MediaLit KIT™

MEDIA LITERACY: A SYSTEM FOR LEARNING *ANYTIME, ANYWHERE…*

Part II: Deconstruction and Construction

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MEDIA LITERACY:
A SYSTEM FOR LEARNING *ANYTIME, ANYWHERE…*

This e-book is the first piece in Part II of the CML Trilogy titled *Media Literacy: A System for Learning Anytime, Anywhere...*

The Trilogy includes:

Part I:
- *Change Management e-book*
- *Professional Development Presentation*
- *Tools for Change Management*

Part II:
- ***Deconstruction and Construction e-book***
- Professional Development presentation: Deconstruction
- Tools for Implementation: Deconstruction

Part III:
- Professional Development presentation: Construction
- Tools for Implementation: Construction

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About the Author

Tessa Jolls is President and CEO of the Center for Media Literacy and Director of the Consortium for Media Literacy, a project of International Humanities Center. She has led the Center since 1999 and founded the Consortium in 2008. Her primary focus is working in partnership to design and implement school and community-based implementation programs for media literacy education. She contributes to the field internationally through her speaking and professional development workshops, with curriculum development and research projects, and through publishing and disseminating new curricular and training materials.

The Center for Media Literacy (CML) is dedicated to a new vision of literacy for the 21st Century: the ability to communicate competently in all media forms as well as to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate with the powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary mass media culture. These skills of media literacy are essential for both children and adults as individuals and as citizens of a democratic society.

Author's Notes

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Media Literacy: A System for Learning

With the pace of technological change, the U.S. education system is under unprecedented and much-needed pressure to creatively reinvent itself. This process is now underway, with new models for teaching and learning beginning to emerge like blooming flowers across a desert landscape. The change that technology is bringing is revolutionary, not evolutionary, and it affects all stakeholders – students, teachers, administrators, parents, employers and citizens. Technology affords new understanding and new approaches to education as the global village becomes ever more complex (Walkosz, Jolls, & Sund, 2008), and it is technology that is enabling the emergence of innovative ways to transform classroom practice.

Learning to navigate the global village successfully is the biggest challenge for adults and children today. They need the skills to be:

- Efficient managers of information
- Wise consumers
- Responsible producers, and
- Active and effective participants in today's global culture.

Meeting these goals requires both content knowledge and information process skills to provide the support and context needed for making every-day choices. In thinking about the interplay between content knowledge and process skills, one must ask "Who can separate the dancer from the dance?" But embedding the formal teaching and learning of process skills into the education system takes new understanding, new modeling and an ongoing, high-level, determined commitment.

This chart captures some of the major shifts that technology has brought to the education world – changes which educators are still struggling to understand and adapt to:

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Table 1

Comparisons between Local Village and Global Village

Past Local Village	Today Global Village
Adult Guidance Plentiful For Children	Adult Guidance Scarce
Local Representations	Global Branding
Information Access Scarce	Information Access Plentiful
Information Acquisition	Information Sorting
Content Knowledge Transmitted	Process Skills Practiced and Applied
Granular Content Knowledge	Research-based Framework Sorting
Isolated Content Silos	Integrated Problem Solving
Production by Few	Production by Many
Access to Best Teachers Scarce	Access to Best Teachers Plentiful through Technology
Physical Location of Schools	Virtual School Locations

Tessa Jolls, 2008

Examining this table more closely, the present education system was born in an era when:

- children's face-to-face contact with adults in the local village was intense on a daily basis, providing children with guidance and filters on the information and people with whom they came into contact. Now, in the global village, such contact with adults is scarce.
- businesses and organizations in the local village were known individually. Today, businesses and organizations are often branded globally for instant recognition.
- information and access to printed information was scarce. Now, information access is plentiful and can be overwhelming.

- content knowledge was passed down through individual teachers and printed information was often hard to obtain. Now, sorting through and validating information are the priorities, using research-based frameworks grounded in information process skills.
- content silos developed as ways to specialize and share scarce knowledge and scarce access; today, deep knowledge is readily documented and available while problem solving across disciplines, using specialized knowledge from various resources, is needed.
- production of media was controlled by a few; today, everyone is a media producer using digital tools.
- access to the best teachers was limited to physical proximity. Today, everyone can have access to the best teachers through the global village.
- students had to be physically present in school to progress; today, students are free from time, space and a lock-step pace.
- learning to play together, to work in teams cooperatively, was confined to physical interaction. Now, students can learn teamwork through online sports and games.
- students were more physically active because their world was more physical. Today, students are less physically active, creating poor environments for physical health and well-being.

With these changed conditions of 21st Century life, it is imperative to ask:

If process skills are central to being an educated citizen, why are process skills not clearly defined and articulated through educational frameworks? Why are these skills not the focal point for learning and acquiring content knowledge?

So, for example:

- If values are the fundamental prism for valuing risk, evaluating choices and making decisions, why isn't character education at the heart of education?
- If critical analysis of representations, including branding systems, is key to sorting valid information for risk analysis and decision-making, why isn't media literacy education central to teaching?
- If the arts provide the creative language for emotional expression and understanding, why are the arts being downsized in schools when children need these skills to

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understand the global village and need to have outlets for expression and learning through different modalities?

- If sports and games are effective ways of learning to work individually and in teams in today's complex society, why are physical education programs being eliminated when children need these skills and healthy outlets more than ever?

The whole child is more than the sum of the parts that are currently being addressed in today's schools. With this in mind, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) (Hodgkinson, 2006) has begun a new initiative to educate the whole child, calling upon educators, parents, policymakers and business leaders to ensure that, in their own community:

- Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle
- Each student learns in an intellectually challenging environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults
- Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community
- Each student has access to personalized learning and to qualified, caring adults
- Each graduate is prepared for success in college or further study and for employment in a global environment.

In this context, the whole child makes for a greater society. Technology as an education tool is able to provide in-depth information on an infinite number of topics on a global basis. But based on this information, choices are made, with consequences to individuals and society. Choices are rooted in values, and in a technology-driven world where choices abound, it is values, coupled with information and critical analysis, that make the difference.

So while technology offers limitless information options, humans need filters and frameworks through which to negotiate meaning. John Naisbitt said in 1988 that society is drowning in information and starved for knowledge; that remains the case. Beginning at birth, children need tools to gain knowledge and make wise choices. Like learning to swim or to row, using these tools takes practice over time. Reinforcement and discussion with adults helps children through the thickets while the adults learn too.

This adult interaction is essential since humans have "social" brains (Goswami, 2008) which acquire knowledge incrementally through cultural experience and social context. But children also need technical skills and equipment to thrive in the technological world. The United States leads all

other Organization for Economic Co-Operation & Development (OECD) nations in providing computer access in schools and classrooms (Hodgkinson, 2006), but predictions are that it may take another decade for teachers to acquire good instructional software and training.

Increasingly, technology affords the necessary tools for curricular integration and a constructivist approach to education, in contrast to the traditional silo approach which lacks little if any connection to the world outside the classroom. These silos, which define traditional academic subject areas such as language arts, mathematics, history and science, are rich in tradition and knowledge. However, they also discourage sharing of knowledge, since silos represent discreet and often impervious subject areas separated by their own unique vocabularies and views. The silos provide endless opportunities to "drill down" deeper into a particular content area, but often at the expense of a broader perspective that contributes to real-world problem-solving.

