

PHOTOGRAPHY IN VISUAL EDUCATION

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For many centuries we find evidence of the urge of man to reproduce images for accurate preservation of those pleasant visual concepts formed in his life's experience. The earlier man carved pictures on the walls of his cave but the modern man reviews pictures in magazines such as LIFE, LOOK, PIC, PEEK, etc., along with the metropolitan dailies. Our social pattern has become picture-conscious. Society pays a billion dollars a year for motion pictures. Photography has grown to be the world's greatest hobby.

Even though pictures play a prominent part in our social pattern, it should be remembered that the laws of learning (whatever they are) have not changed during the history of man. Pictures themselves cannot teach unless there is activity on the part of the learner. This leads to two modest claims for the place of pictures in education, namely: first, to convey a more accurate concept of certain subject matter than could be done by other methods, and, second, to convey such concepts in less time.

There are many types of pictures which may be used in appropriate places to fulfill these claims for the place of pictures in education. The pictures may be motion or still, sound or silent, transparent or opaque, black and white or color, or flat or in third dimension. They may be viewed by reflection, refraction, projection or by such optical aids as the stereoscope. Still pictures have the advantage of economy, but motion pictures have the advantage of eliminating the barriers of time and space.

With equipment available in the industrial world there is a tendency and increased incentive for teachers and pupils to produce their own pictures to use as visual aids in subject matter. This procedure itself has pedagogical value.

With the increase in knowledge of pictures and the large amount of material available, the use of pictures as teaching aid is limited only by the imagination of the teacher.