Resource 1: - Visual Literacy Glossary

Visual Literacy Glossary

allegory	A story or visual image with a second distinct meaning partially hidden behind its literal or visible meaning. A common technique of allegory is personification; thereby abstract qualities are given human shape. An allegory may be conceived as an extended metaphor.
angle	Angle is often used to convey a point of view. In order to make something look powerful and commanding the eye or the camera is positioned below the subject in a low angle shot, looking upwards. To create a sense of equality between the subject and the viewer, the camera is positioned at eye level. In a high angle shot, the camera is above the person or object, often making the person or object appear weak, inferior or under pressure.
audience (target)	Those who read, view or hear a text. Target audience is a specific audience that an author is hoping to reach.
colour	The use of particular colours in a visual image may represent particular moods or feelings. Colour can change the way we think and behave, for example, making us happy or sad, irritated or enthusiastic. Colour can therefore be used in visual texts to create meaning. The symbolic meanings that we attach to particular colours may change according to context. In one visual image, red may suggest passion or suggest danger in another. Colour can also be described in terms of tone and saturation. Tone is the degree of lightness or darkness of a coloured area. Saturation is the degree of purity in a colour. Bright colours are often used to convey a sense of fun and happiness. Dull colours can convey gloom and sadness. For example, red can communicate danger and white is a symbol of purity.
comparison and contrast	Composers of visual texts use these techniques to draw the reader's attention to differences and similarities.
composition	Composition refers to the way that the whole text has been put together and the arrangement of elements within a visual text. For example, by using images, borders and various features.
context	Cultural, historical, social, situational and personal circumstances in which a text is composed and responded to.
contrast	Comparing 'before' and 'after'. Changes in perspective, point of view, and colour and saturation style can be made to imply or state changes.
deconstruct	Respond to a text in an analytical manner by pulling it apart and critically examining each component.

symbol	Picture, language or diagram used to represent something else, or to evoke a certain imagery.
Text style	Consider the font, colour, size and placement used in the text.
texture	The roughness or smoothness of an image.
title	Consider the significance of the text and language of the title.
tone	This refers to the attitude or voice of the composer.
vector	The direction of the sight-lines which the eyes are drawn to follow. Vectors lead the viewer from one element to another. They may take the form of lines, visible or otherwise, created by such elements as a gaze, pointing fingers, extended arms, and an object held in a set direction, animal/foot tracks.