MEDIA LITERACY: A SYSTEM FOR LEARNING

ANY TIME, ANY WHERE...

PART 3:
TOOLS FOR CONSTRUCTION/CRITICAL PRODUCTION


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Introduction
These days, everyone is a producer, yet few people learn the skills necessary to be a responsible journalist or an experienced director. The Tools provided in this Kit help lay the foundation for producing any media, regardless of the genre used – websites, games, posters or ads – or the technology used – cell phones, computers, or tablets.

Producing media is an exciting and engaging way for students to learn about any subject, as well as about media systems and how they operate. But producing media is about more than pressing the buttons or using technology: critical thinking is as important in constructing media as in deconstructing it. And so this Toolkit emphasizes Critical Production and how to teach critical production while illustrating various steps necessary in producing any media artifact.

This Construction Toolkit is organized around the CML’s Questions/TIPS (Q/TIPS) framework for media literacy. Based on the Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy, the Key Questions for Producers emphasizes how to apply the Core Concepts to any production addressing any subject. The Key Questions for Producers provide students with an internalized system for questioning and for seeing their production in context. These Key Questions, used in conjunction with the Five Key Questions for Consumers of media, give students a quick way to critically analyze information they are taking in and information they are sending out to others.

Such project-based learning is challenging for teachers to orchestrate, and this ToolKit is designed to give teachers a concise and practical overview of the many steps involved in media production and publishing. Taking these steps is another way for teachers and students alike to understand the construction of media messages, and to actively participate with global media.

Note: This ToolKit is part of a Trilogy of resources – Media Literacy: A System for Learning Any Time, Any Where – developed and published by the Center for Media Literacy to give an on-ramp to media literacy practice in schools and community organizations. The Q/Tips Framework included throughout the CML Trilogy includes Key Questions and Core Concepts for Deconstruction and Construction. This Trilogy consists of:

Part I: Tools for Change Management
Part II: Tools for Deconstruction
Part III: Tools for Construction/Critical Production

All materials may be obtained through CML’s Store at www.medialit.com
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Recommended Instructional Techniques

Classroom Organization
The activities included here emphasize analysis, reasoning, critical thinking, evaluating and creating rather than memorizing facts and statistics or parroting information given in a lecture format. The goals of this toolkit are realized through small group discussion, activities, and team problem solving. Consider your classroom environment when implementing these activities; try a circle or small table groups. Use a variety of modalities as you present activities and watch videos, so that students are actively engaged. The following activities introduce students to the production/construction aspect of media, it is helpful, but not necessary, to have a background in deconstruction prior to working on construction. The Close Analysis activity (see Culminating Activities) utilizes skills necessary for deconstruction and construction.

Choose a Specific Project with a Specific Theme
Although the Five Key Questions and Core Concepts can be applied to any subject matter, we strongly recommend that you choose a specific project and theme for your students. This provides a focus for teaching and learning, and facilitates assessment. In keeping with common educational standards, examples for themes might include: health, science, or geography. Examples for group projects might include: filming a PSA about healthy eating, creating maps from different perspectives, or designing an interactive web page for the science lab. The options are endless, so choose something you and your students find interesting and encourage self-and peer- based assessment of the work using the tools provided here. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has good ideas for projects using media literacy skills. Take a look at www.P21.org.

Project Management
Included in each section is a Project Management worksheet which lays out the ‘big picture’ for managing a production project. This worksheet is to be completed by students as they develop their media projects. We present each section of the worksheet as it corresponds to the Key Question being addressed, but it is not necessary to work sequentially. CML’s 5 Key Questions and Core Concepts can be taught in any order and applied to all content areas.
**Norms**

**Objective:** To establish ground rules to govern discussion and sharing within the classroom.

**Description:** A list of mutually agreed upon rules designed for classroom management, but also to protect students from themselves. It is important to create a safe environment in which students can contemplate, consider alternatives and connect to their own lives. But, it’s important that students NOT tell their peers personal stories that are more appropriately told in private.

**How to use:** Before getting started, it is helpful to set ground rules to govern discussion and sharing within the classroom. Suggested norms are included on the following page. Teachers may find that it is helpful to review norms for behavior before each activity, so that students become used to these norms being part of the expectations for behavior, setting ground rules that will govern discussion and sharing in the classroom. Suggested norms are provided, but teachers should feel free to adjust, expand or change these as they may best fit their classroom needs. Post your list of Norms for easy reference within the classroom setting.

**Responding to Difficult Questions or Situations**

Because discussing issues around media can sometimes be sensitive, it is helpful for educators to anticipate some possible responses to students asking inappropriate questions or sharing stories that are too personal.

For example, a teacher’s response might be, “That’s an interesting question (or story), but it’s not part of this curriculum. I suggest you ask (or discuss with) your mom or dad, or a respected older adult in your family, or doctor, youth pastor, etc.”
NORMS

- Be respectful of one another, the ideas shared and our learning community.

- Listen to understand.

- Be open to new ideas.

- Do not share inappropriate personal stories.

- Actively participate in all lessons and activities.
Relationship with Media as a Producer

**Objective:** Before teaching (or learning) media literacy skills, one must become aware of his/her own relationship to media. The Media Triangle illustrates the central relationship between the audience, the text and the production process. It is essential to understand our role(s) in the process and to see how we fulfill our roles and exercise our personal power. Understanding this relationship is fundamental to becoming media literate, and to becoming a responsible producer of media.

**Description:** The Media triangle has three equal sides representing audience, text, and production which illustrate the interdependency of the three systems supporting every media message. Defining these relationships and comprehending their connectedness is at the heart of understanding how media works in our society.

The Media Triangle is a static image that represents a very dynamic and interdependent interaction in regards to our relationship with media. For example, Producers must provide a Text but without an Audience, there is no interaction or experience. Each member of this relationship needs each other to exist. And the power dynamics in the relationship can change, depending upon the interplay between the Text, the Audience and Production. For example, if a producer has $5 million to spend on marketing and distribution, that producer is more likely to reach an audience than a producer who only has $5. However, with the internet, the Audience may find an appealing social message and “virally” spread the message, upsetting the traditional power of the purse in gaining audience participation.

Often, the point is made that the commercial advertising world (Production) has millions of dollars to spend while Audiences have little power to resist. Ultimately, however, it is the Audience who has the power because it is the audience that chooses whether to engage with a media Text or not. The U.S. education system spends billions of dollars every year; if media literacy education was taught to prepare students for engaging with the media world, they would be well-equipped to exercise their power as the Audience (and in Production as well!). This is why understanding the Media Triangle is so fundamental to a democratic system and to seeing the role that media literacy education plays!

*The audience* represents the people who engage with the message.

*The text* is the actual message that is sent to the audience. This is the content or story that the audience engages with as they watch or listen to the message. This can be a 30-second commercial, a tweet, a website, a two hour movie, a blog, a print ad, video game or any other type of media message. The five senses are how one experiences the Text, since the Text may be visual, aural, sensual, or an odor or taste.

*Production* represents both the producer of the message and the communications systems involved creating, marketing and distributing the media product. If you are creating media (i.e. posting on YouTube or Facebook) then you are the Producer of the text. You are deciding what to say and to whom the message is directed. Most internet users are both consumers *and* producers of media, especially if they engage in social networking or email communications.
How to Use: The power of media literacy lies in seeing how we actively contribute to making meaning and in accepting or rejecting messages or calls to action that we either receive or produce through media. The three sides of the triangle illustrate the three aspects of media systems and how we participate in the process. When teaching media literacy skills, one must first understand the construction process behind the messages. Once this relationship is known, young people are better equipped to understand and question their roles as consumers and producers of media, and to engage actively with texts.

Ask students to draw a triangle and label the sides with a media example of their choosing. Invite a few students to share their examples with the class. Do they comprehend their roles as consumers and producers of media? Remind students of this relationship in all discussions of media.
The meaning of a media text or product is determined by the relationship between the Audience, the Text and the Production.

Model developed by Eddie Dick, Media Education Officer for the Scottish Film Council.
**Awareness of Self: Private vs. Public**

**Objective:** to examine the different aspects of the private vs. public self and how this affects one’s relationship with media, and to raise awareness about the differences between publishing for a private or public audience.

**Description:** Today, publishing can mean everything from writing on someone’s Facebook wall, to posting a YouTube video or blog, to working with a publishing company to print numerous books, DVDs, or CDs. However you choose to make your work available to others is called publishing. Once a piece is published, it’s available to the masses for a long period of time, quite possibly forever if it is published digitally.

Until recently, the only means of publishing a book or song or film was to partner with the experts at a publishing company and spend several months or years working to make the project acceptable to everyone involved. It was a slow process and only a few select individuals were allowed into this exclusive world. The internet has turned that world upside down by democratizing the process and enabling a broader range of communication among all citizens. Today, publishing is easier than ever and, for this reason, an awareness of self-identity and how one’s perception of self relates to media is critical.

Self-awareness enables an individual to make sound decisions about publishing to a private or public audience, and encourages authentic communication. We all know that some of our messages are meant for a private audience only – family, friends, teachers, or those specifically chosen to receive the information, yet we continually read in the news about students who post private information publically and regret the decision after the fact. The problem is, once you publish, the information is out in the world and is virtually impossible to retrieve or retract. Using the 5 Key Questions for Producers can help students determine the motives and purpose for their messages and whether to publish in the private or public realm.

**How to Use:** Using the chart below*, examine the character traits of an individual as **private self, public representation of self, and commercialization of self**. In terms of publishing, an individual will, ideally, have an enlightened self-awareness and therefore be able to communicate as a global media citizen in a responsible manner. The 5 Key Questions for Producers provide a good check-list for students. Consider posting these questions at computer stations in the classroom and library.

**Activity:** Using a box and magazine images or drawings ask students to cover the inside of the box to represent their inner-self (private), and the outside of the box to represent their outer-self (public). Use the top to represent their commercial-self (brands). Give no other instructions.

Upon completion of the project, ask students to tell you what is different about the two collages. Of course, a student’s level of self-awareness will determine the images selected.
### Awareness Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Aware</th>
<th>Enlightened</th>
<th>Empty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Self</td>
<td>Public Representation of Self</td>
<td>Commercialization of Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BE:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-acceptance: authentic,</td>
<td>Authentic self as shown in public spaces</td>
<td>Aspects of self named and represented in public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole, integrated</td>
<td></td>
<td>spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BE ME:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-actualization: behavior</td>
<td>Mediated self-expression</td>
<td>Brand names represent self through products or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>services used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BELONG:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extending self to others in</td>
<td>Interacting with others in mediated public</td>
<td>Service or product brands used or gifted to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships, honest, balanced,</td>
<td>spaces, authentic, responsible, reciprocal</td>
<td>form basis of interaction with others,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intimate</td>
<td></td>
<td>narcissistic, contrived, exploitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust, character, connections</td>
<td>Trust, character, connections</td>
<td>Selling, transaction-oriented, one-way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated, relational, reciprocal</td>
<td>Integrated, relational, reciprocal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Starting with the three categories down to the left side, the “Three Bs,” relate to all the other categories in the framework:

*The Private Self*

When one looks at the Three B’s in relation to the Private Self, one has a basis for exploring self and self-identity.

