

HOW IMAGES AID

PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING

Images Support Textual Learning



We see things wherever we go. As a matter of fact, every single day of our lives we see things, be it photographs, videos or even natural things such as trees and water. Images are all over and, as such, they have become part of us. It is therefore quite difficult to ignore the images we see around us especially when it comes to the teaching and learning environment. In recent times, schools have begun incorporating the use of images in the learning system. Studies have revealed that it is essential for teachers to use visual aids since it is a very useful tool when it comes to learning, especially when introducing language skills.

This article looks at three elements related to images and learning. First, we'll look at the importance of using images in aiding pre-school learning as well as discovering the various ways through which the use of images supports textual learning. It will also examine the various ways through which images can be used to assist young children learn how to read and write. Finally, we will illustrate various ways through which the use of images as a learning aid has evolved over time and how they have been of great assistance in helping teachers create successful teaching experiences in pre-school learning.

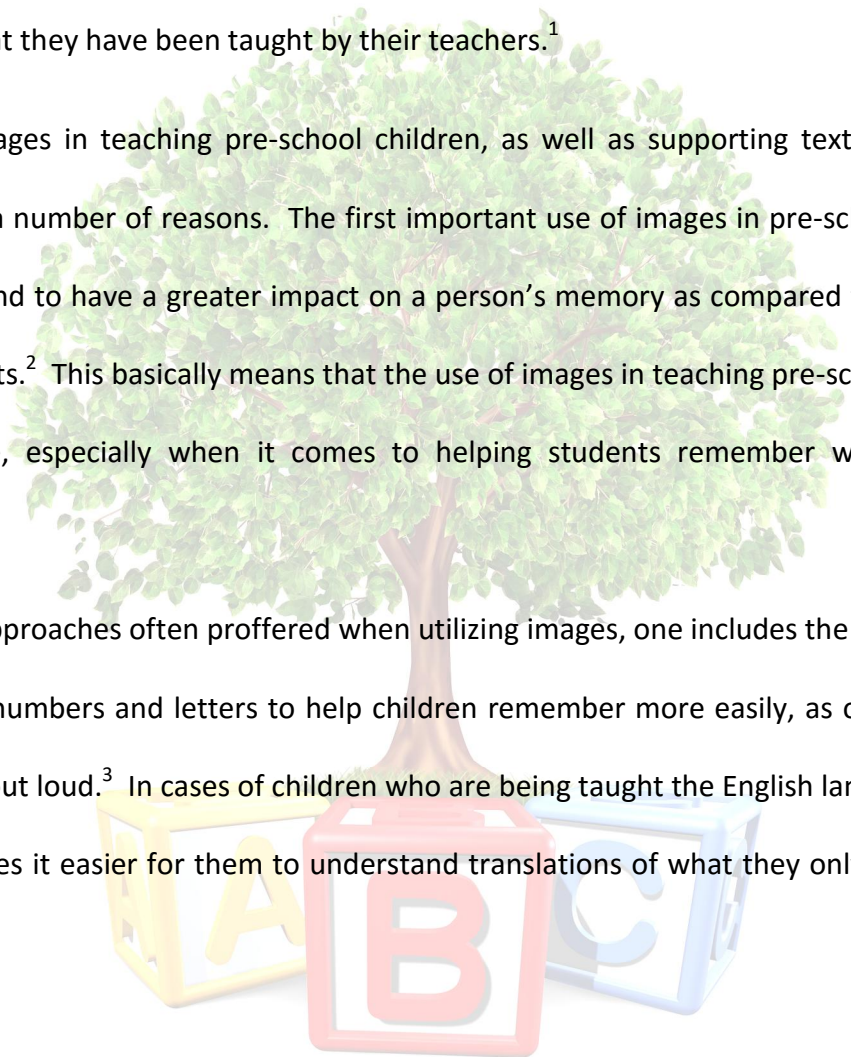
With the passing of time, the use of images in teaching language, especially to young children, has proven to be very resourceful. It is clear that in the society in which we live, the media runs almost everything. As such, children live in a sort of *media world* where almost all messages are relayed through the media. This simply means that most of the information acquired by children is usually received visually through the various existing technological devices.

Studies have shown that in order for children to meaningfully learn how to read and write, and ultimately language, there must be an element of practicality in the classroom. This means

that, in order for students to enjoy learning language, it is important for educators to teach using real life experiences. Learning aids in the form of images have been said to be very powerful tools when it comes to the learning language by children. The use of images help children to understand what they are being taught easily and, more importantly, to always remember what they have been taught by their teachers.¹

The use of images in teaching pre-school children, as well as supporting textual learning, is important for a number of reasons. The first important use of images in pre-school learning is that images tend to have a greater impact on a person's memory as compared to audio, on its own and in texts.² This basically means that the use of images in teaching pre-school children is more effective, especially when it comes to helping students remember what they have learned.

