

## Visual Literacy & Visible Thinking

### Overview

Visual literacy is the ability to construct meaning from or communicate meaning through information presented in the form of images. Making students' thinking visible to others has never been easier with available apps. Many activities and methodologies exist for incorporating visual literacy and making thinking visible in the classroom, but how can mobile apps like Lino, Symphonical, Picstitch, Flayvr support the practices of visual literacy and visible thinking? In this session, you'll explore great apps for making visual displays that communicate thinking, and then work to design and try out instructional activities that leverage their power. No prior experience with these apps is necessary, but you will want to download the apps and sign up for an account ahead of time. If you have a particular topic that you feel would lend itself to visible thinking, bring that topic to design a lesson with these tools.

### Tools

- Lino – collaborative corkboard for posting notes, images, and video
- PicStitch – easily create picture collages
- Symphonical – an collaborative organization tool with a common workspace for sticky notes
- Flayvr – automagically generate dynamic media albums synced with your calendar
- Over – overlay captions and icons onto images

### Activities

#### 1. What's Going On In This Picture? (Lino)

Inspired by the New York Times series, an interesting image with a lot of rich contextual detail is shown to students and they are asked to use Claim-Evidence-Reasoning to speculate what's going on in the picture. Through discussion with other classmates, students can try to achieve a consensus or maintain separate ideas. Using Lino, the teacher would post the picture in the middle of a Lino board and students would post notes with their speculations about what's going on in the image all around. Through discussion, notes can be added, edited or deleted until consensus is reached.

#### 2. Visual Story Telling (PicStitch or Flayvr)

Students will make a storyboard of images that communicate the sequence of events of a story. Each image should be chosen to capture the essence of the most important elements of the story. A story can be told using approximately 5-6 images (Intro/Setting, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Resolution.) With PicStitch, or another collage-maker, students can choose the layout of their storyboard to emphasize the relative importance of each image. Using Flayvr, students can additionally add video clips into their storyboard.

#### 3. 6 Word Stories With a Picture (Over)

Using the Over app, or another photo caption tool, students can select an image and overlay words in front of the image. Students can select an image and write a six-word story about the image. They can then challenge other students to try and interpret what their six-word story is. After 2-3 guesses, the author should reveal the story and explain why they chose those six words for their image. Alternatively, a teacher could post an image and students could create their own six-word stories based on the same image. After creating their stories, students could share their six-word stories and talk about why they selected those six words.

#### 4. Collaborative Concept Attainment (Symphonical)

Create a Symphonical wall for students to use that has 3 columns labeled: WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT IS NOT, OVERALL. In each column, have students post pictures illustrating a concept. For example, for 'freedom' the students might put a picture of a prisoner in the WHAT IT IS NOT column and a picture of an eagle flying. After posting their pictures in each column as a group, students should discuss an overall working definition for the concept.

#### 5. 4 Pics 1 Word (PicStitch)

Students can find four photos that have something in common of their choice. This might be vocabulary they are learning, or it could also be more open-ended. They put together a four-pane collage of their photos to share with others. The objective is to determine the word that stands for what they all have in common.