The Change in Educational Needs

Due to the revolution that technology has engendered, the present education system reflects a system of values from the past. Access to content knowledge is being valued by our society as scarce when it is indeed plentiful. Process skills, along with content knowledge, have not been explicitly labeled and taught in schools through the years because in the local village, access to adult guides was plentiful. With access to caring adults scarce in the global village, children need internalized frameworks and process skills now more than ever, to navigate the global media world.

This is not to say that content knowledge is unimportant – quite the contrary – but process skills in the global village are needed as the central tools through which to acquire and apply content knowledge. This means that process skills must be valued, articulated and taught systematically. The goal of teaching children the problem solving skills they need in life must be grounded in a process of value-based inquiry. It is these values -- coupled with skills of analysis, expression and self-representation -- that will inform and guide their decisions throughout life.

Equipping children with the tools to be able to evaluate their opportunities and risks and to make their own choices is the ultimate responsibility – and gift – of educators to their young charges and the nation's citizens. The online global village, built on the base of technology and media, is as much an arena for learning as the classroom in the local village. It's time to embrace this new way of living and learning and indeed, loving.

Some educators and educational advocates have now designed new education frameworks for overall learning that schools should address. Among these frameworks and organizations who have released them are the

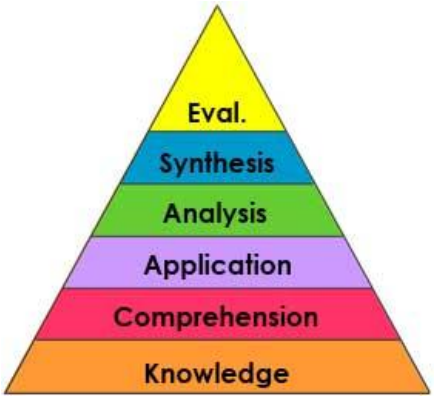
Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), EnGauge Framework (Metiri/NCREL), American Association of Colleges and Universities, ICT Skills (International Society for Technology in Education), DeSeCo (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) and ICT Literacy (Educational Testing Service) (Dede 2009). The most prominent of these frameworks is that of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Alternative frameworks tend to emphasize some subskills identified by P21 as particularly important; or they stress areas such as "risk taking" (Metiri/NCREL) that are missing from the P21 framework. Regardless, all of these frameworks emphasize the importance of core subjects as well as skills in categories such as learning and thinking, information, media and technology, and lifeskills. These frameworks all address the continuing convergence of media, technology and education.

The Basic Process Skills

In 1956, Benjamin Bloom headed a group of educational psychologists who developed a classification of levels of intellectual behavior important in learning (Overbaugh & Schultz, n.d.). Since then, Bloom's approach has gained wide currency in U.S. education circles, particularly in devising curricula and assessment tools (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). In the 1990s, a new group of cognitive psychologists, led by Lorin Anderson (formerly a student of Bloom's), updated the taxonomy as follows:

Table 2 Bloom's Taxonomy

Revised



Original

Remembering: can the student recall or remember the information?	Knowledge: define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, reproduce state
Understanding: can the student explain ideas or concepts?	Comprehension: classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, paraphrase
Applying: can the student use the information in a new way?	Application: choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write
Analyzing: can the student distinguish between the different parts?	Analysis: appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test
Evaluating: can the student justify a stand or decision?	Synthesis: appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate
Creating: can the student create new product or point of view?	Evaluate: assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, write

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Interestingly, the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy utilizes verbs rather than nouns to describe various skills, reflecting that these skills represent active processes, not something that is already "done," and static. The importance of incorporating these thinking skills is emphasized by groups such as the Health Education Assessment Project (HEAP), a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), who are currently updating their assessment item bank to embed these skills in each assessment question addressing health content (Deal and Hodges, 2009). The skills identified in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy also closely resemble the classic definition of media literacy, which is "The ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in all its forms" (Aufderheide & Firestone, 1993). Today, the Center for Media Literacy (CML) has added the words "participate with" as part of the skillset identified in the definition (Center for Media Literacy, 2008), since media technology is now interactive and collaborative (Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma,Robison, & Weigel, 2006).

And though the graphic representation of skills in Bloom's Taxonomy is a pyramid, implying a linear progression with "creating" at the apex of the triangle, it is important to note that utilizing these skills may not be a linear or sequential process at all: as one is creating media, one is also remembering, analyzing, understanding, evaluating and applying new ideas.

Though academic silos remain in schools, there is not a single discipline where these process skills do not apply and indeed, state education standards often employ terms from Bloom's Taxonomy regardless of the academic discipline being addressed. For example, the California Visual and Performing Arts Sandards incorporate terms such as Artistic Perception, which "refers to the processing, analyzing and responding to sensory information through the use of the language and skills unique to" the arts (California, 2001). Other terms in these standards include Aesthetic Valuing and Creative Expression.

However, the basic process skills outlined in Bloom's Taxonomy are not systematically and consistently represented in state standards; they are not scoped and sequenced in a way that applies across all disciplines. Instead, and unfortunately, they are haphazardly addressed in a way that mixes in the process skills with the required content knowledge in each separate discipline. This invites inconsistency as well as a lack of progression, resulting in gaps for instruction and for increased identifying of levels of competence. And so, since technology allows easier comparisons of disciplines by examining and comparing state education standards, it becomes apparent that *all* of the disciplines have common ground in demanding information process skills and critical thinking as part of student learning, but these skills are not presently looked upon as discrete competencies that are scoped, sequenced and applied across *all* disciplines in a systematic way.

Media Literacy: Acquiring a Lifelong Process for Inquiry

The skills of critical analysis are fundamental to media literacy, whether one is acting as a consumer, producer or active participant with media. Media literacy, grounded in inquiry-based, process-oriented pedagogy, offers not a new subject to teach but rather *a new way to teach and a new way to learn all subjects*.

Media literacy began at the grassroots as parents, educators and concerned citizens concluded that if media was to play a pivotal role as children's teacher, children would need a way of filtering through the messages. The goal is wise choices, in accordance with acceptable community norms. For example, in seeing alcohol advertising, children are less likely to be influenced if they have media literacy skills to refute such messages. Furthermore, if they have received media literacy training in analyzing alcohol advertising, their decision-making process can be positively affected in other risky situations. Once children master a decision-making skill, they can apply it to a variety of contexts. For long-term benefits, it seems more valuable to concentrate on helping children develop media literacy skills than to teach them which specific decisions to make (Austin & Johnson, 1997).

Formal education in media literacy, not just censorship or control, is an avenue to help young people understand their choices and to help question the values represented through the media. Media literacy has continued to grow globally and has some common characteristics:

First, media literacy helps individuals explore their deep and enduring relationship with media. In 1989, Eddie Dick, Media Education Officer for the Scottish Film Council, developed the Media Triangle, which illustrated the relationship between Text, Production and Audience. Understanding this relationship is fundamental to understanding the power dynamic between these three elements.

In looking at a common brand identity or logo, for example, it becomes evident that audiences have a shared understanding of the text – the logo – that was produced by a particular organization. The audience did not necessarily "ask" for this understanding, but because of repeated exposure to the brand, people have internalized an understanding of what the brand means and how they may have interacted with it in the past. The producer has established a relationship with the audience through the text, which is the logo. Yet the audience exerts the ultimate power over the relationship when consciously deciding to engage or not.

