Doctorate of Nursing Practice
Students’ Impressions of Uses for Visual Thinking Strategies in Leadership
Session C16

By Meg Moorman PhD RN WHNP-BC
Clinical Assistant Professor
Desiree Hensel PhD RN PCNS-BC CNE
Associate Professor
Indiana University School of Nursing
What is Visual Thinking Strategies? (VTS)

Students gather around a work of art and look closely

Trained facilitator asks:

– What’s going on in this picture?
– What are you seeing that makes you say that?
– What more can we find?
Visual Thinking Strategies

Developed by Abigail Housen (developmental psychologist)
Philip Yenawine (art educator in museum studies)
Purpose was to engage art viewers with a work of art
Role of Facilitator

Listen carefully to comment
Paraphrase back what student said
Seek clarification
Remain neutral
Validate respondent's views
Reinforce range of ideas
Be present-listen intensely
Role of Participants

Look carefully at image
Talk about what they observe
Back up their ideas with visual evidence
Listen and consider others’ points of views
Discuss variant possible interpretations
Construct meaning together
The purpose of this project was to explore perceptions of how nurses enrolled in a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) program thought they might use VTS in their practice.
Methods

Qualitative Descriptive Study

14 participants at DNP event at large Midwestern university

Exempt Study by IRB

Written informed consent obtained by participants

Responses were written, then de-identified

Written responses to the following question:

1. What was your impression of Visual Thinking Strategies?
2. How might you use VTS in your nursing care or leadership role?
Qualitative Descriptive Analysis

Dedoose Version 7.5 software
N=14 participants (all agreed to participate in study via written informed consent)
3 themes emerged
1. As a teaching tool
2. Facilitate interpersonal relations
3. Change thinking in practice settings
#1. As a teaching tool

- 13 of 14 participants identified this as a theme
- “Impactful teaching strategy especially for undergraduate nursing students who have no clinical experience”
- Generates “out of box” thinking
- “I would like to use this in a classroom setting to help students develop their nursing sixth sense and for clinical reasoning”
It can facilitate communication and helps healthcare members to articulate what they want to convey by giving evidence to back up their reasoning.

“(VTS) helps to engage others. From a leadership perspective it is important to listen”.

“I could see this as being a great ice breaker at the start of our simulation for the NICU team (MDs, Neonatal Nurse Practitioners, Respiratory Therapists, and Registered Nurses)

“(VTS) could tear down barriers to communication thus improving quality and safety”
"...an amazing way of thinking that I will try in my daily work."

Useful for physicians and nurses to use visual cues and improve clinical judgment by helping us to give evidence to support what we are seeing

"It could improve clinical judgment"

Quality improvement tool: "I believe this would be a great way to start a (root cause analysis) RCA initiative. If we could use this it might open up people to see things differently in the environment or process"
Implications for Use of VTS

Helps students to see patterns and develop observational skills in a safe environment.

How learners learn to understand art and how to gain clinical reasoning skills was identified by Benner in 1982.

Students learn to be tolerant of ambiguity (Klugman, 2011).

Can help healthcare workers speak out and learn to communicate.

Can help nurses to give visual evidence to back up their assumptions.

Has been shown to increase willingness to communicate.

Increase in tolerance of ambiguity.
Tips for Doing VTS

During discussion, link responses together—compare and contrast what other students have said.

Avoid inserting information. Let students look closely and reason out their responses, rather than discussing the facts.

Allow the conversation to go where it will, even if it gets off topic. Remember, the goal is not to share information, but to encourage critical thinking.

At the end of the conversation, continue with your lesson, linking the content with comments that students made.
For questions please contact
Meg Moorman @mmmoorma@iu.edu

VTS website:
https://vtshome.org/