Media Literacy Grades 4-8

Project Title /Grade Level/Content Areas

Media Literacy: Grades 4-8, Integrating Language Arts, Library/Information Literacy, Math, and Technology

Project Synopsis/Description

This is a Media Literacy project-based unit. Students will become aware of the media influences in their lives and learn strategies to critically interpret the messages of the media. The students learn through active hands-on, minds-on activities and they will show the skills they have developed through the creation of their own piece of mass media—a television commercial. They will present their project to their classmates—this could potentially spark a community forum!

Identifying Desired Result

Standards

ENGLISH/ LANGUAGE ARTS
D. A student should be able to think logically and reflectively in order to present and explain positions based on relevant and reliable information.

LIBRARY/ INFORMATION LITERACY
E. A student should understand ethical, legal, and social behavior with respect to information resources.

TECHNOLOGY
D. A student should be able to use technology responsibly and understand its impact on individuals and society.

Enduring Understandings

Mass media influences and shapes culture.
Mass media has emotional, social, and physical impact.
Mass media is a tool for persuasion and entertainment.
Mass media is distributed through a variety of mediums.
People have the freedom of choice and critical analysis of the influence mass media has upon them.
Mass media is not objective.

Essential Question

How does the media influence my perspectives?
Essential Unit Questions

What forms of media influence my life?
How much of my life is exposed to the influence of the media?
What is the difference between personal communication and mass communication?
What is a target audience?
How does the target audience determine the success of a media source?
What forms of influence do media have on audiences?
What strategies do television stations use while creating a schedule for shows to broadcast each week?
How do these strategies influence viewers’ perceptions?
How do television shows and movies keep the targeted audiences’ attention?
How does it feel to experience a day without media?
How can a camera people create meaning through their camera shots?
How has the radio impacted people through history?
How is popular music an influence on culture?
How does popular music affect me?
How do formal techniques make products more appealing?
Hidden advertising: How do television, music videos, and movies advertise products—aside from commercials?
What is the purpose of each part of a newspaper?
What is news?
Determining Acceptable Evidence/Assessment Description

Culminating Performance Task

Students will create a television commercial. They will plan the target audience, persuasion techniques, and the messages being portrayed. This project will involve a project outline, storyboard, script, and filming. Then it will be presented to the class. Each group or student will write a reflection on the group's product and process of their commercial creation. Each student will complete an evaluation on their peers’ commercials.

Type(s) of understanding this performance emphasizes:

☐ Explanation  ☑ Interpretation  ☑ Application  ☑ Perspective  
☐ Empathy  ☐ Self Knowledge

Dipstick Assessments (formative)
Written reflections (Media log analysis, Radio history, Day without media, Popular music)
Quizzes (vocabulary matching, vocabulary sentences & illustrations)
Work samples (Personal and mass communication mind maps, Media log bar graph & calculations, Camera shots PowerPoint and presentation, Radio history timeline & notes, Magazine advertisement target audiences, Newspaper rankings and analysis, Magazine target audiences and lists of advertisements)
Observations (Daily participation in general and specifically Rip-up activity, Hidden advertising activity)
Discussion Circles (Day without media, Popular music, News)

Student Self-Assessment:
Pre and post (final project) unit reflection
Written reflection rubric
Culminating project: cooperative daily participation checklist for each member- completed cooperatively
Culminating project rubrics: content/writing/presentation,

Culminating task Assessment:
Culminating project rubric: content/writing/presentation
Culminating project: Peer commercial evaluations
**Planning Learning Experiences and Instruction**

**KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS students need in order to reach unit goals and complete culminating task successfully?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students need to know: KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>Students need to be able to: SKILLS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Forms of media influencing their life</td>
<td>• Take pictures with a digital camera, download into the computer, and upload into PowerPoint</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How much time of their life is influenced by media</td>
<td>• PowerPoint basic introduction with uploading digital pictures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The difference between personal communication and mass communication</td>
<td>• Write a well supported personal reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Forms of mass media: literature, films, popular music, popular music videos, prime time news, newspapers, and magazines influence: gender perspectives, cultural norms, persuasion, entertainment, and informational sources</td>
<td>• Write a business letter &amp; address envelope</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Camera shots: long shot, medium shot, close-up, extreme close-up, unnaturally close, pan. high-angle, low-angle</td>
<td>• Empathize with the experience of a day without media</td>
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<td>• How media is influenced by corporate partnerships</td>
<td>• Analyze how television stations use strategy to create a schedule for shows to broadcast each week</td>
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<td>• Advertising propaganda techniques</td>
<td>• Timeline the history of the radio industry</td>
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<td>• Media impacts us personally</td>
<td>• Look critically at various types of media</td>
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<td>• Rules of participation in a Discussion Circle</td>
<td>• Analyze how television, music videos, and movies advertise products- aside from commercials</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Vocabulary: target audience, mass communication, personal communication, pictograph, bar graph, program schedule, audience flow, block programming, blunting, bridge, counter-programming, hammock, prime time, rating, share.</td>
<td>• Analyze how television shows and movies keep the targeted audiences’ attention</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Analyze how popular music has an influence on culture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Timeline a project plan</td>
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<td>• Storyboarding</td>
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<td>• Script writing</td>
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<td>• Oral presentation speaking skills</td>
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<td>• Visual product presentation skills</td>
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<td>• Assess using a rubric</td>
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# Media Literacy Grades 4-8

