

REFERENCE GUIDE

ONLINE READING COMPREHENSION LAB

http://owl.excelsior.edu/orc

How to Read Visual Aids



Here is a quick overview of what visual aids are, where they may be found, and the characteristics of the most common types of visual aids.

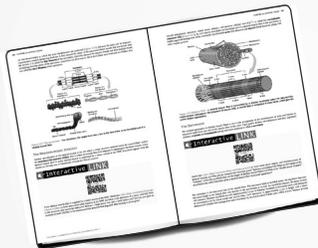
What is a visual aid?

Visual Aid:
An image or graphic used to display information



Visual aids can be found in just about every kind of print and electronic media. They can appear within the body of the text, in boxes or sidebars, or in appendices.

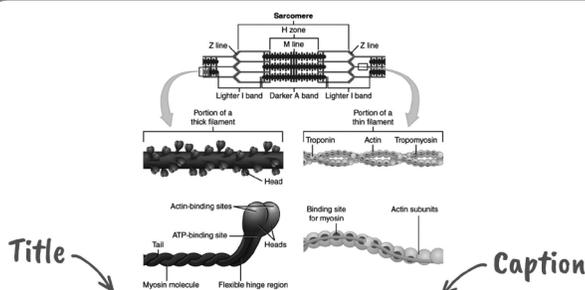
Print



Electronic



Each visual aid has a **title** and **caption** with a brief explanation. They are often referred to as “tables” or “figures” and numbered to keep track of them.

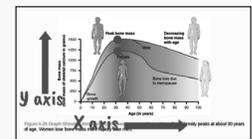


Common Types of Visual Aids

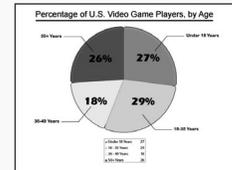
- Tables** Tables are text-based graphics that display information using words and numbers arranged in columns and rows.

		Columns	
		Home Classifications	Examples
Rows	Table	Organized into rows and columns	Periodic table, scientific data table, financial statement
	Table	Organized into rows and columns	Table of contents, index, directory
	Table	Organized into rows and columns	Table of contents, index, directory
	Table	Organized into rows and columns	Table of contents, index, directory
	Table	Organized into rows and columns	Table of contents, index, directory

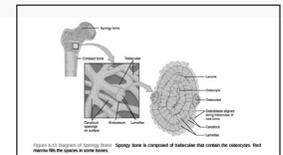
- Graphs** Graphs display information on a grid using an x/y axis. There are different types of graphs, such as line graphs and bar graphs.



- Charts** Charts use shapes to convey information, such as percentages, timelines, or processes. There are different types of charts, such as pie charts and flow charts.



- Diagrams** Diagrams are schematic drawings that show how something works, such as a physical structure, a process, or even a concept.



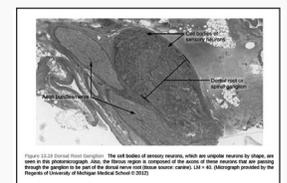
- Maps** Maps are used to describe a territory or identify a location.



- Pictures** There are different kinds of pictures that can be used as visual aids, such as political cartoons and drawings of people, places, things, and events.



- Photographs** Photographs are also used as visual aids to convey information about people, places, things, and events. The types and uses of photos can vary greatly because of the different types of devices used to take them, such as cameras, telescopes, microscopes, and even MRI machines.



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