura, 1986)

## Next Steps

- Present activity and data analysis at the Association of College & Research Libraries' Annual Conference in Cleveland this spring.
- Develop a Neutral Affect scale to supplement the Positive and Negative scales in PANAS.
- Introduce a self-reported measure of students' affective response to complement and confirm observational data.



## Selected Bibliography

- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Debes, J. L. (1969). The loom of visual literacy--An overview. *Audiovisual Instruction*, 14 (8), 25-27.
- Kozulin, A. (2003). *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- McCain, C. (2007). Scavenger hunt assignments in academic libraries: Viewpoints versus reality. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 14(1), 19-32.
- Rugan, E. G., & Nero, M. D. (2013). Library scavenger hunts: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Southeastern Librarian*, 61(3), 7-10.
- Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(6), 1063-1070. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063>



Figure 2. Photographs of SFA 101 students