*Be.* Being is the self. Ideally, with honest self-awareness, the private person accepts him or herself, and is an authentic, whole, integrated person, with unmeasured and unjudged intrinsic value.
Be Me. Behavior is the outward manifestation of self. This is self-actualization; behavior is the action-oriented representation of character, personality, choices, talents and skills.

Belong. Be-long. By being long, individuals extend themselves to others through relationships. We make ourselves available; are capable of trust and intimacy with others and actively engage in interactions with others through sharing ourselves.

The Public Self

On the other hand, Public Representations of Self occur in settings where others are present to witness behavior, or through media representations such as photos or videos or theater or other mediated environments which are generated by oneself or others.

Be. Here, the self is revealed to others, perhaps consciously or unconsciously, perhaps authentically or not, but the key to understanding is that the self is being observed or recorded by others. That observation may be shared widely or not, but because the self is not alone, it is a public representation or observation that is being made.

Be Me. Here, the self is revealed (or disguised) to others through a conscious attempt to represent the self, typically through one-way communication. This can occur through artwork, photos, videos, writing or other media or mode of expression. Whether the person intends the self-revelation to be shared or not is immaterial; the point is that the individual expressed him or herself through some conscious public behavior or media representation.

Belong. In interacting with others, whether individually or through some form of media, a person is extending him or herself to them. The self being revealed may or may not be authentic, whole or integrated, but there is a sharing of “self” that occurs in a community-oriented environment, such as a social networking site, through texting or instant messaging. This type of “belonging” is different from private forums, however, in that the record of the interaction is permanent and can be widely shared and circulated, even on a world-wide basis, instantly and forever, through the Internet. The interaction may extend to people who are not and may never be personally known.

The Commercial Self

When global media and branding are added to the mix of self-identity, a whole new dimension emerges to an understanding of the Three Bs – involving a commercialization of self and identity, often a re-definition of self. To explore some of these implications:

Be. Rather than an integration and wholeness of an authentic self, commercialization of the self encourages a splintering, a “slicing and dicing” of self, depending upon the image and the audience desired. So, for example, a gamer may adopt a gamertag like “Blade011” to elicit a reaction by other gamers of a sharp, dangerous player. This may not be the only screen name adopted by the gamer; this person may have many names for many different applications, with each name projecting a different identity selected to “market” a particular image.
**Be Me.** In expressing identity, the individual selects products or services according to brand. So, for example, a person may select a neighborhood based on a branded zip (90210, Beverly Hills) in a branded home (architecture by Frank Gehry) with branded carpets, furniture and home accessories and then wear branded shirts, dresses, pants, socks or underwear and drive a branded car going to a branded restaurant to eat branded food. These labels are ever-present, and they make a statement about how individuals live and who the individuals define themselves to be.

Although brands are useful in making selections, it’s important to note that there is a difference between a brand and the self. A brand fragments the self into thousands of identities; the self is greater than the sum of all these various parts, which do not identify the actual self.

**Belong.** Who are “friends” today? Are they limited to a ranked list of five, ten or twenty people on a social networking site? Are they long lists of people who are attracted to a self-projected media image and who want to identify with that image? Are they people who have lots of “swag” or “bling” to share? Are they individuals who are selected by viral marketers as “thought leaders” who can influence others to buy certain products or services? The basis of these relationships is transactions rather than interactions, often with a commercial basis. Selling is always going on, whether selling to attract friends through a carefully-manufactured and transmitted image or selling these so-called friends products or services. At worst, these relationships are exploitative, opaque and devoid of real friendships or acceptance of the authentic self.

Yet, in an intense desire to belong and to feel accepted – by oneself and by others – people allow themselves to be seduced by image, fooled into thinking that the mediated, branded world can offer a new and improved version of themselves that will be accepted. While people seek wholeness, integration, connections, trust, intimacy, transparency and reciprocity, what they get often encourages fragmentation, isolation, separation, judging, transactions, fear, opaqueness and competitiveness.

This age-old search for self will never end; but by understanding and using a framework, children can come to see the relationship between the media, the message and the brand, and see how they fit in more clearly. Then there is a choice on how citizens identify themselves and others.

*From “The Impact of Technology on Character Education” by Tessa Jolls, CML (2008)*
CML’s Framework: Q/TIPS™

Objective: To introduce CML’s Framework of Five Key Questions and Core Concepts of Media Literacy for Deconstruction and Construction.

Description: Q/TIPS brings together CML’s Five Key Words, Five Core Concepts and Five Key Questions for Media Literacy for both construction and deconstruction, asking questions from the points of view of both consumers and producers. This chart includes the Five Key Questions and Core Concepts that can be applied to every media message regardless of the technology used for dissemination of the message (film, radio, TV, internet, social media...). Critical thinking and problem solving becomes automatic with Q/TIPS and can be applied to all subject areas. Clear understanding of these questions and concepts will enable critical thinking about all mediated messages and offers students a universal language for talking about media literacy.

Q/Tips can be modified to become more or less sophisticated with students of various ages. Also included here are questions for children in the early elementary grades. See Guiding Questions for Young Children as Producers.

How to Use: As a class, read through the chart and discuss the meaning of each question and concept. Point out the Key Word associated with each number and encourage regular use of this language. Reinforcing and labeling the 5 Key Questions and 5 Core Concepts on an ongoing basis creates a vocabulary and a habit of mind for students to reference easily in discussions and assessments of media messages and of their own media constructions.

Post the Q/TIPS chart on a classroom wall and reference it on a daily basis.
### Media Deconstruction/Construction Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Key Words</th>
<th>Deconstruction: CML’s 5 Key Questions (Consumer)</th>
<th>CML’s 5 Core Concepts</th>
<th>Construction: CML’s 5 Key Questions (Producer)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Authorship</td>
<td>Who created this message?</td>
<td>All media messages are constructed.</td>
<td>What am I authoring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Format</td>
<td>What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?</td>
<td>Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.</td>
<td>Does my message reflect understanding in format, creativity and technology?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>How might different people understand this message differently?</td>
<td>Different people experience the same media message differently.</td>
<td>Is my message engaging and compelling for my target audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?</td>
<td>Media have embedded values and points of view.</td>
<td>Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles and points of view in my content?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Why is this message being sent?</td>
<td>Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.</td>
<td>Have I communicated my purpose effectively?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CML’s Questions to Guide Young Children: Construction (Producer)

KQ #1: What am I making?  
How do I put it together?

KQ #2: What does it look, sound, smell, feel or taste like?  
What do I like or dislike about this?

KQ #3: Who do I want to get this?  
What might other people think and feel about this?

KQ #4: What am I sharing about how people live and believe?  
Have I left anything or anyone out?

KQ #5: What am I telling?  
What am I selling?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Concepts</th>
<th>Key Questions</th>
<th>Questions to Guide Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 All media messages are constructed. | Who created this message? | ▪ What am I making?  
▪ How do I put it together? |
| 2 Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules. | What creative techniques are used to attract my attention? | ▪ What does it look, sound, smell, feel, taste like?  
▪ What do I like or dislike about this? |
| 3 Different people experience the same media message differently. | How might different people understand this message differently? | ▪ Who do I want to get this?  
▪ What might other people think and feel about this? |
| 4 Media have embedded values and points of view. | What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message? | ▪ What am I sharing about how people live and believe?  
▪ Have I left anything or anyone out? |
| 5 Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power. | Why is this message being sent? | ▪ What am I telling?  
▪ What am I selling? |
Project Management

**Objective:** To offer, in worksheet format, a big picture view of what is involved with media production.

**Description:** By reviewing this worksheet, teachers will understand the scope of producing media-related projects. Recognizing what all is involved (Format, Creativity, Audience, Point of View, Technology, Budget) offers an overview for teachers as they choose production projects for their classes. This worksheet appears throughout the Toolkit with each Key Question. Students will complete the corresponding section as they move through the Questions.

**Activity:** Review the attached Worksheet for Project Management to better understand the steps associated with production projects.
Project Management Worksheet

AUTHORSHIP
1. What are you producing? (public service announcement, website, movie, research paper...)

2. Who is the audience?

3. Who is the production team?

4. How will you reach your audience? (YouTube, class presentation, posters...)

5. What are their individual roles? (writer, film editor, actor...)

6. How much time do you have for this assignment? Create a timeline with your team. For example, a video project timeline might look like this:

   week 1--
   Write script and gather costumes to make a PSA for drug-free kids. Sign-up to use school video camera and tripod.

   week 2—
   Memorize lines of script Dress rehearsal and filming.

   week 3 –
   Edit film footage on computer in library. Choose introductory music and finalize production credits.

   week 4 –
   Present to class for peer review.

7. If writing a term paper, research paper or case study, refer to the APA guidelines for specific instructions on format. If the piece is journalistic in nature, refer to the AP style guide. See AP Top 10 list on the following page.

FORMAT/CREATIVITY
1. How will you attract the attention of your audience?

2. What aspect of the arts will be used? (music, actors, dancers, graphic design...)

Tools for Construction/Critical Production Center for Media Literacy ©2012
3. Do you need permission to use existing songs, clips, articles or photos?

4. How should these existing works be credited or cited? Know fair use and copyright laws.

TECHNOLOGY

1. What equipment or software is required? (computer, video camera, editing software, web design program, printer, sound system...)

2. Do you have access to what you need? If not, how will you find the resources you need?

3. What constraints does the technology place on your presentation choices? i.e. Twitter’s limited characters.

4. Does your production team have the technical skills necessary for completing the task?

AUDIENCE

1. Have you identified your target audience?

2. Why are you targeting this particular audience?

3. How will your message be received by this audience? How will your message be received by other audiences (consider age, gender, ethnicity...)?

POINTS OF VIEW

1. What is your point of view with regard to your message?
2. What are you planning to include to establish your point of view?

3. What are you planning to omit to establish your point of view? Is it fair to your audience to leave out this information?

4. Is the material you are including/omitting of value to your audience?

PURPOSE

1. Why are you sending this message?

2. What forms of persuasion have you included? (see handout 10 Techniques of Persuasion)

3. Have you considered the appropriateness of the message? (Peer review)

4. What is the response you are hoping to achieve?

BUDGET

1. Will your project cost money to produce? How much?

2. Have you considered advertising and promotional costs?

3. Will you need to raise the money? If so, how?

4. Who is responsible for managing (keeping track of) the budget?
Key Question #1 for Producers: What am I authoring?

Core Concept #1: All media messages are constructed.

Whatever your genre (web site, print, YouTube, blog, photograph...), apply the questions and concepts of media literacy to better evaluate your creative approach and motive for sending the particular media message. Worksheets and activities for Key Question #1 address the following topics and are applicable to all communication genres:

- Authorship
- Fact vs. Opinion
- Journalism Code of Ethics
- Proofreading
- Privacy
- Digital Citizenship
- Web Site Credibility
- Principles of Public Information
- Copyright
- Fair Use
- Permissions
- Project Management
Key Question #1: What am I authoring?

Core Concept #1: All media messages are constructed

Objective: If we know that all media messages are created by someone, authored by an individual or team of people, then the first question to ask when producing content is What am I authoring? This question is a good starting point for students to define their communication goals and recognize their roles as authors in determining what and how they communicate to their audience.