Second, the focus of media literacy is on process rather than content. The goal of media literacy is not to memorize facts about media or be able to make a video or design a Web site. Rather, the goal is to explore questions that arise when one engages critically with a mediated message that contains

facts or other content – print or digital. It involves posing problems that exercise higher order thinking skills – learning how to identify key concepts, make connections between multiple ideas, ask pertinent questions, identify fallacies, and formulate a response. It is these skills, *coupled with* engagement with factual knowledge, that form the foundation of intellectual inquiry and workplace productivity, and that are necessary for exercising full citizenship in a democratic society and a global economy (Thoman & Jolls, 2004).

Such skills have always been essential for an educated life, and good teachers have always fostered them. But they too often emerge only as a by-product of mastering content areas such as literature, history, the sciences and mathematics. Seldom are process or learning skills explicitly taught. But if society is to graduate students who can be in charge of their own continual learning in a media culture, learning skills must be "incorporated into classrooms deliberately, strategically and broadly" (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2003, p. 6). As writer Alvin Toffler (qtd. in Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2003) pointed out, "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn" (p. 6). By its very nature, media literacy teaches and reinforces 21st century learning skills.

Third, media literacy education expands the concept of text to include all message forms – verbal, aural or visual (or all three together!) – used to create and then pass ideas back and forth between human beings. Full understanding of such a text involves not just deconstruction activities – that is, taking apart a message that already exists – but also construction activities – learning to write opinions and ideas with the wide range of multimedia tools available to young people growing up in a digital world.

Fourth, media literacy is characterized by the principle of inquiry – that is, learning to ask important questions about whatever one sees, hears, produces or engages with:

- Is this new scientific study on diet and weight valid?
- What are the implications of ranking friends on a social networking site?
- What does a "photo-op" mean?

With a goal of promoting healthy skepticism rather than cynicism, the challenge for the teacher (or parent) is not to provide answers but to stimulate more questions – to guide, coach, prod and challenge the learner to discover how to go about finding an answer. "I don't know: How could we find out?" is the media literacy mantra.

Questions, of course, open up many more questions. And how one even approaches a question determines what answers one might find. Inquiry is also a messy process because one question leads to another and yet another. To keep inquiry on course and to provide a way to be able to

master a process of inquiry, curriculum specialists look for a comprehensive framework to provide guidance and structure. Core concepts of media literacy, rooted in media studies by academics throughout the world, are a way to express common media characteristics. Various adaptions of core concepts have been developed, starting with 18 concepts originally named by Len Masterman in his seminal work, *Teaching the Media (1985)*, and eight core concepts used in Canada as a way of structuring curriculum. The National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) provides a listing of Core Principles for media literacy, as do other organizations.

It is these core concepts, derived through media studies, that distinguish media literacy from other disciplines. The Center for Media Literacy (CML), one of the pioneering media literacy organizations in the United States, provides a research-based framework through the release of its original CML MediaLit Kit™ in 2002. Designed to provide a common vocabulary and approach, the original CML MediaLit Kit featured Five Core Concepts for Media Literacy, and Five Key Questions for deconstruction of media messages. Recognizing that skills of critical analysis are just as important during media production, in 2007 CML also developed Five Key Questions for construction of media messages. This pioneering CML framework, called Questions/TIPS (Q/TIPS™), addresses questions from the viewpoint of both consumers and producers.

Q/TIPS serves as a "metaframe" that both teachers, students and parents can grasp and begin to use immediately as a starting point; as training, curricula and assessments are built around the metaframe, the inquiry process deepens and takes hold as the central methodology for critical thinking and learning across the curriculum. Furthermore, this metaframe is an easier way to introduce 21st century skills than some of the more complex frameworks which, although representing desirable outcomes, are very difficult to implement and engage teachers.

CML has long said that if every student in the US would know the Five Key Questions and how to apply them by high school graduation, all its efforts would be an unqualified success. Based on the work of media scholars and literacy educators in the U.S. and from around the world, each of the Five Key Questions flows from a corresponding Core Concept and provides an entry point to explore the five fundamental aspects of any message in any medium: authorship, format, audience, content and purpose. Starting with simple versions of the questions for young children and moving on to more sophisticated analyses for adults, anyone can apply the questions to a variety of texts. Because the questions are succinct, media literacy literature includes a variety of "guiding questions" to tease out the deepest understanding possible.

Learning to ask and to apply the Five Key Questions to texts is a process skill that is not mastered the first time out. Once learned, however,

the process becomes automatic as users build the habit of routinely subjecting media messages to a battery of questions appropriate to their age and ability.

As the cornerstone of the media literacy process, CML's Five Key Questions provide a shortcut and an on-ramp to acquiring and applying critical thinking skills in a practical, replicable, consistent and attainable way. They are an academically sound and engaging way to begin and they provide curriculum developers with a useable structure that can be applied to *any* subject.

The CML framework, Questions/Tips (Q/TIPS), provides a point of entry for thinking critically and a quick process for continued skill development on a lifelong basis (see Table 6):

MediaLit KIT™

CML's FIVE CORE CONCEPTS AND KEY QUESTIONS
FOR CONSUMERS AND PRODUCERS
Media Deconstruction/Construction Framework

CML's Questions/TIPS (Q/TIPS) © 2002-2007 Center for Media Literacy, www.medialit.org				
#	Key Words	Deconstruction: CML's 5 Key Questions (Consumer)	CML's 5 Core Concepts	Construction: CML's 5 Key Questions (Producer)
1	Authorship	Who created this message?	All media messages are constructed.	What am I authoring?
2	Format	What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?	Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.	Does my message reflect understanding in format, creativity and technology?
3	Audience	How might different people understand this message differently?	Different people experience the same media message differently.	Is my message engaging and compelling for my target audience?
4	Content	What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?	Media have embedded values and points of view.	Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles and points of view in my content?
5	Purpose	Why is this message being sent?	Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.	Have I communicated my purpose effectively?

CML's Five Key Questions for Media Literacy apply to both deconstruction, or analysis and consumption of media messages, as well as construction, or production of media messages.

When audiences "consume" or analyze media messages, they have no control over the content of the message. Instead, they only control the meaning that they make from the message and how they might want to respond in making decisions or taking action. They can accept or reject the message, but unless the message is "remixed" and "rehashed," the audience cannot change it until they enter into an active production process.

But when an individual or team "produces" or constructs media messages, they *do* control the content of the message to the extent that they have autonomy or self-awareness. Yet they always bring themselves to the message, with all of the experiences and knowledge that inevitably affects the content of their messages, because by definition, human beings have imperfect understanding, and each human being is unique.

In constructing a message, a producer has many decisions to make. The producer is not just deciding how to make meaning from his own message, but through his construction techniques, he is also influencing how others might make meaning from it and possibly reacting to input from others. All producers have both personal and social power, and therefore personal and social responsibility, toward their audience. Where there is communication, there is audience, even if it is an audience of one!

The Five Core Concepts apply in both consumption and production of media; however, the Five Key Questions that stem from the Five Core Concepts are slightly altered because consumers have a different point of view from producers. This point of view affects the "voice" of the questions, from the passive voice for consumers to the active voice of producers.

The analysis process encouraged by the Five Key Questions and the Five Core Concepts informs the decision-making or actions that may be taken. This decision-making/action process is represented through CML's Empowerment Spiral. The Empowerment Spiral starts with:

- awareness of an issue or message,
- analysis through the Five Key Questions,
- reflection through processing our learning, and
- action -- whether we decide to take action or not.