## Resources

### Teacher resources:
- Media log worksheet
- Reflection instructions
- Reflection assessment rubric
- Television Show Log worksheet
- Clips: television, music video, and movie.
- Assorted magazines.
- Assorted newspapers
- 4 one hour television shows with commercials
- Day Without Media Record worksheet
- Television program guides
- Camera shots PowerPoint
- War of the Worlds by Orson Wells
- Radio History timeline notes & project scoring rubric
- Popular music videos (several in variety of genres)
- Television commercials- several
- Prime time news from several time zones (West coast, East coast, Midwest, Anchorage, English, Arabic, etc.)

### Daily poster prompts:
- What forms of media influence my life?
- How much of my life is exposed to the influence of the media? (Q, BAR GRAPH, PICTOGRAPH)
- CHART: What is the difference between personal communication and mass communication?
- What is a target audience?
- How does the target audience determine the success of a media source?
- What forms of influence do media have on audiences?
- What strategies do television stations use while creating a schedule for shows to broadcast each week?
- How do these strategies influence viewers’ perceptions?
- How do television shows and movies keep the targeted audiences’ attention?
- How does it feel to experience a day without media?
- How can camera people create meaning through their camera shots?
- How has the radio impacted people through history?
- How is popular music an influence on culture?
- How does popular music affect me?
- How do formal techniques make products more appealing?
- Hidden advertising: How do television, music videos, and movies advertise products- aside from commercials?
- What is the purpose of each part of a newspaper?
- What is news?

### Student resources:
- Note-taking and brainstorming notebook
- Stopwatches
- Inspiration
- Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, & PowerPoint
- Internet Explorer
- Graph paper
- Calculators
Accommodations

**Varied reading levels:**
Have newspaper articles with various lengths and complexity of subject matter, attempt for variety in reading levels. The newspaper analysis task may be done in partners to assist lower reading level students.

Vocabulary work will be in crossword puzzle form, drawing examples, and making databases in Excel to prepare students to use the vocabulary to discuss media literacy topics. This variety of word work will help the students who need the repetition to remember the new vocabulary and it will extend into their discussions of personal connections and reflections of the material.

**Cooperative learning groups:**
Final project groups will have assigned roles of camera manager, scriptwriter, actor/actress, and storyboard producer. The success of each role is interdependent on the contributions of the other group members. The groups will complete a daily self-evaluation for participation and contribution to the project. This will help the teacher track each individual’s progress and active participation in the project. The teacher can steer challenging stretches for the students who need the extending and can modify for students needing adaptations. The students will manipulate the video in iMovie as a cooperative group.

Many of the classroom analysis projects can be done in partners, in small groups, and individually. This can support the students who are not thinking as deeply about the material, to work with another individual to discuss and verbally analyze. This assists students in being able to put their ideas in their own words for personal reflections and discussion contributions.

**Task adaptations and extensions:**
Students will be expected to show their learning for each required task. There will be choice involved due to access to resources, time available to work on tasks, and learning styles. For example, the camera shots assignment requires students to make examples of 6 camera shots- a student will have the task of the specified shots and the choice of medium to show their shots (iPhoto gallery, iMovie, drawings, magazine examples, video clip examples, acting them out with a camera, etc.)

There will also be expected written reflections. The students will fluent writing skills will be challenged with the writing rubric to meet the *exceeds* category. They may add a comic to enhance their reflection on the relationship between media and economics or further support of a point they are making with cited research or discussions.
## Planning Learning Experiences and Instruction

### Sequence of Teaching and Learning Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What forms of media influence my life?</th>
<th>Timeline according to 1 hour daily class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much of my life is exposed to the influence of the media? Media log: students will record the number of minutes they use media each day (school and home). They will fill out a log daily for one week. (Radio, Cds, movies, television, books, magazines, newspapers)</td>
<td>First week Homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Record and watch 1 hour of television with the class. • Use stopwatch to time the number of minutes of commercials • Record advertisement topics • Determine target audience of program/ads • Determine a societal message of the program • Write reflective paragraph about the observations &amp; conclusions above and share with discussion circle</td>
<td>Week 1 M,T,W</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Work Sample Assessment (log and reflection)</strong> Vocabulary: advertisement, target audience, media</td>
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</table>

