Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be the glory… Ephesians 3:20-21a
Why Are Visuals Important?

Once we understand why visuals are important, we should be excited to take steps to use these tools when we are teaching.

There are two main reasons why it is important to actually show the children what we are teaching.
   1. Visuals clarify the material being taught.
   2. Visuals make learning more permanent.

Visuals Clarify the Material Being Taught
In normal day-to-day living we learn:

- 3% through taste
- 3% through smell
- 6% through touch
- 13% through hearing
- 75% through seeing

![Graph showing the percentage of learning through different senses. The bar for 'Seeing' is the tallest.]
Though we use all our senses to learn, it appears that seeing is the sense where most of our learning comes from. So this tells us that the most effective way to clarify and bring understanding to what is being taught is to actually show the children.

Here is an example of how important it is to have a clarification of lessons being taught. If a child hears a Bible study regarding the Ark of the Covenant and with not much Bible knowledge, they may assume the Ark is actually Noah’s Ark. The teacher may talk about how the people carried this Ark while traveling in the wilderness. A child could, in their mind, assume the teacher is talking about the people carrying Noah’s big boat ark. A picture of the Ark of the Covenant would clearly show that it is not Noah’s ark.

Here is a demonstration of how seeing something gives much more clarity than just hearing about it.

Imagine a picture of 13-spiraled circles with four of the circles on top of the others. Within the spirals of the circles are different colored ovals of blue and yellow. Black and white areas separate the ovals. As the spiral goes to the middle of the circle, the ovals get smaller, blending into a black dot. If you move your eyes around and look at this picture it appears that the spiraled circles are moving.

Now that you have a picture in your mind of what is being explained, turn the page and see if this is what you imagined. Chances are what you imagine this to look like is much different from the actual image.
Visuals Make Learning More Permanent:

Typically in 3 days we will remember
  10% of all we hear
  35% of all we see
  65% of all we see and hear at the same time

This tells us that if we want to effectively have the children remember the lesson taught we need to show and tell them.
Types of Learners:

In our classroom we will have different types of learners. As we look at these different types, think about what type of learner you may be. We do learn by all these means, but think about which one you best learn.

Visual Learners

83% of people learn by seeing

This is the person who needs to be shown something to have an understanding. This person probably enjoys art. This is the child who will want to sit at the front of the class so they can see what is going on. This child would prefer to have a picture book rather than a reading book.
Here is an example of a visual learning.

Have you ever tried to put together a piece of furniture that has about 500 pieces to it? It may come with instructions like this.

The visual learner would be comfortable with these instructions and be able to follow them.
Auditory Learners

11% of people learn by hearing

This is the person who needs to be told how to do something. This person probably very much enjoys music, and listening to the news on the radio. This child is the one who will perk up and pay attention when music is playing. This child enjoys talking with others and listening to conversations.

Using the above instruction example, when an auditory learner is given that same set of instructions, they would be totally confused. They would prefer that someone just tell them what to do.
Kinesthetic Learners

6% of people learn by moving, doing, touching

This is the person who needs to do it to understand it. This person is a very active person, and likes to touch and take apart everything. This is the child who just can’t seem to sit still. And although they are very active and you think they are not paying attention, you will find that this child usually can answer all the questions at the end of class. Again, using the instruction example above, if this person were given these instructions, they would crumple them up and, just by doing and touching the pieces, would be able to figure out how to put it together.

We all probably have some of these tendencies for learning, but one is typically stronger than the other. Because of these different learning styles it is important to incorporate all of the styles into our teaching so we can effectively minister to and teach each and every type of learner.
Examples of Visual Aids:
Now that we have an understanding of why visuals are an effective tool to be used in teaching, let’s look at some examples of what you can use in the class:

There are many resources out there for purchase, but sometimes they are costly and don’t always cover the lesson we might be teaching. We can utilize people within our churched to help with areas that we may not be gifted in. Some teachers may not be familiar with the computer and searching the Internet. Why not utilize someone in the church who is. And even though they may not be directly involved with Children’s Ministry, the Lord can use their talents to help those in Children’s Ministry with preparation for class time. Maybe there are people that have been wanting to be used for ministry, but just haven’t known where they can help.

Flash Cards
Large picture cards can be made from clip art, color pages, magazines. Enlarge and color the pictures and mount them on a piece of construction paper. If the lesson is on the Tabernacle, there are many items that will be new to the children and so visuals will be very important. Putting a cheat sheets on the back of the picture allows a teacher to see the notes on what the picture is about as the children look at the picture.

Flannel Graphs
Homemade flannel boards can easily be made with felt attached to a large piece of cardboard. If felt is not available, find a fabric that has a bit of a fuzz to it. Experiment with different fabrics to see what will allow pieces to stick to it. Make sure to thoroughly glue the fabric to the cardboard so it doesn’t lift off or pucker. Add a little paint for clouds, or grass. Using chalk to color large areas, will keep the “fuzz” of the fabric. To make the flannel pieces, use color pages or clip art and adhere to a fabric that will stick to the flannel board. Again make sure to glue it down really well so the edges don’t lift off. Gluing the fabric to the paper piece first, before cutting, will allow the fabric and paper to be cut exactly the same size.

Other items used for the back of the pictures are sandpaper, magnets on a white board, or even use good old tape.
Puzzle Boards
Create a grid of 12 squares (3 across & 4 down). Each square is 8” X 8”. On the computer, take a color page and blow it up to be 24” across and 32” high. Divide this large picture into (12) 8” squares. Print each square and cut out. As the story of the picture is being told, attach one square at a time to the grid until all pieces are up and the story picture is complete.