Media literacy is about understanding ongoing relationships with media, about how audiences make meaning from a media product and about understanding the greater role of media in society. Though being media literate implies having a broader skill set than simply evaluating a media product, evaluating a media product always involves the skills of media literacy. It is for this reason that the ability to conduct a media analysis using a process called "Close Analysis" or "Deep Deconstruction" is a fundamental media literacy skill. Acquiring this skill demands practice from an early age and it highly complements study in language arts, so that both educators and students can easily and quickly analyze a media construction of any kind,

regardless of the content area being addressed. (Tools providing guidance on conducting this process are provided in the Tools Implementation section).

Criteria for Success

But the ability to conduct a Close Analysis is only the beginning when it comes to fostering a successful media literacy program, since media literacy calls for a fundamental realignment of the classroom setting, staff coordination and organization development, teaching strategies, professional development, curricula, and assessments.

A recent YouTube video called "A Portal to Media Literacy" (Wesch 2008), which has tallied more than 100,000 viewings since its release in early summer, 2008, clearly captures how media literacy changes the physical as well as the mental landscape of the classroom. The physical layout of classrooms typically feature student desks facing in one direction – toward the teacher and whiteboards or "Smartboards." The teacher is the focal point of the class; the most important communication is presumably a two-way exchange between the teacher and each student facing him/her.

But in teaching students a process of inquiry, and in utilizing today's powerful technology tools which allow for interaction and collaboration world-wide, the teacher is no longer the font of all wisdom, but instead, a guide who sets goals, parameters and assignments with state education standards in mind, helping students learn a process of inquiry that will often take them outside the classroom walls and into an engagement with their peers and others who can assist them. As the saying goes, the teacher is no longer the "sage on the stage, but a guide on the side" (King, 1994).

Not only does this approach allow students to sometimes become the "teacher" and to learn from each other – thus valuing the intellectual capacity and everyday contributions of children -- but it also encourages teachers to collaborate more and to reinforce the skills that all classes have in common, rather than just the content knowledge which distinguishes each class. By instilling a common methodology such as the Five Key Questions of media literacy for critical thinking and content analysis, students carry a research-based process of inquiry with them from grade to grade, from class to class, from subject to subject, from classroom to home, from school to work. This enables and deepens the development of a common vocabulary and a common understanding of both the media messages (the content and its forms) and the systems employed in global communications. It is these messages and systems that inform the every-day lives of students everywhere, regardless of country or location.

The new Common Core standards for language arts, devised through a committee comprised of National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in partnership with Achieve, ACT and the College Board, call for

schools to address the important topics of media and technology. This is a major step forward because without inclusion at the policy level in education standards, teachers cannot reasonably be expected to spend valuable time on teaching these skills. But these skills should no longer be seen as "add-ons," because they are central to teaching and learning in today's education system if schools are to engage students and remain relevant to students' lives, and to the world outside the classroom.

Programs throughout the World

Since this new way of teaching and learning is still in its infancy and not embedded in schools' administrative and curricular systems, there are a limited number of programs which have been both implemented and documented in the United States. As a discipline, media literacy has emerged at the grassroots and survived through the tenacious efforts of individual teachers who are often unsupported and isolated from their peers. University academics have also fostered media literacy through efforts such as Appalachian State University's program, which offers a masters degree in media literacy through its Masters of Arts in Educational Media program, Project LookSharp at Ithaca College, the Center for Excellence in Media Literacy at the University of Washington, Temple University's Media Education Lab, Project New Media Literacies (NML), a research initiative based within MIT's Comparative Media Studies program, the Friday Institute for Education Innovation and the University of Dayton's online certification program for media literacy. Some corporate projects include early efforts such as Channel One's media literacy program, as well as Discovery Education Inc.'s *Assignment Media Literacy* project (with the Maryland Dept. of Education), and Cable in the Classroom's ongoing media literacy efforts. In 2008, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) undertook a new initiative addressing advertising literacy, and in 2008, the U.S. Dept. of Education held its first formal information session on media literacy for its staff (Levin & Jolls, 2008). There are two U.S. membership organizations which address media literacy, the National Association of Media Literacy Education (NAMLE), which holds a national conference every two years, and the Action Coalition for Media Education (ACME).

This brief snapshot of U.S. media literacy work undoubtedly leaves out many initiatives and research efforts that have emerged in recent years, as media literacy is a "viral" phenomenon that represents a world-wide movement. Nascent nonprofit organizations devoted to media literacy are emerging in countries as diverse as South Korea, China, Peru, Brazil, India, Pakistan and Israel. The European Commission, in 2009, adopted guidelines for media literacy education in all European Union (EU) countries, and the United Kingdom (UK) has, through its Office of Communications (OfCom), a

staffed unit solely focused on media literacy. The UK has conducted surveys of the media literacy of its entire population (Office of Communications (2009)), and its efforts (which are part of the Digital Britain initiative) probably represent the most advanced governmental work in the field. In addition, countries such as Canada require media literacy for high school graduation, and the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf is currently conducting a research and development program for media literacy.

CML's landmark books outlining its framework and lesson plans, *Literacy for the 21st Century* and *Five Key Questions that Can Change the World* (respectively), have been translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish and Arabic, and CML has received inquiries from literally the world over, requesting information on resources, research and program implementation.

Its early work began in the early 1980s as a nonprofit publisher of Founder Elizabeth Thoman's *Media&Values Magazine* and Media Literacy Workshop Kits. CML began implementing school-based programs in the early 1990s upon Tessa Jolls' joining the organization as executive director. Because CML typically receives funding to conduct health-related programs, the implementations that CML has conducted address topics such as smoking cessation, nutrition, violence prevention, body image and gender. However, utilizing its core methodology of the Five Key Questions, CML has connected these topics to other disciplines such as language arts, social studies, math and science, meeting state education standards for these subjects while teaching media literacy and health-related content.

Project SMARTArt, a three-year federal demonstration grant sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Education and the National Endowment for the Arts, led CML, the Music Center Education Division, AnimAction, Inc. and Los Angeles Unified School District's Leo Politi Elementary School to a new understanding of media literacy and the implications for developing a full-scale program for implementing it. This work was complemented by a seven-year longitudinal study of CML's curriculum *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media*, originally developed in 1994 and subsequently revamped in 2007. The study was sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and conducted by Dr. Theresa Webb of UCLA's Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center, and involved more than 3,000 students within seven school districts in Southern California. It addressed the effectiveness of media literacy as a health intervention strategy as well as a methodology for students' acquisition of content knowledge; the study also examined the impact of professional development on program delivery and effectiveness. During the past two years, on a for-profit basis under the continuing leadership of Tessa Jolls, CML has helped implement school-wide, preK-12 programs in both U.S. and Peruvian schools, conducting professional development and utilizing the CML framework and teaching methodologies.

Promising Results

As the digital world attracts more and more children, to the tune of daily media exposure for youth aged 8-18 being 8:33 hours daily in 2005 (Roberts, Foehr & Rideout, 2005), the call for media literacy is growing as well, both at policy levels and in schools (David, 2009). A growing body of research on the efficacy of media literacy is emerging from projects world-wide, but still, research on teaching media literacy, especially digital media literacy, is in its infancy. And while research on the effectiveness of media literacy education as a strategy to promote health is also immature (Bergsma and Carney, 2008), there are inconsistencies about how media literacy core concepts and skills are addressed, making the task of comparing results between studies all the more challenging. This, coupled with the fact that it is difficult to have research that is current with the most recent innovations in media and technology, makes it hard to easily match research results with recommended teaching practice.

