Today we are going to talk about ways of communicating with signs — convention, motivation, anchor & relay. It will build upon what you just learned with connotation and denotation, adding another layer of meaning.
convention & motivation
Convention is a **cultural agreement about what a sign means**, or how we should respond to it.

As a people or culture, we start to form particular ideas and implicant agreements about an image, a logo, a graphic, a sign (like a street sign), and how we will respond to it.
Take the idea of the ransom note. We can all agree that fits a particular type of situation – where someone is choosing to remain anonymous, and communicating in a menacing way using an untraceable cut and paste method.
The next is the associations with film noir — glamorous but "dangerous" female, the detective smoking a cigarette, shadowy mysterious mood lighting and the drama associated with that.

We tend, as a culture, to bring the collective responses and associations with these types of signs.
Lastly we have the old yearbook image. Again, we tend to have this agreement what this image means. Almost immediately we know where this image comes from because of the conventional type of look.

The grid, the range of looks, the type of background. Those conventions are changing as technology allows us to put artificial backgrounds in.

The “art” of school photography is getting much more complex, but historically this is the convention that has been set up.
In terms of semiotics, motivation is **how much the signifier describes the concept**, or signified. So, it’s about that relationship about how close they are to representing the actual sign.

Here’s a range of scale of motivation.

Highly motivated signs tend to look very much like the concept that they are signifying. In other words, they are a close representation of the object. The photo of a real heart.

Unmotivated signs are abstractions, looking less and less like the signified or concept.
anchorage & relay
Here are a few more terms to go over that expand on our knowledge of text and image relationships.

The first way text and image can interact is through anchorage. Anchorage is a process of applying text in sort of a label type of way to an image. So the text fixes the meaning of an image.

Think of an anchor holding the meaning.

Barthes says that the reader is “remote-controlled” to pre-determined meaning. It narrows the possibilities for interpretation of the image. Examples include captions for images, like in a magazine or book, when you title an image, or you add some sort of label. It typically will answer the question, “what is it that I am looking at?” and clarifies that information.

In this example, you see an image of a canoe, we are talking about canoes, and that it is also about vacations. We aren’t talking about extreme sports, water quality or fishing. We are talking about seeing Breckenridge by canoe.
How does the text reinforce the image? It's a cupcake.
Now it is celebrating a birthday
Take the word away and add some confetti, the cupcake still signifies a birthday party
You look at the image and the denotation here is a van, man, woman, darkness. The connotation that comes with that is ominous, he is in shadows, it is scary. But the text is telling you things that you cannot get by looking at the image. So this caption "I thought life was going to be hard, but I never expected it to be impossible." That's not a message that we can get from the images.

That's how relay works. The two are fairly separate and each brings their own new bit of information to the overall message.
how does the type relay or advance the meaning of the image?

The additional type alters the original meaning of the rum. The meaning was altered by adding phrases that can be associated with the illustration, but are connected to a visualization of a measuring cup.
what is the connotation with the IV?
your turn
So anchorage reinforces the image with additional text or imagery …
Relay alters the meaning.

The text advances the image by supplying meanings not found in the image itself.
So anchorage **reinforces** the original image with additional imagery …
Relay alters the meaning.

The additional image **advances** the image by supplying meanings not found in the image itself.
So anchorage **reinforces** the original image with additional text …
Relay alters the meaning.

The additional text **advances** the image by supplying meanings not found in the image itself.
So anchorage reinforces the original image with additional imagery …
Relay alters the meaning.

The additional image **advances** the image by supplying meanings not found in the image itself.
So anchorage **reinforces** the original image with additional text …
Relay alters the meaning.

The additional text **advances** the image by supplying meanings not found in the image itself.
So anchorage **reinforces** the original image with additional imagery ...
Relay alters the meaning.

The additional image **advances** the image by supplying meanings not found in the image itself.
So anchorage *reinforces* the original image with additional text …
Relay alters the meaning.
The additional text **advances** the image by supplying meanings not found in the image itself.
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