



The Graphic Research Paper: Navigating Information Using Smart Phones, Pictures, and Modern Media

Guide for Curriculum Unit 14.01.12

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This curricular unit is intended to steer the use of modern technology, particularly cellular phones, from distracting and superfluous to substantive and academic through the study of pictures. While doing so, students will be building a graphic research paper (modeled after the graphic novel) as a product. To do this, students will utilize research skills and an understanding of the modern media landscape to convert their smart phones, tablets and other handheld devices into research tools.

Throughout the unit, students will study the evolution of images used to communicate meaning and understanding. They will track the use of pictures from early communication through modern social media feeds. Through practice, activities and research, they will consider the relationship of pictures to receiving and interpreting the vast amount of information available to them. More and more regularly, Web sites and online news sources in modern communication attach a picture to each story, article or feature. Students will discover why, and use that understanding to create an unconventional research paper, based on – and creatively using – the very pictures they study.

(Recommended for English and Special Education, grades 11 and 12)

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