

★ Offer Alternatives for Visual Information



Day 302

Try Something Tactile

To move beyond visuals in the classroom, consider bringing in items that students can touch and feel.

Tactile materials (e.g., sandpaper letters, interactive picture books, foam shapes) are one type of support you can add to lessons to support a wider range of learners. These materials utilize a student's sense of touch. Educators typically use them to teach young children and those who are blind or have low vision. You can use tactile materials, however, even if you do not teach pre-school or have students with sensory needs. Any number of learners may be interested in examining a maple leaf or exploring a relief map, for instance.

Realia, the use of everyday objects in the classroom, is another tool you can use across subject areas and grade levels. Realia can help English language learners learn vocabulary, but it can also make your lessons more memorable and more engaging. If you are studying the Vietnam War, you might share some dog tags or an Army jacket from the 1960s. If you are reading a short story about cricket, bring in a bat. If you are teaching about the desert, add a cactus to your materials list.