Nevertheless, CML and others have made important strides in gaining understanding in how media literacy can be taught, and what the benefits of such instruction are. For example:

- By the end of Project SMARTArt, teachers demonstrated that combining media literacy and the arts, while meeting CA State Education standards for Language Arts (LA) and English Language Development (ELD), is very possible and fairly easy, with the right training, practice and structure. This notion was validated when, *within a one-hour period*, teaching teams were able to create engaging, integrated activities for classroom use, while connecting the *Five Key Questions* of media literacy with state standards for ELD, LA, and Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA). These teaching teams were comprised of Project SMARTArt teachers and teaching artists, and divided into two groups (Grades K-2 teachers and Grades 3-5 teachers), so that the activities were relevant and could be used by the team participants.

  This type of flexibility in making curricular connections is essential, since every school district in every state uses different combinations of core curricular materials. CML's *Five Key Questions* of media literacy can apply to any curricular content, and the arts are used in every form of self-expression, in any project students create to demonstrate their mastery of core subject areas. Through state education standards and through an understanding of how to apply media literacy and the arts into core curricular areas, teachers now have powerful and more flexible ways of connecting their classrooms

to the real world, and to providing students with the critical thinking and media construction skills that they need to represent themselves effectively.

- In using CML's new 10-lesson curriculum, *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media*, results from UCLA's evaluation show that students can learn a basic method for critical thinking, using CML's *Five Key Questions* for deconstruction, *in less than eight hours of face-to-face instruction by teachers who have undergone a one-day professional development workshop*. Recent research (Annandale, 2009) also supports that in longitudinal studies, children who participated in a media literacy cognitive intervention on violence prevention indicated that these children experienced an immediate reduction in willingness to use aggression after exposure to violent media.

These findings are strong arguments for the practicality and effectiveness of offering media literacy instruction, since both teachers and students alike have demonstrated that they can quickly acquire the process skills and content knowledge that ultimately affect choices and behavior.

Criteria for Success

To provide a replicable program, specific, consistent and readily available tools are necessary. With these tools, no "cookbook" type of textbook is needed, because (over time) teachers internalize the methodology provided by the basic Five Core Concepts and Five Key Questions and other inquiry techniques through professional development and everyday practice. Teachers are able to make the linkages necessary to all curricular subject areas; their lesson plans are informed by this new understanding. This provides a creative way to meet standards while incorporating contemporary media content, and teaching information-processing skills. If teachers consistently provide opportunities for students to apply the *Five Key Questions* of media literacy, then students also internalize this methodology for thinking critically about media content (including the content in textbooks!).

As CML learned from the Project SMARTArt experience, it is just as important to understand how the project was approached as what the project's goals, structure and tools consisted of. Here are some important points:

- A clearly articulated philosophy for media literacy is essential, so that aims are clear. The CML Philosophy of Education (Center for Media Literacy, 2002) emphasizes empowerment rather than censorship or media bashing. It is important to ensure that administrators and teachers buy into a stated philosophy, so that a process of inquiry is encouraged rather than directive, opinionated engagements with media content. With an analytic method resting on inquiry, individuals are free to engage with media on their own terms, drawing their own conclusions and making their own choices. Without philosophical understanding and agreement, a program can easily be derailed due to ideological disagreements.
- In teaching content knowledge as well as process skills, the core elements of any discipline are represented in instruction, with connections made to media and media literacy. Before teachers can teach subjects like media literacy and the arts, or media literacy and social studies, they must first develop knowledge, understanding and skills. Professional development and consistent practice are necessary for teachers to be confident and successful.
- Students are encouraged to learn by doing, taking a constructivist approach. Learning to apply the *Five Key Questions* takes practice over time, much like learning to tie shoes. Through repetition and refinement, the process becomes automatic.
- Meeting state education standards is key, as well as connecting to a school's core curriculum, and to CML's *Five Key Questions* of media literacy. For example, Project SMARTArt concentrated on Visual and Performing Arts Standards (VAPA), Language Arts (LA) and English Language Development Standards (ELD), (California, Department of Education, 2001).
- In the national McRel K-12 Language Arts Standards, the four traditional strands are expanded from reading, writing, speaking and listening to also include viewing and media.
- In focusing on the deconstruction skills of media literacy, it is not necessary to rely on technology to be successful. Some classrooms are not well-equipped with computers or have little access to broadband internet access. Activities can be scaled in terms of technology.
- Student learning can be demonstrated through an ongoing production of artifacts to show learning; assessments can be made through the use of rubrics, portfolio analysis and other simple instruments like pre-post multiple choice tests.

In addition to instructional issues, how a new media literacy project is organized greatly impacts success. Each project is different, depending upon

the focus, scale and the scope of the project involved. But there are some criteria for successful implementation that are common to all, for example:

- *Voluntary Participation*. Teachers who want to contribute to the project make all the difference. Committed teachers, willing to experiment and to share their learning, are essential for success. In a school-wide program, it is key to provide training for new staff members and to make proficiency in teaching media literacy along with core subjects a requirement.
- *Professional Development*. At the onset of any project or any school year, teachers need time to learn and to practice media literacy concepts and skills. As online tools progress in providing professional development, the time and investment costs of teacher training will hopefully be reduced, while enhancing the quality of the experience.
- *Media Literacy Peer Coaching*. Since media literacy instruction often involves a new way to manage and conduct classes, it is helpful for teachers to have the opportunity for meetings with a media literacy teaching coach. In the case of Project SMARTArt, these sessions were sequentially designed to: a) answer questions and plan, b) observe the coach in a demonstration lesson, c) allow the coach to observe a lesson by the teacher, and d) critique and plan.
- *Content Expert Meetings*. In middle school and high school, teachers have responsibility for imparting knowledge in a particular discipline such as science or language arts, often with colleagues and/or departments devoted to a particular subject area. Having departmental meetings devoted to developing media literacy-related instruction, curriculum and assessment is an excellent way to foster continuing professional development and reflection on current classroom practice.
- *Culminating Projects*. Culminating projects provide teachers and students alike an opportunity to synthesize and share learning, as well as give students an opportunity to construct media or projects and showcase them for parents, peers or other online audiences. In Project SMARTArt, for example, students produced 30-second animation shorts as a culminating project, weaving elements of all four arts disciplines into the construction of a replicable media artifact.
- *Assessment Strategies*. Assessment strategies can include a wide array of tools designed to test students' content mastery and knowledge of media literacy. The key is to understand the different purposes of assessments, how they can be structured, and finally, what to do with the results. With new technology to support classroom assessment, hopefully this task will become easier for teachers and students alike. The interactive and collaborative nature of media

technology makes an ideal environment for student-involved assessment, which provides students with the opportunity to strengthen their skills in self-directed and team learning environments.

- *Parent Outreach*. Parent Outreach provides parents with the opportunity to learn about media literacy so that they can reinforce important lessons at home. Since parents were typically educated in a traditional school environment, they need exposure and understanding of the learning environment in which their students are active participants.
- *Annual Evaluation Meeting*. There is no substitute for staff reflection on results and experiences along the way. An evaluation meeting, held at least annually for administrators and staff, is a priceless commodity that can yield benefits for organization and instruction alike.

