



Making meaning brings pleasure: the influence of titles on aesthetic experiences.

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The extent to which titles influence aesthetic experiences was examined in 3 experiments. Participants viewed and rated illustrations and photographs on understanding and qualities of the aesthetic experience (e.g., enjoyment, interest). The presence and type of title were manipulated across conditions and experiments. Metaphorical titles led to greater aesthetic experiences than either no title or descriptive titles (the elaboration effect). The elaboration effect occurred regardless of whether participants believed the titles to be true or false. It also occurred for art-experienced participants, but only for representational and not abstract illustrations. Random titles lowered understanding but not aesthetic experiences. Overall, titles increased aesthetic experiences only when they contributed to rich and coherent representations.