Description: As an author, one must take responsibility for the content presented to the outside world. As discussed in the previous pages, digital citizenship is profoundly important when producing or responding to information in a global environment. As an author, there are responsibilities associated with ‘production’ which include, but are not limited to, the proper citation of works created by others, knowledge of copyright and fair use laws, and an ethical motive for engaging an audience. Collaboration plays a big role in the creation of media content, so it is important to give credit where credit is due and to respect the work of others.

What am I authoring? Understanding Fact vs. Opinion
The difference between fact and opinion is not always obvious to students when they are first introduced to the concepts of media literacy. Determining what is real and what is opinion, is not easy in a media world that blurs the lines with Reality TV and opinionated news show hosts! But as a producer of media content, in all genres, it is an important distinction to make. Are you creating something fictional or telling a true story? Are you writing a news article or an editorial?

A fact is something known with certainty that can be objectively verified. A journalist covering a news story is sent out to gather facts – who, what, where, when, why. The journalist is not meant to add her own meaning to the facts but rather to write down or broadcast everything she sees in great detail. Facts are descriptive in nature and can be supported by evidence.

An opinion is a belief or conclusion held with confidence but not substantiated by positive knowledge or proof. This is where the person relaying the story guesses or speculates about what happened by interjecting his or her own interpretations or judgments.

How to Use: Locate a variety of articles from newspapers or magazines and ask students to identify the author, and whether the author was writing fact or opinion and how can you tell? Review the attached Journalism pages to clarify the different types of writing found in most news sources and the ethical responsibilities of journalists.
**Journalism Code of Ethics**

**Objective:** To instill in students the importance of impartiality and responsible reporting when producing journalistic projects.

**Description:** The Society of Professional Journalists publishes a Code of Ethics. Here is a summary of the four main points from the SPJ Code of Ethics:

1. **Seek truth and report it.** Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.
2. **Minimize harm.** Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect.
3. **Act independently.** Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public’s right to know.
4. **Be accountable.** Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.

**How to Use:** Access and read the full document at [http://www.spj.org/pdf/ethicscode.pdf](http://www.spj.org/pdf/ethicscode.pdf). We suggest you print this page and post in the classroom for review with your students. Students should be able to recite the four points above.

There is also an excellent article on Journalism Ethics at [http://journalism-education.cubreporters.org/2010/08/journalism-ethics.html](http://journalism-education.cubreporters.org/2010/08/journalism-ethics.html)
**Crash Course in Journalism**

*Types of article*

News: This is a presentation of facts and verifiable information about local, national or global events.

Editorial: An editorial represents the views and opinions of the specific author.

Feature: This is typically a story about someone’s life or company or product. The author relies on interviews and historical information to write the article.

Column: A column might appear daily or weekly in a newspaper, magazine or e-zine. It reflects the views and opinions of the specific author and is often less formal than an editorial – can be conversational in tone.

Review: A review is an author’s critique (the author usually has some expertise in the particular area) that offers opinions about a restaurant, book, film, musical or live production.

Blog: A blog is an electronically published editorial. Bloggers write their own opinions that may or may not include factual information.

*Where a story is located in a newspaper can help you identify the type of writing (i.e. World News vs. Op-Ed).*

*Who’s Who*

**Reporter** – assigned to write and report on specific events.

**Copy editor** – the person who reads every word to ensure the text flows well and is free of typos. Copy editors PROOFREAD and use the symbols from the following page to make notations and corrections for the writers.

**Editor** – the person or persons who make the assignments and review the material before it is published.

**Publisher** – the owner of the publication; often a large or small company.
Proofreading

Objective: to impress upon students the importance of careful review of their work prior to publication. To introduce the common proofreading symbols used by journalists and editors.

Description: In this world of one-click publishing, a message containing errors of spelling, grammar, and/or inappropriate content can be released into the world in, literally, an instant. Careful proofreading and copy editing will prevent students from making these types of mistakes, and will ensure that their best work is seen by their audience. A team approach to proofreading is recommended. By allowing a fellow student to read copy and correct misspellings or grammatical errors, much embarrassment is avoided. The goal is for students to present themselves and their work in a high quality, professional manner.

Plan of Action: Discuss the journalistic proofreading symbols on the following page and ask students to practice their skills by using the worksheet provided.
### Proofreading – Present Your Best Work!

The following list is taken from figure 2.6 of the 16th edition of the Chicago Manual of Style Online.

#### Proofreaders’ Marks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATIONAL SIGNS</th>
<th>TYPOGRAPHICAL SIGNS</th>
<th>PUNCTUATION MARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Delete" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="ital" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Close up; delete space" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="rom" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Delete and close up (use only when deleting letters within a word)" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="bf" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="let" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="caps" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Let it stand" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Insert space" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="wf" /></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Make space between words equal; make space between lines equal" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Wrong font; set in correct type" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert hair space" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Check type image; remove blemish" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Letterspace" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert here or make superscript" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Begin new paragraph" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Move left" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert apostrophe or single quotation mark" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Center" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert quotation marks" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Straighten type; align horizontally" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Align vertically" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Spell out" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert parentheses" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="()" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Proof Practice**
Proof this paragraph using the symbols provided on the previous page.

When I produce media, I must consider how my message will be interpreted by others. If I remember to ask myself the Five Key Questions for Producers, I will have a clear view of what I am trying to communicate to my audience. *Who is my audience?* Knowing one’s audience is paramount to good communication!

It’s of the utmost importance to proof my work before pushing the send button. If my message goes out to the world, it cannot be retrieved. This is also true of printed materials. When a publisher prints 1000 copies of a book or newspaper, the typos are there for the world to see. I do not want to send a message containing inappropriate language, typos, or misspellings. Sloppy work does not make a good impression on the audience or my teacher.

Corrections appear on next page.
Proofreading Corrections:

When I produce media, I must consider how my message will be interpreted by others. If I remember to ask myself the Five Key Questions for Producers, I will have a clear view of what I am trying to communicate to my audience. Who is my audience? Knowing one’s audience is paramount to good communication!

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The Question of Privacy in the Media Relationship

Objective: To make students aware of the privacy concerns of those with whom they are engaging in a media text. As producers, there are certain responsibilities that come with asking and receiving private information from audience members.

Description: Where does privacy fit into the media relationship? As a producer of media, are you collecting information about your audience? If so, are you prepared to handle this sensitive information in a responsible, legal manner?

Many sites gather information as a convenient way to learn about the preferences and trends of their customers. This is called market research. But, often the market research is sold to other companies without the customer’s knowledge.

Talk to students about how their information is tracked by retailers. Ask the following questions:

✓ Some people do not mind that their favorite clothing store tracks their sizes, or that their bookstore can recommend titles based upon past purchases, or that their location is known to retailers, but what if your favorite sites are selling your personal information to make a profit?
✓ Are you willing to yield your information to them, so they can profit in ways you are not even aware of? Are you entitled to know who is seeing your private information?
✓ These questions are currently being tossed around the legal field but answers are not clearly defined. The question of who is responsible for privacy is a big one. Are you, as the audience, responsible?
✓ Is the producer of the media text responsible?
✓ Are you both responsible for acting responsibly when it comes to privacy? Yes! If we all act responsibly, as producers and consumers, we will have fewer breaches of privacy and we will knowingly choose our sites for interaction. But this is complicated by the number of players involved, so it’s best to act on the belief that you must secure your own privacy.

How to Use: Ask students if they have a privacy statement on their own website if they are collecting personal information from their audience. Ask them to go to one of their most frequented sites on the internet and print the privacy policy for a class discussion. If they can’t find the privacy policy, tell students to ask the company (producer) to provide it as it is required by law to be readily available.

The best sites will be those that students use to make purchases. Have they ever read a privacy policy before? Are they surprised by what they found? Are they concerned about their own privacy? Do they misuse the personal information of others? Do they need to add a privacy policy to their own site?

For an entertaining video on this topic see: [http://www.aclu.org/ordering-pizza](http://www.aclu.org/ordering-pizza)
Digital Citizenship

Objective: To provide students with the skills they need to become informed citizens who can participate responsibly in a global society.

Description: As technology continues to expand, the skills required for effective communication and citizenship are changing. Use of the internet creates opportunities for students to reach beyond geographic lines to express their views, participate in conversations far from home and create media content. But, it requires a need for a new understanding of citizenship and online behavior. To be a responsible digital citizen, one must continually pay attention to the ever-changing rules of cyber space.

The organization IKeepSafe.org has outlined the 3Cs for safe participation in a global online environment: cyber-security, cyber-safety, and cyber-ethics.

Per their website:
Based on the C3 Framework created by education and technology expert Davina Pruitt-Mentle, the IKeepSafe Digital Citizenship C3 Matrix takes a holistic and comprehensive approach to preparing students for 21st century digital communication. The Matrix outlines competency levels for C3 concepts divided into three levels: basic, intermediate, and proficient.

Cyber-security covers physical protection (both hardware and software) of personal information and technology resources from unauthorized access gained via technological means. Cyber-security is defined by HR 4246, Cyber Security Information Act (2000) as “the vulnerability of any computing system, software program, or critical infrastructure to, or their ability to resist, intentional interference, compromise, or incapacitation through the misuse of, or by unauthorized means of, the Internet, public or private telecommunications systems, or other similar conduct that violates federal, state, or international law, that harms interstate commerce of the US, or that threatens public health or safety.”

Most of the issues covered in Cyber-safety are steps that one can take to avoid revealing information by “social” means. Cyber-safety addresses the ability to act in a safe and responsible manner on the Internet and other connected environments. These behaviors protect personal information and reputation, include safe practices to minimize danger from behavioral-based rather than hardware/software-based problems.

Cyber-ethics is the discipline of using appropriate and ethical behaviors and acknowledging moral duties and obligations pertaining to online environments and digital media.

How to Use: Teaching children the 3Cs will help them to reap the benefits of online access and make them less vulnerable to online hazards. This information, when taught along with CML’s Core Concepts for media literacy, enables students to make wise decisions while fully participating as a global citizen.

The following worksheet can help to get the conversation started. Of course, ongoing discussion of digital citizenship is necessary as students will continually encounter new situations in the online world.
Worksheet: Cyber Scenarios
What would you do? Circle the correct answer(s).

**Cyber-security:** Alice just opened her e-mail box and found a message that says “you have won a prize” in the subject line but it is not from one of her regular contacts. When she opens the message, she is asked to send her name, address, and telephone number so someone can deliver her prize. The message offers no information about the contest or how she was selected to win. And she still doesn’t know who sent it.

What should Alice do?

A) Reply to the message with all of the information so she can get her prize  
B) Don’t open the message. Label it JUNK and Delete it  
C) Ask a parent to help her set stricter junk mail settings on her computer

**Cyber-safety:** Johnny went to the mall with his friends. While they were eating lunch, a man at the next table struck up a conversation. He seemed a little odd but said he could sell them new bikes for a really cheap price. Johnny was interested since he really wanted a new bike and he hadn’t been able to save enough money. The man said he could just email him his parent’s credit card number and he would meet him back at the mall with the bike by the end of the week. He wrote his email address on a piece of paper and gave it to Johnny.

What should Johnny do?