| What is the difference between personal communication and mass communication? | |
| Define Personal communication and Mass communication • Brainstorm what communication is and make it into a chart Personal/Mass • Show movie, music video clips, print and television ads, books, magazines, online news, and newspapers Activity: students mind map mass/personal using Inspiration | Week 1 TH,F |
| **Work Sample Assessment (print copy of mind map)** | |

| Analyze media logs • Create personal bar graphs • Calculate the fraction and percent of time experiencing mass media in a week, month, year | Week 2 M,T |
| **Work Sample Assessment (bar graph and calculations)** **Self-Assessment:** Write a personal reflection attached to the graph (extra credit: created in Excel) (Both teacher and student use reflection rubric) | |
| **What is a target audience?** How does the target audience determine the success of a media source? **What forms of influence do media have on audiences?** • Determine target audiences and media influences in clips of TV ads, TV shows, music videos, and magazines (gender, | W,TH |
### Media Literacy Grades 4-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Sample Assessment (target audience/ influence logs)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday/Tuesday homework:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take a Home Inventory of all types of personal communication mediums and mass media sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Make a class pictograph</td>
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<td>• Make personal bar graphs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Work Sample Assessment (pictograph and bar graph)

**Self-Assessment:** Write a paragraph reflection (both teacher and student use reflection rubric)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prepare for a day without media: self-observation record. 10 minute television show analysis of character non-verbal communication and watch again analyzing the music and sound effects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
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### DAY WITHOUT MEDIA

**What strategies do television stations use while creating a schedule for shows to broadcast each week?**

**How do these strategies influence viewers’ perceptions?**

**How do television shows and movies keep the targeted audiences’ attention?**

- Learn media literacy vocabulary:
  - (Audience flow, block programming, blunting, bridge, counter-programming, hammock, prime time, rating, share)
- Analyze a TV Guide schedule and make conclusions using new vocabulary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How does it feel to experience a day without media?</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Open discussion to the class and provide them with question prompts.</td>
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<td>• What did you do instead of indulge in your favorite forms of media?</td>
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<td>• Did you ever reach out towards a form of media in an automatic sort of way? How did it feel to turn away from it?</td>
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<td>• What do you think life would be like without any media?</td>
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<td>• What if we only had a few forms of media?</td>
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<td>• How may have life been before the telephone? Internet? Newspaper?</td>
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<td>• What may life be like if all forms of media were free of cost?</td>
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<td>• What if the government strictly regulated our media sources? Do they?</td>
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#### Discussion Circle Assessment

**Self-Assessment:** Write a 1-2 page reflection on their DAY WITHOUT MEDIA (both teacher and student use reflection rubric)
## How can camera people create meaning through their camera shots?

Learn about camera shots and their purpose.
- Watch several music video, television show, and movie clips and determine/label the shots and interpret the meaning intention
- Discuss the difference in intention of camera shots with differing genres (documentary, Saturday morning show, action, sci-fi, romance, popular music)
- Have students make samples of each camera shot using digital cameras

**Work Sample Assessment (camera shots PowerPoint presentation)**

### How has the radio impacted people through history?

Have students conduct research of the history of radio
- Emphasize the impact of the transistor radio on popular music/youth revolution
- Have students make timelines for the history of radio music industry
- Listen to: War of the Worlds by Orson Wells dramatization of the H.G. Wells novel
- Have students research the effects on the listeners in 1938

**Work Sample Assessment (timeline and research notes)**

**Self-Assessment:** Write a 1-2 page reflection on radio in history (both teacher and student use reflection rubric)

***Introduce Media Self-Evaluation Project and have students begin recording their source of media to be analyzed the following Monday morning.***

### How is popular music an influence on culture?

**How does popular music affect me?**

1. **Discussion Circle:**
   - What are some of the different types of popular music and how do they differ in their lyrics, melody, and beat?
   - Why are young people so intensely loyal to their music (and antagonistic of other music)?
   - What role does popular music play in your life?
   - How does it influence your friendships?
   - How could it give you a sense of identity?
   - Why do young people think popular music and recent videos belong to them? To what extent is that true?

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2. Watch a few music videos:
What feelings, needs, or wants, of young people are communicated by the music, lyrics, and images on music videos? How do you participate with music physically, emotionally, and cognitively?
3. Have students write a personal reflection about one song and the effects it has on them personally.

**Discussion Circle Assessment**

**Self-Assessment:** Write a 1-2 page song reflection (both teacher and student use reflection rubric)

Gender check in popular music videos.
Watch a few music videos and discuss how women and men are portrayed. Discuss how the gender portrayal may influence culture.