Although there are no formal "credentialing" or scaling systems in place for media literacy education, there are some fundamental tasks that teachers should be able to do to be proficient in delivering instruction, depending upon their instructional responsibilities (CML Tools are provided in the accompanying Tools section to help teachers perform these tasks):

- *Conduct a Close Analysis (Deep Deconstruction)* quickly and efficiently, gearing the Analysis to specific time parameters. In conducting such an exercise, teachers train the students and in turn, students carry this methodology with them to train their peers and others. Once this methodology takes hold, schools can build on a consistent vocabulary and systematic ways of deconstructing texts, regardless of the subject or type of media used.
- *Construct a short, engaging Activity* that demonstrates both deconstruction and construction (production), and provides a basic assessment tool for the Activity. Activities can take many forms, but a key goal of any activity is to have an "Aha!" moment that promotes student learning and engagement.
- *Design Lesson Plans and Curricula* addressing a specific subject area, featuring both deconstruction and construction, along with basic assessment tools. Lesson plans consist of a series of activities, and a series of lesson plans comprise a curricula. Because media literacy calls for applying concepts that are not necessarily sequential, there is a great deal of flexibility in designing lessons and curricula. However, each lesson should incorporate activities which represent the CML Empowerment Spiral: Awareness, Analysis, Reflection and Action. Furthermore, it is useful, in applying the Five Key Questions, to focus on one Key Question per lesson, unless the lesson is an introductory

lesson or culminating lesson, so that students learn to "see" the lesson content through the "lens" of a particular Key Question. Although a particular text may remain the same, the focus of the text analysis changes depending upon the Key Question being applied.

- *Integrate media literacy across the curriculum*, reinforcing the basic media literacy methodology throughout the various subject areas and assessing skills. For elementary school teachers, this skill is essential. For middle school and high school teachers, more staff coordination is necessary since they are typically focused more on their specific discipline rather than intertwining content knowledge with process skills across various disciplines. So long as the Five Core Concepts and Five Key Questions are represented in each subject area across the curricula, it's likely that a school curricular program will consciously build the process skills necessary to connect with content knowledge.

  However, although each Core Concept may be taught in each grade, it may be useful to emphasize certain Core Concepts at certain grade levels. For example, at Hathaway Brown School, a pre-K-12 school where CML helped implement a media literacy program in 2009, the Daycare-Pre-K teachers focused more on Key Questions for Young Children related to Core Concept # 1, to explore construction and "what is real." Grades 1-3 examined Key Question #2, to explore formats and techniques. Grades 4-6 focused on Key Question #3 to begin understanding audiences and differences. Grades 7-9 concentrated on Key Question #4, looking at what is included and what is omitted in content, lifestyles, values and points of view. Grades 10-12 looked at Key Question #5, examining media purpose and communications systems at work. As teachers and students become more knowledgeable about using the Key Questions, these "assignments" can be shifted around over time so that eventually, all the various grade levels have emphasized all of the Five Key Questions.

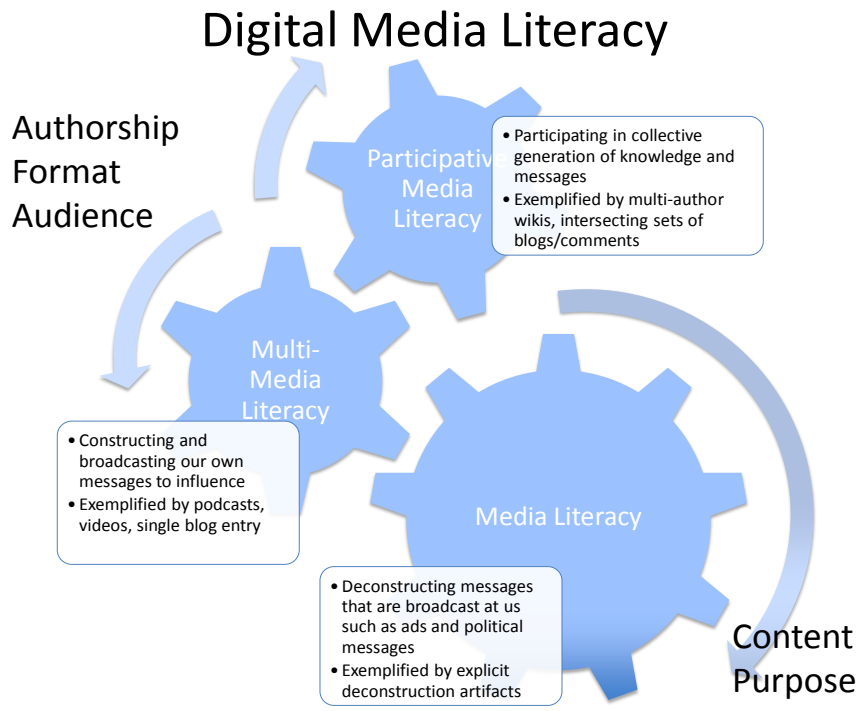
A Moving Target

Since media literacy has not been part of the overall education structure called for specifically in state education standards, the teaching of this new discipline has been haphazard. Technology innovation has compounded the difficulty of embedding media literacy in the education structure, since the slow pace of change in education has not kept up with available technology, and technology continues to drive new understandings of media literacy. There is continuing debate over whether media literacy should be taught as a separate discipline, so that it does not get lost in the

time pressures of a typical class day, or whether the ideal of curricular integration should persistently be pursued. Until media literacy becomes more grounded, both approaches are needed.

The following chart, developed by the Digital Media Literacy Committee of the Council for Chief State School Officer's (CCSSO) EdSteps assessment project in 2009, illustrates how technology has driven new understandings of media literacy:

Table 4



- When "big media" represented the latest technology, media literacy focused mostly on deconstruction of messages, while construction projects tended to be limited to writing letters to congressmen or doing posters or other non-digital artifacts. On the chart, this "wheel" appears at the bottom and is labeled "Media Literacy."
- When technology progressed to being able to easily do desktop publishing and video editing etc. in creating multi-media digital assets, it became much easier in a classroom or after-school setting to focus on construction techniques, and in teaching students to deconstruct as they were also learning to construct their own media messages.
- Now, collaborative technology allows for new participation in creating media messages and also in contributing to understanding and knowledge-building. These new technologies allow for interactive, quick ways of constructing and representing new knowledge.

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- What makes media literacy different is the Five Core Concepts and Five Key Questions (rooted originally in Len Masterman's work (Masterman 1985) and carried through by the Center for Media Literacy and others). These Concepts address Authorship, Format, Audience, Content and Purpose. These keywords are reflected on the Digital Media Literacy Graphic chart, since they apply to all aspects of media literacy. These Concepts, which apply not only to media messages but also to the use of communications tools and systems, are timeless and have stood up throughout the digital communications revolution.

Ultimately, CCSSO determined that digital media literacy is not a tight fit for its EdSteps assessment methodology, which relies solely on assessing student-created artifacts. As technology evolves, so do opportunities for updating and deepening understanding of digital media literacy and assessment strategies.