A) Go home and convince his mom to give him the credit card number so he can send it to the man and get the bike  
B) Email the man to ask a few more questions before sending the credit card number  
C) Tear up the piece of paper since he knows he shouldn’t email strangers  
D) Tell his mother or father or teacher about the man and the bike

**Cyber-ethics:** Ellen and Tim were dating for a short time then Tim ended the relationship. Ellen’s feelings were hurt so she wrote mean comments about Tim on her Facebook page. Most of the kids at school read her postings. Ellen’s friends have started to ridicule Tim and some of the boys are pushing him around in the halls.

What should Tim do?

A) Report the problem to his school counselor and his parents  
B) Write mean things about Ellen on his Facebook page  
C) Ask Ellen to please take down the posts and stop going ‘public’ with their personal issues
What’s Credible and What’s Not?

**Objective:** To provide general guidelines for thinking critically about what students see and hear in the media.

**Description:** Teaching students to judge the validity of the many resources available to them online is an important and relatively new job for educators, especially when students today do much of their research on personal computers away from school. And because the internet is available to anyone who wants to post an opinion or press release under the guise of research, students must be taught to sift through the abundance of information and, ultimately, determine what is valid and credible. In many ways, the internet has made conducting research faster and easier, yet it has also added more room for error and confusion.

Like most forms of communication, the criteria needed to determine the quality and credibility of online information are **accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency, and coverage** (Barbara Ray, *Creating Skeptics: Helping Students to Judge the Credibility of Online Content, Spotlight MacArthur Foundation, 2009*). Offering a checklist for students to use when judging validity is helpful, states Ray, but a more fool-proof way to ensure success is “to also teach students to develop a personal suite of automatic decision-making strategies. Sometimes they will use these strategies more rigorously when the situation calls for it, and other times, they will use a less-involved set of steps.” This brings us back to media literacy and the critical thinking skills that create a media literate individual.

**How to Use:** Providing general guidelines for thinking critically about what students see and hear in the media will help them in their roles as consumers and producers of media. We suggest using the key words associated with the Core Concepts for media literacy, whenever possible.

Who authored the material? *If the answer is YOU, read the following questions as if asking yourself about the message you want to send.*

Why is it presented in this way? (format)
Who is the intended audience?
What is included? What is omitted?
What is the purpose of this message?
How does this information compare to other information on the same topic?
Is the author (You) a credible source of information on this topic?
Checklist 1: Key Words for Determining Quality and Credibility of Information (Producers):

- **Accuracy.** Is the material you are presenting correct and truthful?

- **Authority.** What is your level of knowledge, expertise and reputation as the author and publisher?

- **Objectivity.** Have you approached the subject in an unbiased manner? If not, how is it biased?

- **Currency.** Is the information relevant and timely?

- **Coverage.** How does your research compare to other research in the same field?

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Key words for judging credibility from Barbara Ray, *Creating Skeptics: Helping Students to Judge the Credibility of Online Content*, Spotlight MacArthur Foundation, 2009
Checklist on Website Quality
Based on CML’s Key Questions for Media Literacy

Key Question # 1: Who created this message?

- I can identify a group or individual responsible for the content on this site.
- I have verified that the site’s authorship is consistent with its .com, .org, .net, .edu, .gov domain extension.
- This site is maintained by a person or organization that I know is credible outside of the internet.
- This site has been updated in the past 3 to 6 months.
- This site has a phone number or mailing address that I could use for contacting the person or organization for more information.

Key Question #2: What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?

- This site contains many misspellings and/or broken links.
- This site has no external links.
- This site contains clear graphics and explanations.
- This site has a well-organized navigation system and makes things easy to find.

Key Question #3: How might different people understand this message differently?

- This site contains external links to other credible websites.
- I have verified the information on this site using reliable online or offline resources.
- This website is relevant to my questions and interests.

Key Question #4: What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?

- This site is clearly biased toward a specific opinion or point of view.
- This website is branded.
- This website uses copyright ethically.
- This website is socially responsible.

Key Question #5: Why is this message being sent?

- This website is trying to sell me a product or service – or not.
- The main purpose of this site is to provide facts (not opinions).

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Principles of Public Information

Objective: To raise awareness about the rights associated with the access and use of public information.

Description: In the 1850s when the first public library opened its doors in Boston, Massachusetts, it was understood that an informed citizenry was good for government and for society as a whole. As we know, the dissemination of public information has been altered by the advent of the internet, and the availability of information now far exceeds the confines of a single building. With that in mind, it is a good time for schools to review the Principles of Public Information in light of these technological advancements and to further understand the rights and needs of individuals as they relate to creation, use and dissemination of information.

The US National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) was appointed in 1970 to provide valuable updates and recommendations in regard to issues of public information. The Commission was a permanent, independent agency within the federal government that advised the President and Congress on library and information policies, and developed overall plans for meeting national library and information goals. The Commission was a voice for recognition that US library and information resources are a national resource that should be strengthened, organized, and made available to the maximum degree possible in the public interest. The NCLIS' definition of public information is “information created, compiled and/or maintained by the Federal Government. We assert that public information is information owned by the people, held in trust by their government, and should be available to the people except where restricted by law.”

In more recent years, the NCLIS focused on the changing roles of libraries and the management of internet information. The Committee, in its final publication “Meeting the Information Needs of the American People: Past Actions and Future Initiatives” (2008), noted that “a critical part of the comprehensive and renewed strategy to ensure that students learn to read and are effective users of information and ideas, is the requirement that every school have a school library and that school libraries be staffed by highly qualified, state certified school library media specialists.”

The NCLIS recommended the following Principles of Public Information as a foundation for the decisions made by the Federal government and the nation in regard to issues of public information. These recommendations were adopted in 1990, and are still applicable today.

1. The Public Has the Right of Access to Public Information.
   Government agencies should guarantee open, timely and uninhibited access to public information except where restricted by law. People should be able to access public information, regardless of its format, without any special training or expertise.

   By maintaining public information in the face of changing times and technologies, government agencies assure the government's accountability and the accessibility of the government's business to the public.

Any restriction of dissemination or any other function dealing with public information must be strictly defined by law.

4. The Federal Government Should Safeguard the Privacy of Persons Who Use or Request Information, as Well as Persons About Whom Information Exists in Government Records.

5. The Federal Government Should Ensure a Wide Diversity of Sources of Access, Private as Well as Governmental, to Public Information. Although sources of access may change over time and because of advances in technology, government agencies have an obligation to the public to encourage diversity.

6. The Federal Government Should Not Allow Cost to Obstruct the People's Access to Public Information. Costs incurred by creating, collecting and processing information for the government's own purposes should not be passed on to people who wish to utilize public information.

7. The Federal Government Should Ensure that Information About Government Information is Easily Available and in a Single Index Accessible in a Variety of Formats. The government index of public information should be in addition to inventories of information kept within individual government agencies.

8. The Federal Government Should Guarantee the Public's Access to Public Information, Regardless of Where They Live and Work, through National Networks and Programs like the Depository Library Program. Government agencies should periodically review such programs as well as the emerging technology to ensure that access to public information remains inexpensive and convenient to the public.

**How to Use:** Encourage students to learn and understand these principles, so they are better equipped to actively participate in the exchange of public information.
Copyright – What does it mean?

Objective: to clarify the meaning of copyright and the legal issues associated with it. To identify additional copyright resources for teachers and students.

Definition of Copyright: The exclusive statutory right of literary (authors, playwrights, poets), musical (composers, musicians), visual (painters, photographers, sculptors), and other artists to control the reproduction, use, and disposition of their work, usually for their lifetime plus seventy years. The Copyright Act of 1976 governs most copyrights in the United States. Webster’s New World Law Dictionary Copyright © 2010 by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey.

Description: Copyright laws were established to protect the author(s)/producer(s) of written, visual and musical material from having their work used by others without recognition or acknowledgement. If a person other than the original author uses a creative work without prior approval or proper citation, copyright infringement has occurred, which is against the law. Use of material for educational purposes generally falls under Fair Use (pg. 27) and does not require special permission, but it is always best to consult a legal expert if there is confusion about using someone else’s work (especially if the product will leave the confines of the school and launch into cyberspace separate from its original educational intent.) This is important for students pulling photos, clips, articles, etc. from web sites and re-posting under their name as the author. They must keep track of their sources—a digital bibliography—so they can accurately list names and references for their materials. Guidelines for listing these sources should be set by the instructor, or aligned with style guidelines as further discussed in Key Question #2.

Students will come to understand the seriousness of abiding by copyright laws when they become producers of their own original works and want to protect themselves from copyright infringement.

How to use: Learn about copyright. More information for educators and students is readily available at www.creativecommons.org
Media Literacy and Fair Use (credits, citations, permissions)

Objective: To raise awareness and clarify the meaning of Fair Use in regard to media literacy education.

Description: The legality of using media clips for classroom activities can be confusing, but it needn’t be so, and a clear understanding of your rights when it comes to the use of copyrighted media materials is a must for media literacy educators. As technology advances and issues surrounding the access and download of media content become more complex, some educators are becoming wary of using works of media in the classroom for fear of copyright infringement, but Fair Use supports education and should be studied by educators for purposes of clarity and reassurance.

Fair Use guidelines state that the use of copyrighted materials for educational purposes is legal and generally does not require special permission. If the purpose of viewing excerpts in class is to allow students an opportunity to apply media literacy skills to an actual media message, you are operating well within the guidelines. It is understood, under the law, that social and cultural works are important for learning and for the advancement of future generations.

On the other hand, if copyrighted materials are being duplicated and used strictly for entertainment or for purposes other than intended, you are not compliant with Fair Use guidelines.

The use of media is vital to teaching critical thinking skills about the media; we encourage you to enhance your lessons by including plenty of examples from a variety of sources. Students are easily engaged when discussing current media events -- please don’t let confusion about copyright laws prevent you from providing meaningful lessons in media literacy.

How to Use: Know your rights! Familiarize yourself with Fair Use guidelines to become comfortable and knowledgeable about using media examples in the classroom. Incorporate these concepts into student media production activities whenever possible as this is valuable information for your students, too.

Permissions

**Objective:** To inform students of the need to ask for permission before using someone else’s work or a portion thereof, and to provide examples for their use.

**Description:** As with most anything in life, one should ask permission before using someone else’s things – including their physical image. In an effort to protect the rights of people featured in media productions, and the producers creating the productions, a form called a *Release* is used to document an agreement before production begins. This document gives the producer permission to use the agreed upon material in his or her production and provides all parties with information regarding the intended use of the materials.

Without signed release forms, a producer risks leaving himself/herself open to legal issues when the media product is published.

Below is one example of a Release form. There is not one set form, but the key information needed is:

- **Description of project** (i.e. PSA for drug-free kids, student news program, campus newspaper...)

- **How will it be used?** Educational, promotional, commercial...

- **What type of media?** TV, radio, YouTube, posters...

- **How long will this project be available to an audience?** Posters up for one month, on YouTube forever, broadcast twice on local radio...
RELEASE AGREEMENT/Producer’s name

Name:_________________________________________________________

Address:______________________________________________________

Telephone Number: ___________________

I agree to be photographed, videotaped or recorded as part of documenting my participation in “_________” (the “Project”) for the duration of the project and my contract with Producer. I understand and agree that these documents may be used in educational, commercial or promotional material (“Material”).

