CNX151: When Black Lives Matter

Library Research Session | Anna Boutin-Cooper | November 6, 2019

Class Purpose: To get students familiar with visual research & visual literacy.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of class, students will understand how to construct searches for images using Artstor and keywords.

By the end of class, students will be able to "read" an image, through the process of close looking, in much the same way as they can read a text.

Supplies: Instructor laptop
Lesson plan & PPT
Whiteboard nameplates (16)
Whiteboard markers (16)
Worksheet from *Visual Literacy for Libraries* (17)

Pre-Work: Students will have read the preface and first chapter of *The Methodologies of Art* by Laurie Schneider Adams

Timeline: 2:30-3:50pm

Class Outline:
I. 2:30-2:35pm - Introductions & Why We're Here
II. 2:35-2:50pm - Discussion of Chapter/Readings
III. 2:50-3:15pm - Reading a Visual Image Exercise & Discussion
IV. 3:15-3:30pm - How this relates to research transition & Keyword Exercise
V. 3:30-3:45pm - Demonstrations of Artstor & JSTOR
VI. 3:45-3:50pm - Lingering Questions & Assessment

Class Script:

I. Introduce self, introduce class purpose - have students go around the room and introduce themselves with names, pronouns, and a fun fact.

[Go around the room, thanking folks for participating]

Today we're going to be learning about a term called visual literacy, meaning fluency in reading images like you would read a book. This is an important skill to have not just for looking at and appreciating works of art, but also for interacting more fully with the world around you. A visually literate person can pick out symbolism and similarities in

images, understanding that all images are constructed in some way by the artist, for some particular purpose.

II.   Begin discussion of their readings for the day, following the below prompts if discussion runs short or dry:

[Facilitate discussion, asking questions below if things lag.]

Reading Discussion Questions

   1. In the Preface, Adams alleges that words cannot accurately describe the experience of looking at a picture. Do you agree or disagree, and why?
   2. What do you think of Fry's approach to analyze art "out of context"?
   3. Are there other ways that you can think of that may be important to view art? What other lenses or frameworks could you use to view a work of art?

[If it doesn't come up in conversation, mention visual analyses and what those do.]

III.   Introduce "close looking" exercise: have students fill out a worksheet from *Visual Literacy for Libraries,* explain why close looking matters. Five minutes to look at the image projected on the screen, then pass the worksheet to your neighbor.

Have them pass the worksheets to their neighbor, noting if what they noticed was similar or different.

[Facilitate discussion on what was noticed, why, what some folks missed, etc.]

IV.   Introduce keyword-generating activity: project an image on the screen, ask students to come up with their own keywords that they would use to find that image, have them share them out verbally. Write them down as we go, and then check them up against the actual Artstor record for the work.

[facilitate activity, pull up the record and cross out words.]

V.   Transition into Artstor discussion, and searching within it: Mention Artstor, go over basic search functionalities. Mention finding images guide, with plenty of other options. Mention JSTOR, integrated search with artstor, too.

VI.   Thank students & ask for their surveys to be filled out. Offer help if needed, in the future.

Survey includes the following questions:
- What, in your own words, is visual literacy?
- What is one thing you learned in class today?
- What is one thing that you still find confusing after class today?
- Any other questions or comments?