A New Approach to Curriculum Construction

As new online and cellular technologies advance, the implications for the traditional textbook model of curricular instruction are profound. On June 19, 2009, Texas Governor Rick Perry signed HB 4294, ushering in a new era for how teachers and students access and utilize classroom resources. With more than 8,000 schools educating 4.6 million students, Texas has a major influence over the textbook market, but today, Texas only requires a single set of classroom textbooks that are adopted by the State Board of Education for each subject and grade level in the curriculum. The new law provides for a vetting and approval process that will result in a "Commissioner's List" of electronic textbooks and instructional materials that districts are allowed to purchase, and also gives districts latitude to use monies previously used to purchase textbooks for the purchase of equipment as well as educational resources (thejournal.com 2009).

This change, coupled with the technological ability to easily share, collaborate on and publish new instructional materials, marks the beginning of a revolution that will inevitably destroy the 50-year-old business model of "one textbook book for one student," and unleash a new era for the creation and distribution of intellectual property by America's school community.

Looking more closely at implications for curriculum, the following chart compares the "old" model with the emerging model for how curriculum is conceived and distributed:

Table 6 **Curriculum Characteristics**

Old" Model, Pre-Internet	Interactive, Collaborative Model
Closed classroom experience	Open to world, sharing with others
Teacher delivers	Teacher assigns task, sets parameters and guides toward results
Teacher-led focus	Student-led focus with peers
Uniquely authored	Collaboratively authored
Individual learning in class setting	Differentiated learning in collaborative setting
Information not timely	Information as of today
Linear, Sequential	Modular, Interchangeable
Directive	Explorative
Master content knowledge	Strengthen process skills to advance content knowledge
Focus on facts and content	Focus on facts, content and process
Student artifacts typically written or physically constructed	Student artifacts digitally created, project-based
Limited distribution of learning	Unlimited distribution of learning globally
Assessment by teacher	Assessment by teacher, student, experts, peers, parents and/or others
Assessment limited and untimely	Assessment/feedback 360 degrees and instant if desired
Forced adoption of materials Statewide	Customized resources meeting state standards/local needs
Often not research-based	Research-validated frameworks for inquiry and process
Access limited to print	Easily accessible
Distribution limited	Easily scalable through online distribution
Curricula a standardized cookbook	Curricula based on formulas with varying relevant content
Technology discouraged	Technology essential
Hands-on, deconstruction, limited construction	Hands-on, deconstruction, construction, interaction, collaboration
Oriented to understanding	Oriented to understanding and action
Intellectual property taken for granted	Intellectual property valued
Student work discarded	Student work archived digitally

Tessa Jolls 2009

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Examining this chart:

1. Students' exposure and interaction with the outside world was limited to field trips or to visitors, while today, technology allows access to experts as well as powerful images, words and sounds connecting students with limitless opportunities for exploring and communicating right in the classroom.
2. In the past, teachers were the "imparters of wisdom," while today, teachers guide students and set the limits and boundaries necessary for students to work together and to learn. This has deep implications for how curricula are constructed.
3. Teachers provided the "window on the world" for students, while today, students explore and discover and learn from their peers as well as the teacher.
4. Curricula from the past was typically uniquely authored by a teacher or author; today, teachers team together to collaboratively author curricula so that there is more continuity between classes.
5. The emphasis in the past was individual learning and mastery, with students following the teacher in lockstep to acquire concepts; today, students learn collaboratively and yet have more opportunities for differentiated instruction.
6. Since curricula took more time to research, publish and distribute in the past, information was often outdated before arriving at the classroom door; today, information is readily available and sharing is instantaneous.
7. Curricula published in textbooks was necessarily presented in a linear and sequential fashion; technology allows for curricula to be presented in modules that can be interchangeable and dynamic, much like object-oriented software.
8. Teachers provided instruction in a directive manner; exploration of a multitude of sources is now easily possible with an emphasis on evaluating the quality of sources.
9. Emphasis was on content "mastery," since memorizing basic concepts and facts was critical in an environment where information access was more limited. Now, strengthening skills to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate with information are critically important in a world where information is easily available. The range of competency in an individual's ability to demonstrate these process skills is variable.
10. The primary emphasis of instruction in the past was on facts and content; although facts and content are still highly important (since they represent a particular discipline or information needed for problem-solving), facts and content information are readily accessible.

Today, more time is spent on process skills that allow for the ready and effective acquisition and application of content knowledge to projects or problem-solving.

11. Limited access to technology meant reliance on traditional tools such as pens, paper, or printed materials. Today, technology allows for construction of sophisticated digital multi-media productions by students.
12. Demonstrations of student learning, such as student artifacts, were typically limited to viewing by the teacher or other students and occasionally, parents. Today, these demonstrations of learning can be distributed easily world-wide.
13. Due primarily to time limits, assessment was limited to the teacher's feedback on students' performance. Today feedback can be quickly obtained from many people, both within and outside the classroom.
14. Because teachers were assessing the work of many students, assessment was more limited and often took much time. Technology is continuing to expand assessment possibilities through software such as "reputation" rating or comments.
15. States "adopted" and required certain textbooks in each discipline for purchase by school districts. As states loosen regulation, schools will have the option to purchase customized resources so long as these resources meet state education standards.
16. Due to 1) the cumbersome and expensive processes needed to support research-based approaches, 2) the uniquely-authored curricula generally available, and 3) the difficulty in easily distributing this knowledge and information to teachers, research-based approaches tend to be hard to find. Using research-validated frameworks that allow for modular curricular construction by a variety of authors allows for a flexible research-validated approach while allowing for an infinite number of variations on how to engage students and promote understanding.
17. Access to knowledge was limited to face-to-face encounters or print publications; today, face-to-face encounters can connect a multitude of people from anywhere in the world, and information is accessible in multi-media formats that can be published globally.
18. Due to physical limits, distribution of knowledge was limited; today distribution is easily scaled to meet needs and demand.
19. With uniquely authored curricula, presented in a physical text in a linear fashion, curricula presented a standardized "cookbook" that teachers needed to follow day by day. Today, curricula based on research-validated frameworks can be presented in a non-linear, dynamic fashion through a multitude of channels, some involving the teacher, some not.

20. Technology is often discouraged in today's classrooms, with cell phones and laptops being banned. Such technology will be essential in the future, both as an instructional tool and for student engagement.
21. Because of limited access to technology tools and multi-media production, media literacy instruction has typically been limited to deconstruction activities with fewer opportunities for construction (with assignments such as "write a letter to your Congressman" or "write a reflection on the role of branding in your food choices.") Access to multi-media, interactive and collaborative tools allow for a full range of media literacy instruction.
22. Primarily because of the classroom isolation of teachers and students, instruction was typically oriented to promoting student understanding. With technology access to the world, instruction can be oriented to both understanding and to problem-solving and action.
23. Again, because students and teachers were isolated in their classrooms with few and limited opportunities to share their work, intellectual property and student work were taken for granted and not valued (typically being thrown out at the end of an assignment). The communications and storage capacities of technology allow for teacher, student and class work to be archived and in cases where the work actively contributes to problem-solving or societal issues, valued appropriately as intellectual property.