I give my permission to ____________ and ____________ (the “Organizations”) or their assigns to use the artwork, writing, videotapes and recordings of myself for exhibition in all media forever. I give my permission to the Organizations to use my name, picture, voice and biographical information to promote, advertise or publicize in all media and in any manner. I understand that I will be due any money for my participation or appearance in the Material.

I agree that I will not make or permit anyone else to make any claim or demand related to the use of the videotapes and recordings of myself in the Material.

I agree that your receipt of this Release Agreement signed and returned is legally binding. I have read and I understand this release agreement and agree to its contents and the promises made by me.

_____________________________  _________________________
Signature                        Date

_____________________________  _________________________
Printed name                    Telephone (if different)
Project Management Worksheet

AUTHORSHIP

1. What are you producing? (public service announcement, web site, movie, research paper...)

2. Who is the audience?

3. Who is the production team?

4. How will you reach your audience? (YouTube, class presentation, posters...)

5. What are their individual roles? (writer, film editor, actor...)

6. How much time do you have for this assignment? Create a timeline with your team. For example, a video project timeline might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>week 1--</th>
<th>week 2—</th>
<th>week 3 –</th>
<th>week 4 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write script and gather costumes to make a PSA for drug-free kids. Sign-up to use school video camera and tripod.</td>
<td>Memorize lines of script Dress rehearsal and filming.</td>
<td>Edit film footage on computer in library. Choose introductory music and finalize production credits.</td>
<td>Present to class for peer review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. If writing a term paper, research paper or case study, refer to the APA guidelines for specific instructions on format. If the piece is journalistic in nature, refer to the AP style guide. See AP Top 10 list in the following section.

FORMAT/CREATIVITY

1. How will you attract the attention of your audience?

2. What aspect of the arts will be used? (music, actors, dancers, graphic design...)

Tools for Construction/Critical Production Center for Media Literacy ©2012
3. Do you need permission to use existing songs, clips, articles or photos?

4. How should these existing works be credited or cited? Know fair use and copyright laws.

TECHNOLOGY

1. What equipment or software is required? (computer, video camera, editing software, web design program, printer, sound system...)

2. Do you have access to what you need? If not, how will you find the resources you need?

3. What constraints does the technology place on your presentation choices? i.e. Twitter’s limited characters.

4. Does your production team have the technical skills necessary for completing the task?

AUDIENCE

1. Have you identified your target audience?

2. Why are you targeting this particular audience?

3. How will your message be received by this audience? How will your message be received by other audiences (consider age, gender, ethnicity...)?

POINTS OF VIEW

1. What is your point of view with regard to your message?
2. What are you planning to include to establish your point of view?

3. What are you planning to omit to establish your point of view? Is it fair to your audience to leave out this information?

4. Is the material you are including/omitting of value to your audience?

PURPOSE

1. Why are you sending this message?

2. What forms of persuasion have you included? (see handout 10 Techniques of Persuasion)

3. Have you considered the appropriateness of the message? (Peer review)

4. What is the response you are hoping to achieve?

BUDGET

1. Will your project cost money to produce? How much?

2. Have you considered advertising and promotional costs?

3. Will you need to raise the money? If so, how?

4. Who is responsible for managing (keeping track of) the budget?
Key Question #2 for Producers: Does my message reflect understanding in format, creativity and technology?

Core Concept #2: Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.

Whatever your genre (web site, mobile device, film, game, photograph...), apply the questions and concepts of media literacy to better understand the message being sent. Worksheets and activities for Key Question #2 address the following topics and are applicable in all communication genres:

- Format: AP Style Guide
- Creativity and Technology
  - The Arts
- Project Management
Key Question #2: Does my message reflect understanding in *format*, *creativity* and *technology*?

Core Concept #2: Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.

**Objective:** To provide a quick tool for media producers (students) to identify and question what they are creating, and how they are presenting their message whether through art, language, dance, music or all of them at once!

**Description:** Flowing from the Core Concept that “Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules,” this question explores Marshall McLuhan’s famous saying that “the media is the message.” Often, the media determine a great deal about the message. If we are using cell phones to communicate, our messages had better be short and compact! If we are producing film to communicate, we had better know how to make a film and how to use the language of film to communicate with our production team. And if we want a message to resonate with powerful emotions or with compelling facts, we must be clearly aware of what these are and we had better be the master of crafting a particular form of message, whether it’s entertaining, informing, persuading or participating.

Some formatting questions are easily addressed by accessing the accepted guidelines for certain fields. For example, the *Associated Press (AP) Style Guide* is used by journalists and editors for grammar, punctuation and consistency in reporting, and the *American Psychological Association (APA) style guide* is used by academics for publishing research and case studies; they provide guidelines for the author about how to prepare the material in such a way that is professional and consistent with other material in the same field.

Graphic style guides might indicate the exact size or colors for a company logo, or the size and shape of photographs appearing in a book.

Length of the production is also a consideration, television and radio advertisements are usually 30 - 60 seconds in length, occasionally they are longer or shorter, but the industry standard is one minute or less and that’s a good gauge for producers. Once you determine what you are creating, whether a news article, advertisement, research paper or other form of media, follow the guidelines set by the industry to ensure consistency and recognition within the particular field.

Having a deep knowledge of the *arts* is also helpful in mastering the creative languages of media construction. Theatre requires knowledge of storytelling techniques; dance and motion demands understanding of choreography; music involves knowledge of tempo and instruments and orchestration; visual arts require knowledge of perspective and line and form and color.
And technology plays a role, too, because the technology provides the tools and also the environmental constraints in which the tools can be used in cases like videogames or websites or search engines. Before making or breaking the rules, we must first know and understand what the rules are.

**How to Use:** Ask to students to think about the Arts, and how/what they will use in their production project. The following Arts worksheet can help them to identify the creative techniques they intend to utilize.

Ask students to complete the sections for Format/Creativity/Technology on their Project Management worksheet. Careful consideration and knowledge of format, production methods and responsibilities will lead to successful communication, teamwork and project completion. Knowledge and access to existing guidelines provide structure for formatting documents and citing research.
The Arts

Media rely heavily on the arts to create interesting messages for audiences. Think about the messages you see and hear on a daily basis, how many include music, storytelling, dance, photography, or a combination thereof? When you set out to produce a message, you must consider the best way to appeal to your audience. Which art form(s) will you incorporate into your message?

Place a check mark in the circle(s) you want to use then describe your ideas and how this particular art form will enhance your project.

- **Theater** – storytelling, costumes, actors
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- **Visual Arts** – color, photography, computer generated images, drawings, animation
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- **Music** – sound effects, lyrics, instrumentals
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- **Dance** – movement, choreography
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- **Media Arts** – social media, websites, YouTube, twitter
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
1. **Use a person's full name and title the first time you mention him or her in an article.** For example, write Don Swanson, professor of communication, not Prof. Swanson. Once people have been fully identified, refer to them by last name only. There are exceptions, so always check the AP stylebook.

2. **Spell out abbreviations or acronyms on first reference.** For example, use Passaic County Community College the first time you refer to the college in a story. You may use PCCC on any references made after that. Another example would be to use DAR only after you have spelled out Daughters of the American Revolution on first reference.

3. **Abbreviate months when used with days, and use numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) not ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, etc.).** Exceptions are March, April, May, June and July -- write them out, don’t abbreviate. For example, write Sept. 2, 2008, not September 2nd, 2008. But, when using only the month and year, spell out the month.

4. **Generally, spell out the numbers zero through nine and use numerals for 10 and higher.** Note, however, that numbers used at the beginning of a sentence are spelled out. Example: Five hundred twenty-four students attended. It is better, however, to rewrite the sentence so that it doesn't begin with a number. Example: Attending the event were 524 students from local colleges. Years are one of the exceptions. For example: 2008 was a bad year for investors.

5. **But use numerals even for ages younger than 10.** This is another exception to the aforementioned number rule. When used like an adjective, say X-year-old, including the hyphens. Otherwise, don’t use the hyphens. For example: the 5-year-old girl kicked her brother, who is 8 years old.

6. **Spell out the word "percent" but use numerals for the actual number.** Examples: Participation increased 5 percent. Nearly 28 percent of all students don't like algebra. Exception: use may use the % sign in headlines.

7. **To indicate time, use figures and lowercase letters** (9 a.m., 6 p.m.). Put a space between the figure and the letters. Exceptions are noon and midnight. Do not say 12 noon or 12 midnight -- it’s redundant.

8. **Capitalize formal titles used before a name.** For example, write Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Very long titles may be shortened or summarized unless they are essential to the story, but the shortened form should not be capitalized (for example, you may use spokesperson instead of Vice President for Public Affairs and Communications). Use lowercase when formal titles follow a name (e.g., Hillary Clinton, secretary of state). General titles, such as astronaut Neil Armstrong and actor Matt Damon, are lowercase.

9. **Capitalize names of people, places or things** to set them apart from a general group. These include proper nouns such as Mike, Canada, Hudson River, and St. John’s Church. But use lowercase for common nouns (i.e. nouns not coupled with a proper name), such as the river or the church. Also, put a word in lowercase when you have more than one proper noun sharing the word. Example: Ocean and Monmouth counties. Capitalize the first word in a sentence. Refer to the dictionary or AP Stylebook, if needed. When in doubt, use lowercase.
10. Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr., Miss, Mrs., or Ms., except in direct quotes or where needed to distinguish between people of the same name. Using courtesy titles may be polite. And the New York Times uses them in its articles. But it is not AP style.

* [www.cubreporters.org](http://www.cubreporters.org) is a web site offering information about AP Style for journalism education.
Project Management Worksheet

AUTHORSHIP
1. What are you producing? (public service announcement, web site, movie, research paper...)

2. Who is the audience?

3. Who is the production team?

4. How will you reach your audience? (YouTube, class presentation, posters...)

5. What are their individual roles? (writer, film editor, actor...)

6. How much time do you have for this assignment? Create a timeline with your team. For example, a video project timeline might look like this:

   week 1--
   Write script
   and gather costumes to make a PSA for drug-free kids. Sign-up to use school video camera and tripod.

   week 2—
   Memorize lines of script Dress rehearsal and filming.

   week 3 –
   Edit film footage on computer in library. Choose introductory music and finalize production credits.

   week 4 –
   Present to class for peer review.

7. If writing a term paper, research paper or case study, refer to the APA guidelines for specific instructions on format. If the piece is journalistic in nature, refer to the AP style guide. See AP Top 10 list on the following page.

FORMAT/CREATIVITY

1. How will you attract the attention of your audience?

2. What aspect of the arts will be used? (music, actors, dancers, graphic design...)

Tools for Construction/Critical Production Center for Media Literacy ©2012 50
3. Do you need permission to use existing songs, clips, articles or photos?

4. How should these existing works be credited or cited? Know fair use and copyright laws.

TECHNOLOGY

1. What equipment or software is required? (computer, video camera, editing software, web design program, printer, sound system...)