**Homework:**
Write a reflection on a favorite music video

**How do formal techniques make products more appealing?**
Teach advertising techniques:
- Weasel words (helps, refreshed, enriched, we’re different and unique)
- Testimonial (celebrity)
- Bandwagon (everybody’s doing it)
- Scientific or statistical claim
- “Water is wet” claiming something about the product that will be true of all similar products

Activity: have students find 3 magazine ads that appeal to different audiences (children, mothers, elders, etc.), cut out the ads, and label them for their target audience and advertising techniques

**Work Sample Assessment (labeled magazine ads)**

Rip it up activity: have students find two ads and rip them between the product and the image trying to sell the product.
- Then put the products in one pile and the images in another. Hold them up interchangeably and have the students observe how the products can be sold by many differing images based on the audience.
- Sort by target audience.

**Observation Assessment**

**Hidden advertising: How do television, music videos, and movies advertise products—aside from commercials?**
Watch movie and television clips and record how many name brand products are visible. Discuss and compare lists with partners and small groups.

**Observation Assessment**

**Week 6**
### What is the purpose of each part of a newspaper?
Teach the students the layout of a newspaper. Examine several newspapers.
- What decisions are made to decide what information goes where?
- How can each part of a newspaper be categorized as advertising or a news hole?
- What are the formal features of a newspaper?
- Why are different kinds and sizes of type used?
- When and why are photographs used?

**Work Sample Assessment (reflection)**
Reflection: rank the parts of the newspaper you would read in order and reflect on why they interest you.

### What is news?
Begin the lesson with this question and chart responses. Then discuss:
- Is news new?
- To whom is it news?
- Who determines what is newsworthy?
- Is it all the news?

Activity: Watch the beginning of two different networks evening news and compare:
- What type of music is used?
- Is there voice-over introduction to the news?
- Does the introduction begin with some sort of logo or graphic? What does it represent?
- Does it start with a top story or a hook and quickly intro the top two or three stories?
- When the first reporter appears, are they in the studio or on location? Sitting or standing? Clothing? Camera shot?

### Magazines= Sales
Analyze magazines for target audiences in ads and stories. Have students analyze 3 magazines of choice for target audience and make lists of the products being advertised in each magazine.

**Work Sample Assessment (magazine advertisement lists)**

### Media Self–Evaluation Project (Self-Assessment)
Students will choose one form of media in their life, critically analyze the variety of messages being presented, and conclude how it has influenced their life and how it may influence the perspectives of others.
1. They will keep a media log of that media source for two weeks, graph, and calculate their findings.
2. They will take a specific segment of their media source and
analyze it for target audiences, persuasion, entertainment, gender, and cultural (analysis log and/or include in reflection).

3. They will conclude their project with an analysis of the influences of their media source on their life. The will show their analysis through:
   • A presentation to the class and through a letter to the editor/producer of the media source they are analyzing. The presentation will include a visual (tri-fold board, painting, PowerPoint, sculpture, poster, etc.) and
   • A summary of their findings and analysis (prepared speech).
   • They will hand in to the teacher: their media log, calculations, graph, reflection analysis 2-3 page paper, and business letter.
   • The business letter to the editor/producer of their media will briefly explain the unit they have experienced and the Media Self-Evaluation Project analysis, highlighting the aspects of this media that they like and any other suggestions they have for them.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduce culminating project and rubric</th>
<th>Week 9</th>
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<tr>
<td>The students will synthesize their Media Literacy experiences throughout this unit by creating a piece of media in cooperative groups. The teacher will demonstrate the project through an example project plan of the target audience, persuasion techniques, timeline, storyboard, and script. Storyboarding and script writing will be reviewed and templates will be distributed.</td>
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<td>Each group will:</td>
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<td>1. Create a product/service</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Create a television advertisement for their product or service. To accomplish this they must set a target audience and create their ad from the perspective consumers in that audience. They must use persuasion techniques and outline the commercial with a timeline, storyboard, and script.</td>
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<td>3. They will present their commercial to the class and all classmates will complete an analysis form for each television advertisement.</td>
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<td>4. Advertisement groups will write a group reflection or individual reflections at the end of the project. See scoring rubric.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Work on projects and presentations</th>
<th>Week 9</th>
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<tr>
<td>The teacher will circulate to each group daily for questions or concerns. Each group will cooperatively complete a participation checklist daily for each group member- concerns discussed with the teacher at the end of the period or the start of the next day.</td>
<td>Tu-F</td>
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<th>Class presentations of final projects (Final Self and Teacher Assessment)</th>
<th>Week 10</th>
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Author Reflections

Why is this a good unit?

It is relevant to children’s lives and their freedom to think. They get to work with mass media material that is a part of their daily lives. Their reflection on the potential societal and personal impact will provide them with the tools to critically analyze the mass media they encounter in the future. This unit integrates several content areas making the skills and knowledge authentic and applicable to their lives. Students from kindergarten through grade twelve can benefit from this unit, although accommodations should be made for primary students.