

Barbara Dowling: Children's understanding is enhanced when they are encouraged and they can create their own representations. Children can represent their knowledge in a variety of mediums -- they contribute to literacy. These representations of visual forms can include drawing, painting, and creating 3D models. Let me illustrate with a few examples of visual literacy.

In Webcast 2 we talked about classifying treasures and found objects that children brought from home. These materials were used in the design and execution of models, and in drawings of those models using visual language. Each of these approaches or strategies asks children to extend their learning by engaging in careful observation and by recognizing shapes, forms, patterns, color, texture, and relationship between the parts of the models, objects, or pictures.

Sometimes children's representations do not perfectly reflect the real world, but they do accurately represent the child's understanding, and serve as a window into their thinking.

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