2. Do you have access to what you need? If not, how will you find the resources you need?

3. What constraints does the technology place on your presentation choices? i.e. Twitter’s limited characters.

4. Does your production team have the technical skills necessary for completing the task?

AUDIENCE

1. Have you identified your target audience?

2. Why are you targeting this particular audience?

3. How will your message be received by this audience? How will your message be received by other audiences (consider age, gender, ethnicity...)?
POINTS OF VIEW

1. What is your point of view with regard to your message?

2. What are you planning to include to establish your point of view?

3. What are you planning to omit to establish your point of view? Is it fair to your audience to leave out this information?

4. Is the material you are including/omitting of value to your audience?

PURPOSE

1. Why are you sending this message?

2. What forms of persuasion have you included? (see handout 10 Techniques of Persuasion)

3. Have you considered the appropriateness of the message? (Peer review)

4. What is the response you are hoping to achieve?

BUDGET

1. Will your project cost money to produce? How much?

2. Have you considered advertising and promotional costs?

3. Will you need to raise the money? If so, how?

4. Who is responsible for managing (keeping track of) the budget?
Key Question #3 for Producers: Is my message engaging and compelling to my target audience?

Core Concept #3: Different people understand different messages differently.

Whatever your genre (web site, mobile device, film, game, photograph...), apply the questions and concepts of media literacy to better understand the message being sent. Worksheets and activities for Key Question #3 address the following topics and are applicable in all communication genres:

- Audience
- Focus Groups
- Project Management
Key Question #3: Is my message engaging and compelling for my target audience?

Core Concept #3: Different people understand media messages differently.

**Objective:** To introduce student media producers to the important role of the audience, and how different audiences might interpret (or misinterpret) the message they are sending.

**Description:** The key word for this Question/Concept is **audience**. The audience is made up of the people who view or engage with the message. As discussed earlier with the Media Triangle, the audience can choose whether to respond or engage with a media message.

The Core Concept for Key Question #3 is that each person in the audience will understand the message differently. If you show the same movie to a group of people, each viewer will have a slightly different reaction based upon their age, background, experiences, etc. As a producer of media, one must consider the possible reactions to the work. **Being considerate and respectful of your audience is an important aspect of digital citizenship.** Student producers must learn to ask themselves: *Is the material presented in a compelling way? Will my audience want to engage with my message? Is my message ethical and beneficial to my audience?*

A **target audience** is the specific group of people determined to be the most likely viewers or readers to engage with a media text (for example, sweetened breakfast cereal is targeted to children; diapers to new mothers; fast food to teens...).

Once the target audience is identified, the goal becomes reaching that audience with an interesting and creative message. Advertising agencies and production companies use **focus groups** to determine their target audiences. A focus group brings together a sample of individuals who are willing to give feedback, opinions and reactions about a new product or media campaign before the product or campaign is known to the wider public. This enables producers to bounce ideas off of a variety of people at relatively little expense thus providing an opportunity to try different creative approaches to a message before going ‘public’ with a final product or campaign. Gathering data from focus groups enables producers to make more informed decisions about their audiences. Focus groups can take place in-person or online.

**Polling** is another method for gathering information from an audience. Simply asking people their opinions is an easy way to get answers about a product or presentation. Polls are often used on web sites requiring a one-click answer in the form of like or dislike. A **survey** is typically longer and more involved; both of these information-gathering methods can be accomplished in-person, by cell phone, or online with a dedicated location like yahoo groups.

**How to Use:** In groups of 5 or 6, ask students to act as a focus group to critique two ads for the same product. For example, two ads for laundry soap or two ads for soft drinks found in magazines. Use the questions on the Focus Group page to get the conversation started. Group discussion will illustrate how different people experience the same media message differently.
Next, ask students to work in groups to provide peer review of their own ideas. Have students apply these same techniques to their own projects to get ideas and feedback from other students, parents, etc. Review Norms prior to all group activities.

Complete the corresponding section for Project Management.
**Focus Group**  
*Answers to these questions will vary among participants.*

What is similar between the two ads? (color, format, text...)

What is different? (color, format, text...)

Which ad is more convincing? (will vary among group members)

Why? What do you like about the ad? (color, photograph, tag line, brand...)

Which product would you buy based on the ads?

Who do you think is the target audience for the product being advertised? (For example, sweetened breakfast cereal is targeted to children; diapers to new mothers; fast food to teens...).

If you are not in the target audience for these particular ads, do you think they are convincing for the target audience? Why or why not?

After practice, students can use these techniques to critique messages created by their peers.
Project Management Worksheet

AUTHORSHIP
1. What are you producing? (public service announcement, web site, movie, research paper...)

2. Who is the audience?

3. Who is the production team?

4. How will you reach your audience? (YouTube, class presentation, posters...)

5. What are their individual roles? (writer, film editor, actor...)

6. How much time do you have for this assignment? Create a timeline with your team. For example, a video project timeline might look like this:

   week 1— Write script and gather costumes to make a PSA for drug-free kids. Sign-up to use school video camera and tripod.

   week 2— Memorize lines of script Dress rehearsal and filming.

   week 3 – Edit film footage on computer in library. Choose introductory music and finalize production credits.

   week 4 – Present to class for peer review.

7. If writing a term paper, research paper or case study, refer to the APA guidelines for specific instructions on format. If the piece is journalistic in nature, refer to the AP style guide. See AP Top 10 list on the following page.

FORMAT/CREATIVITY

1. How will you attract the attention of your audience?

2. What aspect of the arts will be used? (music, actors, dancers, graphic design...)

Tools for Construction/Critical Production

Center for Media Literacy ©2012
3. Do you need permission to use existing songs, clips, articles or photos?

4. How should these existing works be credited or cited? Know fair use and copyright laws.

TECHNOLOGY

1. What equipment or software is required? (computer, video camera, editing software, web design program, printer, sound system...)

2. Do you have access to what you need? If not, how will you find the resources you need?

3. What constraints does the technology place on your presentation choices? i.e. Twitter’s limited characters.

4. Does your production team have the technical skills necessary for completing the task?

AUDIENCE

1. Have you identified your target audience?

2. Why are you targeting this particular audience?

3. How will your message be received by this audience? How will your message be received by other audiences (consider age, gender, ethnicity...)?
POINTS OF VIEW

1. What is your point of view with regard to your message?

2. What are you planning to include to establish your point of view?

3. What are you planning to omit to establish your point of view? Is it fair to your audience to leave out this information?

4. Is the material you are including/omitting of value to your audience?

PURPOSE

1. Why are you sending this message?

2. What forms of persuasion have you included? (see handout 10 Techniques of Persuasion)

3. Have you considered the appropriateness of the message? (Peer review)

4. What is the response you are hoping to achieve?

BUDGET

1. Will your project cost money to produce? How much?

2. Have you considered advertising and promotional costs?

3. Will you need to raise the money? If so, how?

4. Who is responsible for managing (keeping track of) the budget?
Key Question #4 for Producers: Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles and points of view in my content?

Core Concept #4: Media have imbedded values and points of view.

Whatever your genre (web site, mobile device, film, game, photograph...), apply the questions and concepts of media literacy to better understand the message being sent. Worksheets and activities for Key Question #4 address the following topics and are applicable in all communication genres:

- Framing
- Branding
- Marketing Plans
- Project Management
Key Question #4: Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles and points of view in my content?

Core Concept #4: Media have embedded values and points of view.

**Objective:** To illustrate that media have embedded values and points of view based upon the author’s choice of what to include or exclude in the message.

**Description:** Media, because they are constructed, carry a subtext of who and what is important—at least to the person or persons creating the construction. Media are also storytellers (even commercials tell a quick and simple story) and stories require characters and settings and a plot that has a beginning, middle and end. The choice of a character’s age, gender or race mixed in with the lifestyles, attitudes and behaviors that are portrayed, the selection of a setting (urban? rural? affluent? poor?), and the actions and re-actions in the plot are just some of the ways that values become “embedded” in a TV show, a movie or an ad.*

When a producer chooses certain values or lifestyles to focus on in a media production, they are framing their message for the audience. Much like cropping a picture, the author chooses what’s important and what’s not and thereby creates a message reflecting his/her own point of view.

**How to Use:** The framing activity on the following page is a simple but clear way to explore the concept of framing. By using an actual frame (paper cut-out or digital camera) to look at items close-up and far away, students will see, firsthand, how they can alter the scene by their choice of framing.

*Read more in CML’s Literacy for the 21st Century.
WHAT DOES FRAMING PICTURES LEAVE OUT?*

Cut out the center square of this illustration or simply cut a rectangle with no center to make a frame (use digital cameras, if available).

1. Hold the frame at arm’s length then move it closer to your eye.
Describe how your view changes.

2. Walk around holding your frame about six inches from your face.
Look at people from different angles – stand on a chair, sit on the floor... What do you notice?

3. Look through a magazine or newspaper using your frame. What difference does it make when you can only see part of the page or picture?

4. Ask students to apply the concept of framing to their own projects. Have they made decisions about angles, cropping photos, backgrounds, etc.?

Each time you change how much of a person or object you see by moving your frame closer or farther away from your subject, you are cropping your view of the subject. By cropping or cutting out a part of the view of the person or object, you are changing the meaning.

* From CML’s Five Key Questions That Can Change the World
What is a Brand?

**Objective:** To understand the influence of branding on our choices as consumers and producers of media. Brands have embedded values and points of view (KQ#4).

**Definition:** A brand is an identifiable product or service that is widely marketed and easily recognizable. For example, the Nike swoosh not only identifies who made the product, but also carries with it an expectation for a certain level of craftsmanship, quality and price for athletic shoes and clothing. A brand is sometimes tied to a famous person and carries with it a variety of intangible feelings for the consumer. Some consumers feel passionately about certain brands – they trust the company for its quality, reliability, and reputation. Just by seeing the Nike swoosh, you know much more about the product than meets the eye! A great deal of time and money is spent to establish a brand name by the marketing departments and ad agencies that represent the product.

A brand is usually trademarked and cannot be used by other companies.

Movie and television producers often use **product placements** of well known brands within their films because they are instantly identifiable to the audience. If the main character drinks Pepsi-brand soft drinks, you might associate your feelings about Pepsi with the character, and at the same time, Pepsi gets good exposure for their product in front of large audiences. Cars are another product that gain a great deal of exposure through product placements. If a marketing department can convince a movie producer to have the macho, heroic character drive their brand of car, then they’ve done their job! Product Placements are a type of advertising – media producers and advertisers make deals to use brand-name products in their productions. If the movie or show is a hit, it’s a win-win for the media maker and the company that creates the brand.

**How to use:** Find a clip of a recent film that is appropriate for your class and ask students to count the number of product placements they see. It might be helpful to have a score keeper so students can call out their discoveries. Tally the number of placements and discuss how they feel about being ‘sold’ during a film? As members of the audience, does this bother them? Do they think the companies behind the products should be revealed?

**Activities:** Review the chart on the next page then ask students to work in groups to come up with five brands that they can name in five minutes. Regroup and have one student per group share their list with the class. They might be surprised at how often the same brands are named. Discuss as a class about the influence of brands on the students’ purchasing decisions. Do brand names matter to them? Are they willing to pay extra for a certain brand? Why?

Next, ask students to come up with their own marketing plan for a brand they want to create. See the worksheet called Marketing Plan.
What is a Brand?