Crafts
Using a craft as part of the lesson time allows the children to see what they will be making and how it relates to the story.

Puppets
Whether you purchase or make puppets, they are a great tool for getting the children’s immediate attention. Some examples of ways to use puppets in class: Have the puppet whisper in the teacher’s ear what they want to tell the class and the teacher will convey the message. Have the puppet dialogue with the teacher about the story. Have a puppet be the main character in the story and tell about what happened to them in the story.

Story Books
Story books can be used for so much more than just reading a story. Look for books with large pictures, if possible. Reading the story is not always necessary. The teacher can tell the story and use the pictures as the visual. Sometimes the story book may not be exactly what the teacher wants to share, but if the pictures are good, use them as your visual and tell the story or read directly from the Bible. With older children cover the words with some blank paper. That way the children will not be distracted by the words. As the story is being told talk about the picture and point to parts that are relevant to what is being taught. Remember, 65% lesson memory is visual and hearing together.
Time Lines
This is a visual that will help the children see the progression of events. One way to show the progression is to take the color page for each week’s lesson and continually add a picture each week and do a 1 – 2 sentence review of each picture. This way the children can mentally review the previous lessons and see the order that things are happening.

Maps
Maps can be expensive to purchase, but here’s an idea to make maps. Use an overhead projector with a map copied on a transparency. Put up a piece of large paper on the wall and with the transparency shining on the paper, trace the map. If it is a map being used for several weeks, color the map very quickly with chalk. Even a very simple hand drawn map will work to show the children where things were taking place. Consider the journeys that Paul made during his missions trips. It’s amazing how far he went with no planes, trains, or automobiles.

Flip Charts
Flip charts can easily be made with sheets of paper stapled together at the top. Using a black marker, draw simple images to illustrate the lesson. Even those who do not feel artistic can use this visual to draw simple stick figures, animals, maps, diagrams, charts, etc. After a point is drawn and discussed, flip the sheet of paper to a clean sheet. If reviewing a point, simply flip back to the picture being discussed.

Drama, Costumes, and Props
The children get so excited when their teacher comes to class dressed in costume. Cut a hole in an old sheet, put it over your head, and tie a rope around your waist for a Bible costume. Use an old pillow case for a head covering. Yarn and a little glue can make a wig, beard, or mustache. Act out the story to bring it to life for the children. Old cardboard boxes can be cut and painted very quickly to make Bible time props, a sword, a shield, a well, jars of oil. With prayer and a little imagination, one box can become many different things.
Object Lessons
A Biblical object lesson is taking an ordinary, everyday item and teaching a spiritual truth. It's an example by which a doctrine or precept is illustrated.

When looking at the parables that Jesus taught we see examples of object lessons. Jesus taught earthly stories with heavenly meanings.

Some objects Jesus used as He taught:

Sheep
In Luke 15:4 Jesus teaches about how a shepherd would go after one lost sheep, leaving the other ninety-nine behind, until he finds it. And when he does, he rejoices and calls all his neighbors together to rejoice with him.

Spiritual truth: There is great joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, even more than ninety-nine just people, who have not strayed away.

Pearl
In Matthew 13:45-46 Jesus teaches about a pearl merchant who is searching for a pearl of great value. When he finds it, he would sell all that he had to purchase it.

Spiritual truth: Jesus is the buyer and we are the pearl that He sees as so valuable that He would happily give all to have it forever. We are as precious to Jesus as a beautiful pearl of great price.

Birds & Flowers
In Luke 12:24-31 Jesus teaches about how God feeds the ravens and how the lilies are clothed.

Spiritual truth: Instead of worrying, Jesus wants us to have a child-like faith in Him. Children don’t worry about paying the bills, or such things. They live lives of simple trust in their parents. You can’t accomplish little things by worry; what makes you think you might accomplish great things by worry?
Types of Object Lessons:

Objects from Scriptures:

**Sand**
Psalm 139:17-18 teaches us that God’s thoughts outnumber the grains of sand. When we look at even a small jar of sand, we can’t help but think of the multitude of God’s loving thoughts towards us.

**Rock**
Psalm 31:3 God is our rock and fortress. Who can break a even a very small rock? God is like a boulder and think of how strong it is and how it is immovable.

**Clay**
Isaiah 64:8 God is the Potter and we are the clay. We are the work of His hands. How wonderful that He is molding and shaping us to be what He wants us to be.

Ordinary objects not mentioned in Scripture

**Paper & Glue**
Ephesians 5:31 In marriage a man and woman become one. When two pieces of paper are glued together they become one although there are still two pieces of paper. God intended for marriage to last. When division comes into a marriage it is like glued paper being torn apart. Parts of one piece are still stuck to the other and the pieces become a mess.
Telephone
Jeremiah 29:12 When we call upon the Lord and pray to Him, He will answer. How many times do we call on the telephone and get a busy signal, or no answer? Or if we are on a cell phone and get disconnected or the battery dies? God’s line is never busy or there no answer. We never have to worry about being disconnected with Him when we are talking to Him.

Eraser
2 Corinthians 5:17 What does it mean to be a new creation in Christ? How wonderful it is to have all our mistakes (sins) erased away, and to have a new beginning.

Pastor Chuck best sums up object lessons by saying:

“You take something that is familiar to them, something that they can understand, and you tell the story, and then by the story you illustrate the truth that you are trying to get across to them.”