



SEARCHLIGHTS AND SUNGLASSES

LEARNING LAYER

Infographics are stories, too

Thirty years ago, USA TODAY appeared as a new national newspaper, devoted to color, infographics and short stories. Some traditional journalists derided it as shallow, calling it “McPaper.” But then, as founder Allen H. Neuharth said, “they stole our McNuggets.” By that, he meant that newspapers nationwide began using the same techniques. Chief among those was the colorful infographic designed to convey “maximum information” in “minimum time.”

Activities at three levels:

Flashlight: Ask students to research the history and purpose of infographics, and then create an infographic on what they learned. It might be about how to make an infographic, or the history of infographics, or the anatomy of an infographic. Discuss as a class where to post the best ones.

Spotlight: Explain the concept of infographics to your students. Have them explore the following Infographics websites and apps: [Google Drawing](#), [Easel.ly](#), [Visualize](#) (iPad App), and create an infographic to complement a story of their choice.

Searchlight: Why does some web content do well on search engines? It’s called Search Engine Optimization. Have your students look at this [infographic explaining SEO](#). Find a way to display it on a big screen or printout. Blog or post a sample piece of content and use as many of the techniques as possible. Do they work?