

# **Publishers' Bindings Online, 1815-1930**

## **Bindings.lib.ua.edu**

### **Sample Lesson Plan to be treated as a standing lone lesson or integrated into other Publishers' Bindings Lessons: Visual Literacy Grades 6-12**

#### Objectives

This exercise is designed to be flexible so that it may be integrated into other lesson plans or be treated as a separate lesson on its own. The lesson provides a list of questions concerning publishers' bindings images which will facilitate discussion concerning the visual decoding of the images. Visual literacy is the ability to discriminate and interpret visual imagers, and discern meaning from them. Students will improve their critical and visual thinking skills by:

- describing the visual elements and principles of design contained in an image
- looking for and finding common patterns within a series of images
- analyzing those patterns for what they reveal about the historical culture that created the images
- discussing assumptive or hidden agendas in the images they analyze

#### Materials

- 1) A computer with an Internet connection and a large screen or other capability to display the teacher's actions to the entire class
- 2) Blackboard or dry erase board

#### Lesson

##### Introduction

The Publishers' Bindings Online (PBO) project depicts images which have been used to help market books either by adding information with a visual image or by making the text more attractive. Visual literacy skills are helpful to include in your lessons when discussing the bindings as they will aid in the understanding of historical imagery and its context.

The class will examine one image at a time and find relationships within a larger group of images. The series of images used will depend on the topic of your lesson. It is suggested that you choose from the topics located on the Publishers' Bindings website [bindings.lib.ua.edu](http://bindings.lib.ua.edu) under the hyperlink *Teaching Tools* (<http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/teaching.html>). The *Essays and Galleries by Subject Topic* heading will lead you to a list of several essays on historical events. Find an essay appropriate to your curriculum plan. This will be the background topic by which you integrate this visual literacy lesson plan.

##### Example

Let's say you are doing a unit on the American West and would like to use the Publishers' Bindings Project as part of this unit. You will locate the American West essay and gallery at [www.bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/west](http://www.bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/west). You may want to use one of our sample lessons plans on this topic, or you may simply want to use the essay and images themselves.

### Discussion

Have a student read aloud, or you yourself may want to read the essay aloud to the rest of the class. Get the student's feedback on the essay to ensure that they comprehend the topic of discussion. Write down important points of interest on the blackboard or dry erase board. Students will later draw correlations between these remarks and the publishers' bindings images. Try to get your students thinking about how images would be used by governing powers during this time period discussed. Review with your students the visual literacy cues listed in the PBO visual literacy essay.

It is advised that students go through the following exercise as a class or in groups as these sorts of questions work best in a brainstorming open discussion forum.

Below is a list of questions designed to aid in the discussion: **see hand out**

1. Label the elements and principles of design found in each image.  
(you may do each image in gallery or choose a few)
2. How do they contribute to the book's meaning or content?
3. Historical significance:
  - Does the image reflect the time in history when it was created?
  - Does the image the message is conveying take on a different meaning in our present society and culture?

\* Remember to draw correlations from the ideas you wrote on the board with the images you are discussing
4. Whose views are not represented?
5. Why might the artists(s) have chosen this subject and not others?
6. What sort of people are in it?
  - Can you tell their age, race, gender, and social class? How?

The Publishers' Bindings Online project is an excellent forum for historical, cultural and visual learning. Visual learning can be integrated into any aspect of research and study in examining the Bindings. For additional resources see links listed under visual literacy essay.

## Publishers' Bindings Online Visual Literacy Handout

### Visual Elements:

- **Dot:** a pointer, marker of space  
Pbw02012.bib
- **Line:** creates form, can either stand alone or create an edge where two lines meet  
Pba00708.bib
- **Shape:** the basic outlines which create a form such as the circle, triangle, and square  
Pbw00508.bib
- **Direction:** all lines have a direction; horizontal (calm), vertical (balance), or oblique (movement or action).  
Pba01529.bib
- **Value or Hue:** the presence or absence of light, the lightness or darkness of a color, also known as tone  
Pbw01682.bib
- **Saturation:** the intensity of a specific hue based on a range of gradation scale: from the most vivid hue of a color to the mutest hue of a color  
Pba02496.bib
- **Texture:** visual or physical surface characteristic of a shape such as rough, smooth, soft, hard, glossy etc.  
Pba01250.bib
- **Size:** the relationship of the area occupied by one shape to that of another  
Pba01598.bib

### Principals of Design

- **Rhythm:** the regular repetition of elements of art of produce the look and feel of movement. An artist creates movement in illustration by repeating colors, shapes, lines, or textures.  
pba01410.bib
- **Movement:** guides a viewer's eye through the work, usually to a focal point. Depicts a change in the position of a body relative to a reference point  
pbw1164.bib

- **Balance**: there are three forms of balance; regular, asymmetrical, and radial. Balance is the overall weight of a composition  
**Regular** Pba02318.bib  
**Radial** Pbw05959.bib  
**Asymmetrical** Pbw00958.bib
- **Harmony and Unity**: harmony in painting is the visually satisfying effect of combining similar, related elements. Adjacent colors on the color wheel, similar shapes, etc.  
Pbw00899.bib
- **Repetition**: the use of repetition of an element such as color, or shape creates interest, emphasis, and variety  
Pba02287
- **Contrast**: an abrupt, unexpected change in a visual element. Contrast can be created through value, color, texture, and shape.  
Pbw04526.bib