A Qualitative Study Exploring the Use of Visual Thinking Strategies with Nursing Students

By
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What is Visual Thinking Strategies?

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a teaching method that uses art to engage participants in conversations using visual evidence for what they see.

Created by Abigail Housen and Philip Yenawine
Studied in primary education
Questions Used in VTS

1. What is happening in this picture?
2. What are you seeing that makes you say that?
3. What more can you find?
Purpose of Study

- Nurse educators are called on to create innovative experiences for students in order to prepare nurses to work in complex healthcare settings.
- The purpose of this study was to explore the meaning of VTS for nursing students and how they used it in caring for their patients.
Methods

• Students enrolled in the 7th semester of an 8 semester Bachelor of Science in Nursing program were recruited

• Nine students recruited to participate who had experienced VTS in their 6th semester OB course

• Participated in 2 1-hour VTS experiences at local art museum with trained VTS facilitator

• Interviews with researcher were audio taped

• Informed consent obtained
Questions:
• What meaning does VTS have for nursing students?
• How do students who have experienced VTS use it in the care of their patients?

Interviews were transcribed and analyzed for common themes
Heideggarian hermeneutics used as research method and for analysis
Research team analyzed data for themes
Themes that emerged from student interviews

- Feeling safe in learning
- Seeing differently
- From view of researcher, theme emerged about process of VTS Facilitative Teaching
Feeling Safe in Learning

- No right or wrong
- All responses given equal acknowledgement
- Students reported feeling heard
- Facilitator is attentive to student and no prior knowledge of art required
- Students more likely to participate when they are not judged and can think out loud
Feeling Safe in Learning

- Students linked interactions with artwork directly to patient care
- Students used same line of questioning form VTS to elicit more information from other care givers
“What is going on in this painting?”

• After student answers, facilitator repeats back and paraphrases what student said.
• Seeks understanding from student
• Allows for clarification

Facilitator asks “Tell me what you are seeing that makes you say that?”

• Student looks deeper and gives visual evidence for what he/she is seeing
• More students participate after seeing that there is no right answer
Facilitator asks “What are you seeing that makes you say that?”

- Student gives evidential reasoning
- Other students hear how student came up with answer, providing insight into thoughts
- All answers given equal attention, so students can hold the possibility of multiple answers
Seeing Differently

- Looking at art as a large piece, then breaking it down into smaller pieces
- “Seeing the big picture” and relating it to clinical work
Facilitative Teaching

From researcher perspective, themes emerged about VTS process that can be used to encourage students to participate.
## Facilitative Teaching In Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Educational Rationale</th>
<th>How to incorporate into teaching practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Validation| Promotes speaking out       | Paraphrase student response  
Ask “Tell me how you came to that conclusion: and paraphrase back to student  
Ask “Did I understand you correctly?”                                                                                           |
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<th>Themes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reformation of VTS Processes in Clinical Practice</td>
<td>Formulation/Reformulation</td>
<td>Display complicated work of art during class and ask “What is going on in this painting?” Ask “What are you seeing that made you say that?” Paraphrase back Provide picture of complicated patient scenario and repeat above questioning like VTS</td>
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<td>Mutual Respect</td>
<td>Mutual respect in learning and education</td>
<td>Invite participation&lt;br&gt;Seek understanding of student’s view&lt;br&gt;Ask for rationale&lt;br&gt;Paraphrase and seek understanding of response&lt;br&gt;Model mutual respect&lt;br&gt;No judgment or criticism</td>
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References


