

Using Social Justice to Alleviate Fear in Undergraduate Research Courses

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Abstract:

Research methods courses train majors in the development, conduct, and dissemination of original research. Fear of these courses is common, creating difficulties for the instructor when designing course material to ensure students' course success.

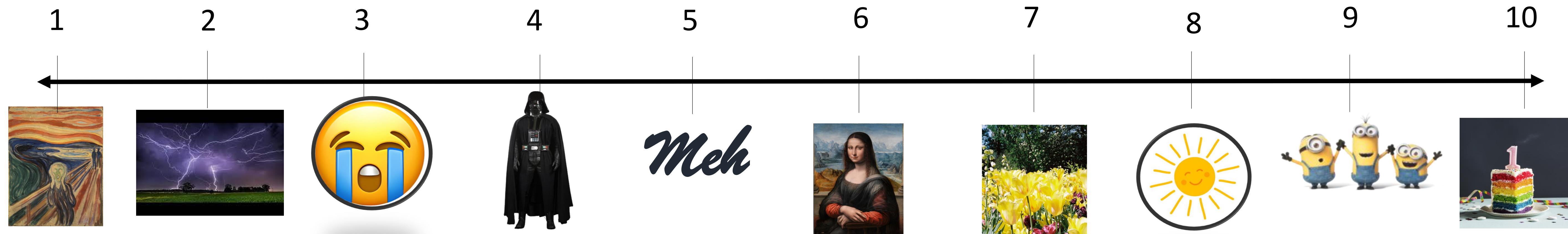
In this project, I examine if inclusion of the theme of power and examination of local issues reduces student anxiety and increases confidence in the research process. Power is envisioned as: student identity as researchers; a theme to understand the lived experience; and responsibility researchers have to participants.

Students completed methods exercises around the theme of inequality. Current and past local government officials visited class to help students center their research questions within the Dunn County community. Finally, class readings highlight how students can examine the lived experience. To determine the impact of the intervention, pre/post tests were administered asking questions on anxiety about research and self-identification of research skills.

Where do you stand?



Attitudes Towards Research



How do you feel about engaging in your own personal research?

How do you feel about assigning research projects in your classes?

How do you think your students feel when they are required to do a research project for your class?