A *brand* is a collection of images and ideas representing organizations as well as products, services or individuals. It refers to the concrete symbols such as a name, logo, slogan and design scheme as well as the associations and expectations people have about the owner of the brand.

Examples of Brand Names:

*Brand names reflect how companies/organizations are organized:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Description</th>
<th>Marketing Name</th>
<th>Company Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast cereal</td>
<td>Frosted Flakes</td>
<td>Kellogg’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball shoes</td>
<td>Air Jordan</td>
<td>Nike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>iPhone</td>
<td>Apple, Inc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Operations/Manufacturing**

- Make the product or provide the service
  - Marketing/Sales/Advertising/PR
  - Owners/Executives/Administration
  - Sell the product or service
  - Finance and manage the company

*Company Organization Chart Showing Structure/Responsibility:*
Graphic Examples of Brands

Frosted Flakes

Air Jordan

iPhone

Apple Inc.
**Brand Activity: 5 in 5**

Can you name 5 of your favorite brands in 5 minutes? Do you know which company is behind the brand? Fill out the chart below. Ready, Go!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Marketing/Brand Name</th>
<th>Company Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>For example: breakfast cereal</em></td>
<td>Frosted Flakes</td>
<td>Kellogg’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.
# Marketing Plan Worksheet

## Identify your market

- What is your product or service?
- Who is your audience?
- Who are your competitors?
- Why will your audience buy your product or service?
- How will you determine the best price for your product or service?

## Introduce your product or service

- Do you have a logo?
- What is the brand name for your product?
- Is this name the same as or similar to other products? Check trademark availability.
- Do you have photographs, drawings or written description of your product or service for use in press releases, posters, etc.?
- How will you advertise your product or service?

## Packaging and Distribution

- Do you need to package your product?
- What design and materials will be needed for packaging?
- How will customers receive your product or service?
- Have you considered privacy issues for online sales and delivery?

## Budget

- Will you incur any costs to produce your product?
- Have you considered shipping and handling costs?
- Do you have a budget to cover the costs?
- Who is assigned to keep track of your budget?
Project Management Worksheet

AUTHORSHIP
1. What are you producing? (public service announcement, website, movie, research paper...)

2. Who is the audience?

3. Who is the production team?

4. How will you reach your audience? (YouTube, class presentation, posters...)

5. What are their individual roles? (writer, film editor, actor...)

6. How much time do you have for this assignment? Create a timeline with your team. For example, a video project timeline might look like this:

   week 1--
   Write script
   and gather
   costumes to
   make a PSA
   for drug-free
   kids. Sign-up
to use school
video camera
and tripod.

   week 2—
   Memorize
   lines of script
   Dress
   rehearsal and
   filming.

   week 3 –
   Edit film
   footage on
   computer in
   library. Choose
   introductory
   music and
   finalize
   production
   credits.

   week 4 –
   Present to
   class for peer
   review.

7. If writing a term paper, research paper or case study, refer to the APA guidelines for specific instructions on format. If the piece is journalistic in nature, refer to the AP style guide. See AP Top 10 list on the following page.

FORMAT/CREATIVITY

1. How will you attract the attention of your audience?

2. What aspect of the arts will be used? (music, actors, dancers, graphic design...)

   week 1--
   Write script
   and gather
   costumes to
   make a PSA
   for drug-free
   kids. Sign-up
to use school
video camera
and tripod.
3. Do you need permission to use existing songs, clips, articles or photos?

4. How should these existing works be credited or cited? Know fair use and copyright laws.

TECHNOLOGY

1. What equipment or software is required? (computer, video camera, editing software, web design program, printer, sound system...)

2. Do you have access to what you need? If not, how will you find the resources you need?

3. What constraints does the technology place on your presentation choices? i.e. Twitter’s limited characters.

4. Does your production team have the technical skills necessary for completing the task?

AUDIENCE

1. Have you identified your target audience?

2. Why are you targeting this particular audience?

3. How will your message be received by this audience? How will your message be received by other audiences (consider age, gender, ethnicity...)?

POINTS OF VIEW

1. What is your point of view with regard to your message?

2. What are you planning to include to establish your point of view?
3. What are you planning to omit to establish your point of view? Is it fair to your audience to leave out this information?

4. Is the material you are including/omitting of value to your audience?

PURPOSE

1. Why are you sending this message?

2. What forms of persuasion have you included? (see handout 10 Techniques of Persuasion)

3. Have you considered the appropriateness of the message? (Peer review)

4. What is the response you are hoping to achieve?

BUDGET

1. Will your project cost money to produce? How much?

2. Have you considered advertising and promotional costs?

3. Will you need to raise the money? If so, how?

4. Who is responsible for managing (keeping track of) the budget?
Key Question #5 for Producers: Have I communicated my purpose effectively?

Core Concept #5: Most media messages are created to gain profit and/or power.

Whatever your genre (web site, mobile device, film, game, photograph...), apply the questions and concepts of media literacy to better understand the message being sent. Worksheets and activities for Key Question #5 address the following topics and are applicable in all communication genres:

- Purpose
- Persuasion
- Project Management
Key Question #5: Have I communicated my purpose effectively?

Core Concept #5: Most media messages are created to gain profit and/or power.

Objective: To encourage students to consider the purpose for their message. By asking themselves Why am I sending this? a producer must consider his/her motives and goals.

Description: Every producer must have a reason or a purpose for sending a message. Generally, there are three reasons: I want to persuade or influence or inform someone of something, and as a result, I have a power motive (defining power as neutral and in its broadest sense). Or I want my audience to buy something that I am selling, and so I have a profit motive. Or perhaps I have a mix of both a profit and a power motive, where I want to sell the world on a new idea and a new product at the same time. These motives are not necessarily good or bad, but purpose is always present.

Behind media messages there is always intent. Inherently, there is nothing wrong with profit or power; they can be honorable and serve the public good. What is the intent of the message?

Is the motive to sell or tell or both? As the producer, are your students asking someone to buy something or to take action (i.e. register to vote, get vaccinated, etc.)? As a producer and/or consumer, understanding the motive of the message allows one to make informed decisions.

How to Use: Producers have several ways of persuading an audience. Review the 10 Techniques of Persuasion and discuss which techniques you and your students most often experience, and which techniques they find to be the most persuasive. Next, ask to students to complete the Key Question #5 worksheet prior to creating (producing) a media message, and to complete the sections for Purpose and Budget on their Project Management sheet. Budget will also be addressed in Culminating Activities.
10 TECHNIQUES OF PERSUASION

The following is a list of various strategies that advertisers use to entice us to want the product being advertised.

1. Humor
   Funny or crazy images.

2. Tough
   Macho Strong, tough, powerful – usually males. May carry weapons or be pictured in dangerous situations, e.g. Superheroes.

3. Friends
   Groups of people enjoying each other and doing things together. Buddies, pals and friendship.

4. Family
   Mother, father, children or a family. May also be intergenerational group.

5. Fun
   Everyone is happy – smiling and laughing. Often images of people doing fun things and having a good time.

6. Nature
   Outdoor settings – mountains, ocean, desert, snow, flowers, etc. May or may not have people included.

7. Sexy
   Emphasis on physical attributes of models, usually female; may wear revealing clothing and be shown flirting through attitude or body language.

8. Cartoon
   People or animals portrayed as drawing or animation, often humorous.

9. Celebrity
   Someone most people recognize – athlete, musician, politician, or movie star.

10. Wealth
    Expensive and elegant places and things. Big houses, new cars, jewelry, designer clothing, etc.
Key Question #5 for Producers

1. What is my intent? Whose needs am I trying to satisfy with my message? ________________

2. Am I primarily entertaining, persuading, informing, or encouraging action and participation as the form of my message? ________________________________

3. Who is paying for this message to be constructed and sent? Should I disclose this underwriting for any reason? ________________________________

4. Do I want my audience to feel, think or do anything specific as a result of engaging with my message? ________________________________

5. How is the audience served by my message? How do I profit or benefit? How does the audience profit by or benefit from my message? ________________________________

7. What economic decisions may have influenced my message and how I constructed or transmitted it?

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

8. Have I considered ethical, social and/or legal constraints on achieving my purpose?

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________
Project Management Worksheet

AUTHORSHIP
1. What are you producing? (public service announcement, web site, movie, research paper...)

2. Who is the audience?

3. Who is the production team?

4. How will you reach your audience? (YouTube, class presentation, posters...)

5. What are their individual roles? (writer, film editor, actor...)

6. How much time do you have for this assignment? Create a timeline with your team. For example, a video project timeline might look like this:

   week 1—
   Write script
   and gather
   costumes to
   make a PSA
   for drug-free
   kids. Sign-up
   to use school
   video camera
   and tripod.

   week 2—
   Memorize
   lines of script
   Dress
   rehearsal and
   filming.

   week 3—
   Edit film
   footage on
   computer in
   library. Choose
   introductory
   music and
   finalize
   production
   credits.

   week 4—
   Present to
   class for peer
   review.

7. If writing a term paper, research paper or case study, refer to the APA guidelines for specific instructions on format. If the piece is journalistic in nature, refer to the AP style guide. See AP Top 10 list on the following page.

FORMAT/CREATIVITY
1. How will you attract the attention of your audience?

2. What aspect of the arts will be used? (music, actors, dancers, graphic design...)

3. Do you need permission to use existing songs, clips, articles or photos?

4. How should these existing works be credited or cited? Know fair use and copyright laws.

TECHNOLOGY

1. What equipment or software is required? (computer, video camera, editing software, web design program, printer, sound system...)

2. Do you have access to what you need? If not, how will you find the resources you need?

3. What constraints does the technology place on your presentation choices? i.e. Twitter’s limited characters.

4. Does your production team have the technical skills necessary for completing the task?

AUDIENCE

1. Have you identified your target audience?

2. Why are you targeting this particular audience?

3. How will your message be received by this audience? How will your message be received by other audiences (consider age, gender, ethnicity...)?

POINTS OF VIEW

1. What is your point of view with regard to your message?
2. What are you planning to include to establish your point of view?

3. What are you planning to omit to establish your point of view? Is it fair to your audience to leave out this information?

4. Is the material you are including/omitting of value to your audience?

PURPOSE

1. Why are you sending this message?

2. What forms of persuasion have you included? (see handout 10 Techniques of Persuasion)

3. Have you considered the appropriateness of the message? (Peer review)

4. What is the response you hope to achieve?

BUDGET

1. Will your project cost money to produce? How much?

2. Have you considered advertising and promotional costs?

3. Will you need to raise the money? If so, how?

4. Who is responsible for managing (keeping track of) the budget?
In this section, activities are focused on critical analysis of the construction process. Remind students of the agreed upon Norms for considerate discussion among peers.

- Assessment using Group Close Analysis
- Norms
- Q/TIPS
- Conducting a Close Analysis
  - Description and Evidence
  - Interpretation and Evidence
- Assessment Example PSA
NORMS

• Be respectful of one another, the ideas shared and our learning community.

• Listen to understand.

• Be open to new ideas.

• Do not share inappropriate personal stories.

• Actively participate in all lessons and activities.
Assessing Construction by Conducting a Close Analysis

Objective: To assess student construction projects by learning to conduct a close analysis of the media message. To provide a tool that allows teacher assessment and self-assessment of student work.