Of the many approaches often proffered when utilizing images, one includes the use of cut-outs of pictures of numbers and letters to help children remember more easily, as opposed to just reading them out loud.³ In cases of children who are being taught the English language, the use of images makes it easier for them to understand translations of what they only know in their native tongue.



¹ Garcia R. M., (2012). Usage of Multimedia Visual Aids in the English Language Classroom: A Case Study at Margarita Salas Secondary School.

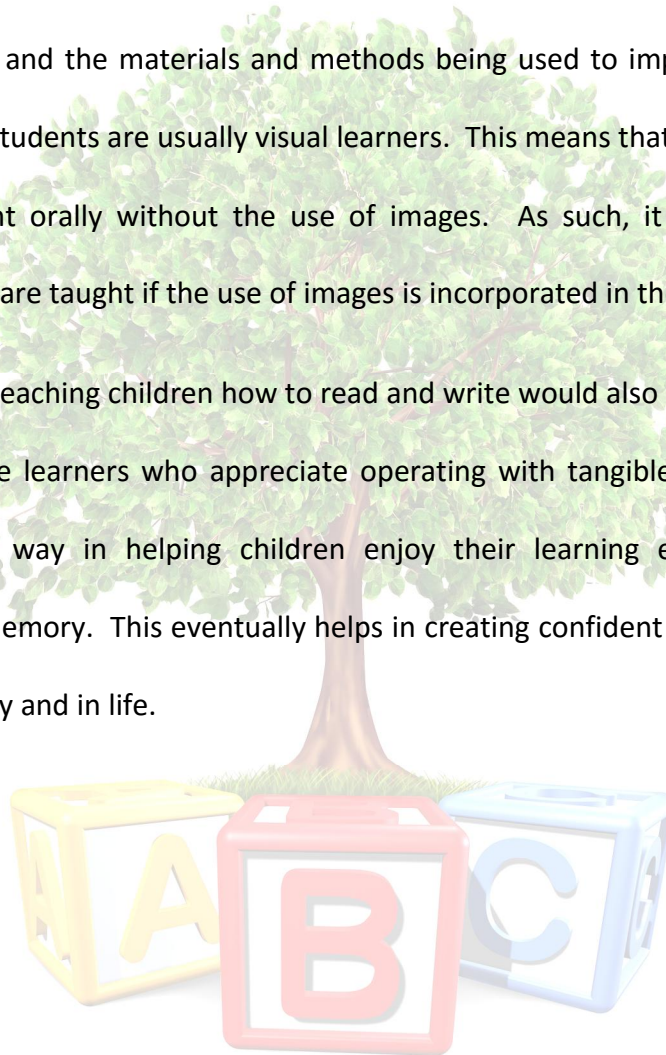
²Clark, R.C and Lyons, C. (2004) Graphics for Learning: Proven Guidelines for Planning, Designing, and Evaluation visuals in Training Materials, San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer.

³ Oxford, R.L. (2000). 'Language Learning Styles and Strategies' in Celce-Murcia, M. (ed.) Teaching English as a second or foreign language (3rd ed., pp.359-367). Boston: Heinle and Heinle.

Images essentially serve as *mental skeletons* for such young learners.⁴ They subsequently enable teachers to associate the proper concepts that are required in order for learning to become more tangible.⁵

The use of images in the classroom has come a long way in helping to build a synchronization between the teacher and the materials and methods being used to impart this knowledge to the children.⁶ Some students are usually visual learners. This means that they have a hard time when they are taught orally without the use of images. As such, it is easier for them to remember what they are taught if the use of images is incorporated in their learning.

The use of images in teaching children how to read and write would also be greatly beneficial to kinesthetic and tactile learners who appreciate operating with tangible objects.⁷ The use of images goes a long way in helping children enjoy their learning experience as well as strengthening their memory. This eventually helps in creating confident students who perform well both academically and in life.



⁴ Carney, R.N and Levin, J.R. (2002). 'Pictorial Illustrations still improve students' Learning from Text' Educational Psychology Review, Vol. 14, no. 1, March.

⁵ Mannan, A. (2005). Modern Education: Audio-Visual Aids. New Delhi: Anmol Publications.

⁶ Supra note 3

⁷ ibid

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