INFOGRAPHICS: IS A PICTURE REALLY WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS?

How many of you know what an infographic is? An infographic, also called information graphics, is a popular way to present data by distilling the words, data points, key concepts and illustrations that might be present in a report and creating a visual representation of the material.

Infographics are being created to help people understand virtually any topic; for example, it only took 12 hours after the Oscars ended for the first Oscar infographics to start popping up. Infographics aren’t just about entertainment however.

LESSON

Is a picture really worth a thousand words? Research indicates that visual communication may be more powerful than verbal communication, suggesting that people learn and retain information when it is presented visually better than when it is only provided verbally or as text.

Every single day we create with 2.5 billion gigabytes of data from sensors, mobile devices, online transactions, and social networks. That amount of data is equal to a full-length episode of “Glee” running continuously for 214 thousand years.

With this much data being generated, two new skills have become critical for students and all internet users to master:

- The ability to absorb and make sense of huge amounts of information
- The ability to present huge amounts of information visually in ways that are easy for others to absorb.

Enter the world of infographics, where the combination of relevant data and a visually memorable format bring quick understanding to topics.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Given the very powerful nature of quality infographics in learning and retaining information, these can be powerful tools in the classroom. Think about material you are trying to teach in upcoming lessons.

Have you looked online to see if there are existing infographics that can help your students better understand the material?

If you have not yet tried your hand at creating infographics, now is a great time to start. Use the same resources listed for students in the lesson and under the additional resources section, and find other online sources as needed. Once you’ve created your first infographic, you’ll find these become easier to do over time. You can measure your infographic’s success by how well it increases your students understanding of the topic.

PARENT TIPS

Critical thinking, and the ability to communicate information effectively to others, are two key skills every student must learn. In class this week we delved into the expanding field of infographics, and we looked at these from two perspectives.

The first perspective was that of a viewer, and we challenged students to ask critical questions like:

- Does the infographic cite their sources? and, Are the sources reputable?
- Is the data relevant? and, how old is the data?
- What is the motive of the organization, person, or group that created the infographic? Is it to educate, entertain, or sell something?
- Is there an angle or bias coming through? Are readers being manipulated through the text, colors or graphics?
- Does the infographic represent an accurate outline of the data?

Look at some infographics with your child, and see how well they can identify the correct answers to these questions. Make it a game that every time you see an infographic you review these critical thinking questions, and see if you can’t come up with additional questions.
The second perspective discussed in class was that of an infographic creator. Your child will need to be able to create infographics of their own to convey information in an easily digestible and retainable format for school projects and when they enter the work force. In fact, distilling information down to the key points and learning to make it visually appealing will help them learn to summarize and distill any information they need to learn.

Consider making an infographic together for your family. Maybe it shows recurring calendar appointments like piano lessons, sports team practices, work schedules, and so on. Or maybe it outlines the chore list or your media viewing rules. Be creative with color, images and the content to keep your infographic short, clear, and meaningful.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- [Infographics: How to Make Them Work Best](#)
- [5 unbeatable types of infographics and free tools to create them](#)
- [Top Tools for Making Incredible Infographics](#)
- [Tips Tricks and Resources to Make Your Own Gorgeous Infographics](#)
- [Introduction to Infographics and Visualization for Journalists](#)
- [The Do's And Don'ts Of Infographic Design: Revisited](#)

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