Description: The ability to conduct a close analysis of a media text is critical to becoming a media literate consumer and producer. Knowing how to deconstruct and construct a message leads to a better understanding and appreciation for what’s behind (or within) the text. Teachers and students alike can conduct a close analysis of a production piece to assess the quality of the creative and technical process, while also addressing the key questions of authorship, format, audience, point of view and purpose. This method for critical analysis can be used by teachers assessing student work, student producers assessing their own work, or peer review. A foundation in deconstruction is helpful (see deconstruction tool for close analysis on page 85).

How to Use: Remind students of the Media Triangle, and how their personal relationship to media shapes their views. With the Q/TIPS chart posted in the front of the class, have students analyze their own projects and note their findings on the worksheets provided. Ask a few volunteers to present their media projects for peer review, using the same sequence of questions. But first, set ground rules for the peer discussion, and post those as well (see suggested Norms on page 80).

For group assessment:

Have the volunteers present their projects without offering background information or comments prior to viewing. All discussion will take place at the end of the exercise. The idea is to create an environment which resembles the one in which most media messages are delivered – to someone in a living room watching TV or reading a magazine, or surfing the web, or in a movie theater. Most messages are not presented with any information except what appears in the 30 second commercial or on the printed page. The interpretation is left to the audience of the media text and this is an important point for student producers to grasp as they create media messages and send them out to the world.

Go through the following steps to conduct a close analysis. Students will be taking notes to share at the end of the viewing. These steps are designed for viewing a media text on DVD or other video format and can be adjusted for print or web:

1. Visuals. Ask students to write down everything they can remember about the visuals—lighting, camera angles, how the pictures are edited together. Describe any people—what do they look like? what are they doing? wearing? What scenes or images do you remember clearly? Focus only on what is actually on the screen, not your interpretation of what you saw on the screen. (See the following sample exercise, What Do You Notice?) If necessary, play it again but with the sound off. Keep adding to your list of visuals.

2. Sounds. Replay again with the picture off. Listen to the sound track. Write down all the words that are spoken. Who says them? What kind of music is used? Does it change in the course of the clip? How? Are there other sounds? What is their purpose? Who is being spoken to—directly or indirectly? (That is, who is the audience addressed by the commercial?)
3. Apply Key Questions for Construction (Q/TIPS)

With the third viewing, begin to apply the Five Key Questions for construction. Is the message presented in a clear, compelling way? Is the format appealing and technically sound? Are values and points of view clearly and consistently framed throughout? Why is this message being sent? What is the purpose or the motive?

Continue to show the text over and over; it’s like peeling back the layers of an onion.

4. Review Your Insights.

Summarize how the text is constructed and how various elements of the construction trigger our own unique response—which may be very different than how others interpret the text.

Ask students to share their comments in a respectful, constructive way reminding them of the Norms agreed upon at the beginning of the exercise. Then allow the author(s) of the media text to respond and explain his/her technical approach and purpose, if it is unclear to the class.

Try this exercise with other kinds of messages—a story from a newscast, a key scene from a movie, a print advertisement, a website. Are different questions important for different kinds of messages?

Doing a close analysis with a class or group can be exhilarating, with insights coming fast and furiously. After the first showing, start the group exercise with the simple question: “What did you notice?” Different people will remember different things so accept all answers and keep asking, “What else did you notice?”

The key to success with this exercise is for the teacher/leader to keep asking questions. Refrain from contributing too many answers yourself.

While you may not have the time to subject every student project to this kind of analysis, it takes only two or three experiences with close analysis to give us the insight to “see” through other media messages as we encounter them. It’s like having a new set of glasses that brings the whole media world into focus.
## Media Deconstruction/Construction Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Key Words</th>
<th>Deconstruction: CML’s 5 Key Questions (Consumer)</th>
<th>CML’s 5 Core Concepts</th>
<th>Construction: CML’s 5 Key Questions (Producer)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Authorship</td>
<td>Who created this message?</td>
<td>All media messages are constructed.</td>
<td>What am I authoring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Format</td>
<td>What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?</td>
<td>Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.</td>
<td>Does my message reflect understanding in format, creativity and technology?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>How might different people understand this message differently?</td>
<td>Different people experience the same media message differently.</td>
<td>Is my message engaging and compelling for my target audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?</td>
<td>Media have embedded values and points of view.</td>
<td>Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles and points of view in my content?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Why is this message being sent?</td>
<td>Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.</td>
<td>Have I communicated my purpose effectively?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLOSE ANALYSIS: PART 1 (Description and Evidence) CONTENT

Media Title: ____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viewings:</th>
<th>Descriptions, Observations, Examples, Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Viewing #1 (General)</td>
<td>What is happening?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Viewing #2 (No Sounds)</td>
<td>What did you notice about lighting, camera angles, and editing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Viewing #3 (ONLY Sound, no picture)</td>
<td>What did you notice about dialogue, music, and sound effects?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### CLOSE ANALYSIS: PART 2 (Interpretation/Evidence) CONTEXT

Apply Key Words and Core Concepts to analyze a media message:

**Media Title:** ________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Words/Key Questions for Producers</th>
<th>Observations, Examples, Ideas</th>
<th>5 Core Concepts</th>
<th>Observations, Examples, Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Author: What am I authoring?</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. All media messages are ‘constructed.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Format: What creative techniques are used to attract attention?</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Content: Have I consistently framed my values and point of view?</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Media have embedded values and points of view.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Purpose: Why am I sending this message?</td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Most media messages are constructed to gain profit and/or power.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment: Example PSA

Objective: To provide a tool for teachers and students to use in evaluating production projects.

Description: A Likert scale like the one provided here can be used to evaluate any media product – whether film, web, print, etc. This tool provides a consistent method for teacher, self, and peer evaluation of production projects.

How to use: The assessment form provided shows how students may assess a Public Service Announcement (PSA). The first section of the form, on Authoring, details defining characteristics of PSAs that are unique to structuring a PSA. This list may vary, depending upon the media genre. It is important to establish the criteria for the media being created; these criteria may be created with student help to insure that the goals of each project are articulated. Rate the effectiveness of a production project by circling the appropriate numbers on the scale provided. Use the comments section for more specific explanations, constructive criticism, and praise!
ASSESSMENT: PSA
Center for Media Literacy, www.medialit.org

Evaluators should score each of the indicators (bullets) on a 1-5 scale, one being a low score and 5 being a high score.

WHAT AM I AUTHORING?

- Problem posed clearly
  1  2  3  4  5
- Solution posed clearly
  1  2  3  4  5
- Call to action
  1  2  3  4  5
- Time/space structure
  1  2  3  4  5

DOES MY MESSAGE REFLECT CRAFTSMANSHIP IN FORMAT, CREATIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY?

- Persuade, inform, entertain, participate
  1  2  3  4  5
- Visual, aural, dance/movement, theatre, storytelling
  1  2  3  4  5
- Print, electronic, digital
  1  2  3  4  5

IS MY MESSAGE ENGAGING AND COMPELLING FOR MY TARGET AUDIENCE?

- Target(s) is clear
  1  2  3  4  5
- Appealing to target
  1  2  3  4  5
- Engagement throughout
  1  2  3  4  5

HAVE I FRAMED MY CONTENT CLEARLY AND CONSISTENTLY?

- Framing is evident
  1  2  3  4  5
Have I communicated my purpose effectively?

- Message is clear
- Message is consistent

Overall, how well has this PSA accomplished its goal?

Comments:

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In this final section, activities are focused on preparing the final product. Remind students of the agreed upon Norms for considerate discussion among peers.

- Publishing
- Promotion
**Publishing**

**Objective:** To provide a tool for final review prior to publishing a media project.

**Description:** This is where students tie it all together – the final check before releasing a production piece to an audience. Again, this requires collaboration and responsible decision-making. Remind students about their roles as digital citizens, and encourage them to review their work carefully (see proofreading sheet) so they are showing off their best efforts as producers!

**How to Use:** Distribute the following questionnaire *Ready to Publish?* when students reach the final stages of their production projects. Discuss the importance of proofreading and remind students of the proofreading symbols on page 22.

Be involved in the final review with students and provide resources (AP style guidelines or school rules), if needed.
Ready to Publish? Final Checklist for Producers.

Is your project ready to be seen by others? Whether you are sending a message to your classmates about graduation or posting to a global audience on YouTube, it’s important to present your best work. Answer these questions BEFORE you publish.

1. Are you authorized to publish this work? Some schools and workplaces have strict guidelines about publishing. Know your school’s rules!

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

2. Have you proofread the text? Misspellings and typos are distracting and diminish your credibility. Before publishing, read the text carefully multiple times and ask someone else to read it, too. Ask all proofreaders to use the same symbols for corrections (pg. 22).

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

3. If you are publishing for a specific professional audience, have you prepared your work in accordance with the AP or APA Style Guidelines?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

4. Have you given credit where credit is due? Do you have signed Releases from the people appearing in your production piece? Be certain that the people featured in your film, photographs or video have agreed to participate!

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
5. Have you credited photographers, artists, authors, musicians, etc.? Did you pay the necessary fees, if applicable, for the use of photographs or songs?

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

6. Are your motives in line with the ethics of journalism? Is this message potentially hurtful to others? If so, take a step back and reconsider your purpose for sending this media message.

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

7. Have you determined your target audience? How do you intend to reach that audience? Deciding how to publish your material (private vs. public, scholarly vs. blog, etc.) and who will see it, is an important consideration for producers.

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

8. Do you want to publicize the release of your production? How will you go about letting people know it is available?

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________
Promoting Your Work

Objective: To provide students with ideas for promoting and publicizing their media productions.

Description: If students intend to show their work outside the classroom, consideration must be given to how this is accomplished. Promotion can be as simple as a poster in the hallway or as elaborate as creating a full promotional campaign involving local or national news outlets.

How to Use: Discuss the different possibilities for promotion with your students. Using the following worksheet, ask students to identify their target audience and the best way to reach that audience. Do they have time and/or resources ($) to promote their work?
Promotion Plan

Who is the target audience? ________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

How can we reach them?

- Posters
- School Newspaper
- PTA Newsletter
- School Assembly
- Local Radio Station
- Local TV News
- Local Newspaper
- Email
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Other ideas? _____________________________________________________________

Is the promotion FREE or will it cost money? _________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

How much time is required for making contacts and preparing promotional materials? _____
_____________________________________________________________________________________

When are the deadlines for submitting content to news and radio outlets? ________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

If an interview is requested, who will be interviewed? ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Do we have any known contacts that can help us spread the word? (parents, friends, teachers...) _____
_____________________________________________________________________________________


Helpful References and Web Sites

Production
Facebook  http://www.facebook.com
Glogster  http://www.glogster.com
YouTube  http://www.YouTube.com

Style and Ethics
Associated Press (AP) Stylebook  http://www.apstylebook.com/
Society for Professional Journalists  http://www.spj.org/pdf/ethicscode.pdf
Cub Reporters  http://www.Cubreporters.org
The Chicago Manual of Style Online  http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org

Media Literacy
Center for Media Literacy  http://www.medialit.com
Consortium for Media Literacy  http://www.consortiumformedialiteracy.org