

Teaching Translational Research and Dissemination to Family Science Students through an Infographic Assignment

Assignment Objectives: Using an infographic assignment, the goal of this assignment is to teach research and dissemination skills in an introductory class that surveys the field of Family Science. The objectives of this assignment are three-fold:

1. To critically research a current topic related to Family Science and select findings that communicate an important message to families.
2. To visually represent a clear, engaging message based on research using an infographic that could be posted online or printed for dissemination.
3. To learn about current family topics and research from the presentations of fellow students.

Methods: In our Foundations of Family Studies course, we have followed the following method over eight weeks for guiding students through the infographic assignment (Thomson, 2015).

- Introduce the assignment by sharing some examples of infographics, for example the NCFR infographics “Career Opportunities in Family Science” and “How to Spot Fake News.”
- Review the assignment together, including defining the audience for the infographic and stepping through the process of doing research and creating the infographic. We then review with the students a worksheet we provide for gathering and organizing the research they will use to create their infographic.
- Progress report: Two weeks into the assignment, each student shares verbally the topic they are beginning to research and a research article on the topic that they have found.
- Half way through the assignment the research worksheets are due; give students the opportunity to share what they have been working on with their classmates in small groups.
- Review in class the rubric for grading the material, including a focus on the accuracy of the information, the creativity and organization of the visual material, and the class presentation of their final product.
- Give students two no-cost websites that have templates for creating infographics:
<http://piktochart.com/> or <http://www.easel.ly>.
- Students share a draft of the infographic with the instructor before it is due to get constructive feedback.
- Grade the research portion and the visual portion of the infographic project separately. Students present their work publicly in class on the day that the assignment is due, giving all other students the opportunity to learn about current issues in family science.

Take home message: Leveraging students experiences with social media to create infographics can benefit their synthesis of information and ability to communicate to broader audiences.

References.

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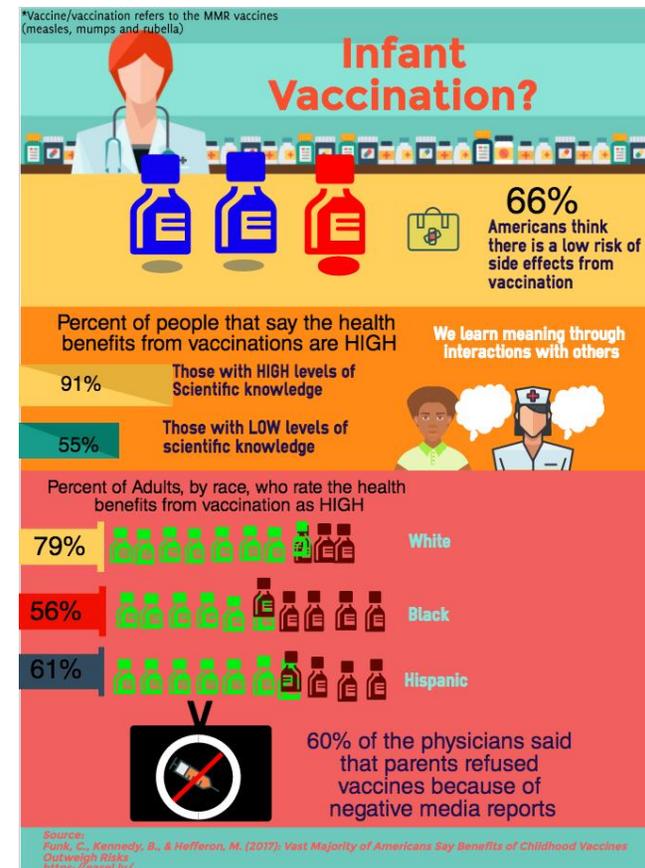
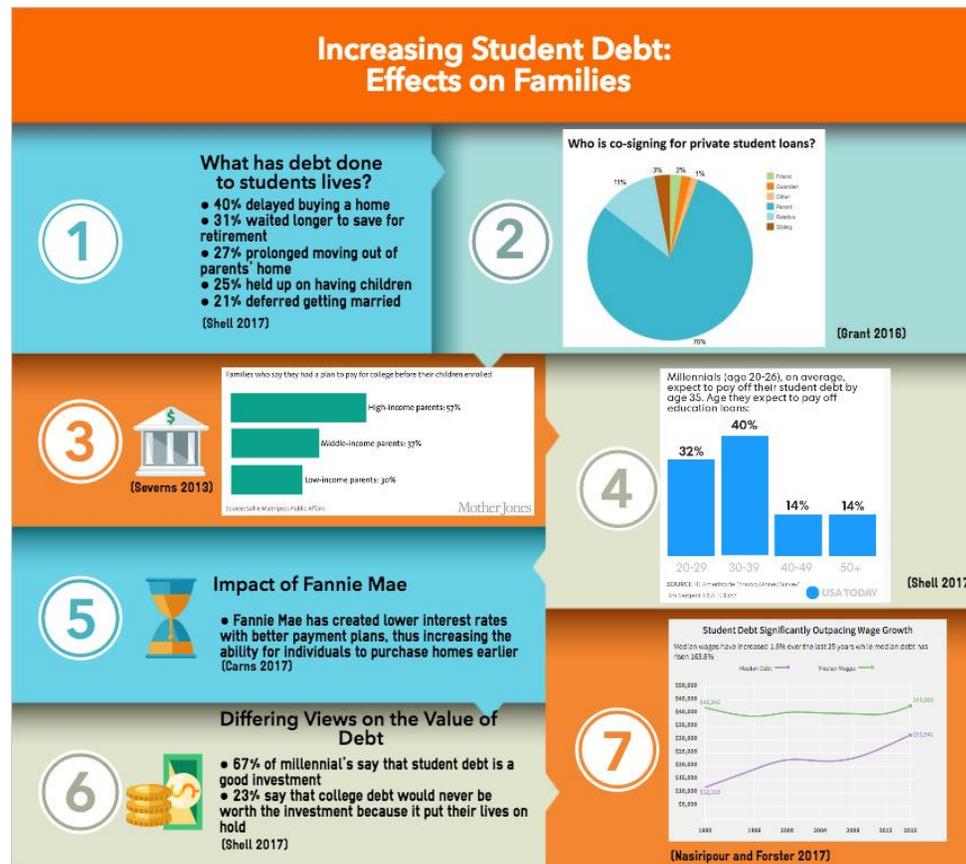


Figure. Student Infographics. Used with permission