This "retooling" of curricula and instruction in the United States is just beginning, and of course, the barriers toward such change are high. Yet a 2008 survey of U.S. school district administrators sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation (Picciano and Seaman, 2008) reported that three quarters of responding school districts offer online or blended courses; 66% of school districts with students enrolled in such courses anticipated their online enrollments will grow, and the overall number of K-12 students engaged in online courses in 2007-2008 is estimated at 1,030,000, a 47% increase since 2005-2006. Students, parents and school administrators are undoubtedly responding to the changes demanded by rising and unsustainable costs, high turnover of personnel, increased demand for critical thinking and technology skills, and students accustomed to using technology from an early age. In the book *Disrupting Class* (Christiansen, Johnson and Horn 2008), which examines the role of technology and online curricula as disruptive forces in American education, the authors predict that by 2019, 50% of all high school courses will be delivered online. Like many other industries before it, education is now moving from paper-based, face-to-face classwork to technology-enabled curricula that is delivered better, faster and cheaper.

Professional Development

Before teachers can teach, they must first understand. Media literacy education is well-suited to providing the type of curricula and instruction described in Table 6; however, because this approach has been outside the education mainstream, there has been little systematic exploration of how to teach media literacy effectively either in graduate schools of education or in school districts. CML has conducted various professional development workshops for pre-K-12, and these workshops have ranged from one-hour introductory overviews of media literacy to five-day intensive trainings, followed by coaching and culminating projects. The variety in these workshops is dictated by the time, budget, availability and interest of administrators and teachers. Furthermore, the experience of teachers with media literacy-oriented curricula is as wide-spread as the workshop formats. Some teachers quickly acquire the skills to integrate their curricula with media literacy principles; others need at least one year to make such a transition. But regardless, teachers need time and practice to understand the Core Concepts and Key Questions of media literacy, how to apply them and how to teach them.

Indeed, CML's recent evaluation of the delivery of its curriculum, *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media*, (Webb & Martin, 2009) revealed the importance of teacher training. The acquisition of student content knowledge and changes in student attitudes and behaviors in the classes of teachers who were trained in a one-day professional development workshop substantially outshone their peers who delivered the same curricula without training, or who merely administered a pre-post test as a control group.

Teachers need training and they need educational resources to do the job, and the magnitude of this task cannot be overstated. *No one* presently teaching in U.S. schools grew up learning in this way, and unless professional development is scaled up and delivered in a way that is accessible for the many rather than the few, the likelihood of transforming teaching and learning is greatly diminished.

Hopefully, the same technologies that will transform classroom practice and curricula will also transform professional development. The efforts of professional associations such as the American Association of School Librarians also support the professional development of their members as well as fellow teachers, calling for all learners to use skills, resources and tools to:

- Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge.
- Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations and create new knowledge.
- Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society.
- Pursue personal and aesthetic growth. (AASL, 2007)

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And given the skills and interests of our youth, this new generation will contribute greatly to the pedagogy of tomorrow:

"The experience with communication technologies that teenagers today possess must be tapped by educators and connected to pedagogy and content…We are currently at a moment in time in which the current and next generation of educators each can make a genuine contribution by working together," advise a team of education experts affiliated with the New Literacies Collaborative at the Friday Institute for Innovation (Bull, Thompson, Searson, Garofalo, Park, Young and Lee, 2008).

Although teachers fill a unique role in the lives of their students, the challenge to teach children to contribute to global society through wise, effective, safe and responsible choices and use of communication systems and tools belongs to society as a whole. Teachers need support to be able to meet the needs of the students they face every day in the classroom.

Tools and Curricula

In working with teachers and students to implement media literacy programs both in the United States and abroad, CML has developed a host of approaches, systems and tools. Components of typical implementation programs include:

- Planning and structuring the program, identifying goals, themes, program elements, timelines, staffing and budget.
- Professional development.
- Curriculum development and delivery for students.
- Development of problem-solving and/or advocacy campaigns conducted by students, showcasing youth media production.
- Parent education and showcases of student work.
- Assessment and evaluation of curriculum and program effectiveness.

Programs address diverse topics and can span for days or years. As teachers and students deepen their work, the process of deconstruction and construction of texts becomes a self-perpetuating cycle, in which students learn to critique their own work and that of others.

The work of developing tools and measures for teachers to deliver media literacy in a systematic, modular, consistent and research-validated way is an enormous task, given the relatively young state of the field and the challenges of using technology and media texts in the classroom. To date, among the specific systems and tools that CML has developed during the past seven years are:

- *A Statement of Philosophy of Education* (CML, 2002). This statement emphasizes empowerment through education, not censorship, media bashing or blaming the media.

- *The CML MediaLit Kit* (CML, 2002-2009). This Kit contains all of the various tools, programs, and curricula that utilize CML's framework for media literacy education.
- *Basic Framework* (CML, 2002-2008). CML's Basic Framework for media literacy is explained in its book, *Literacy for the 21st Century*, 2nd Edition. The Basic Framework includes a Definition, Skills Identification, Five Core Concepts, Five Key Questions, Key Questions for Young Children, Expanded Questions, and the Empowerment Spiral. This second edition addresses both the deconstruction and construction of media.
- *Questions/TIPS (Q/TIPS)* (2007). Q/TIPS is a set of five validated Core Concepts, with questions for both deconstruction and construction of media. These questions are designed to ignite a process of inquiry, and to help students gain an automatic, internalized process for thinking critically about any media message, anywhere, anytime. Q/TIPS serves as a "metaframe" that provides an entry point into critical thinking about any subject, in any media channel – whether print, video or internet. In 20 minutes to an hour, teachers can easily develop activities and lessons that connect CML's metaframe to any curricular content. Because this metaframe is used consistently across all curricular areas, students master a process of inquiry that provides them with an automatic way to analyze any text, regardless of the classroom setting or the media they are using. All of CML's curricular work and professional development revolve around understanding and applying Q/TIPS (and expanded versions of Q/TIPS) to media texts in acquiring or communicating content knowledge.
- *Curricular System for Deconstruction* (2006-2009.) CML has designed a systematic way to construct curricula that focuses on the deconstruction of texts, utilizing the Five Key Questions as well as the Empowerment Spiral. CML has model assessments included. This curricular system has been evaluated through UCLA and is based on the Five Key Questions for Deconstruction, which are validated through the study. Many of the lessons and tools developed by CML for teaching deconstruction tend to require little technology, since deconstruction focuses on the analysis of media texts and schools who have little access to technology can still deliver deconstruction lessons. Examples of such lessons are contained in CML's book, *Five Key Questions that Can Change the World*, which features 25 lessons, with five lessons for each of the Five Key Questions (Center for Media Literacy, 2005).
- *Curricular System for Construction* (2002-2009). CML has also designed a systematic way to design curricula that focuses on the

construction of texts, utilizing the Five Key Questions as well as the Empowerment Spiral. As technology advances, student constructions become increasingly sophisticated and issues related to interaction and collaboration must also be addressed. Furthermore, this type of curricula lends itself well to problem-solving campaigns conducted by students, showcasing youth media production and advocacy skills. There are a host of assessments available to connect with student production work, as well as a construction assessment tool designed by CML.

- *Interactive, Collaborative Curricular System* (2009). The CML system is now being adapted to a system for developing and delivering interactive, collaborative curricula using a powerful new software platform. This type of curricula integrates construction and deconstruction as interactive and team processes.

With CML's approach, process skills are "constants" used in deconstructing and constructing communication, and content knowledge is variable, depending upon the subject area. Having this consistent process of inquiry enhances the ability to communicate and to share ideas through a common vocabulary that transcends subject areas as well as geographic boundaries. Thus, there are no "silos" with this method for teaching critical thinking because the process skills are cross-curricular and common to all. It is through this process of inquiry that students acquire and master content knowledge.

"Teach critical thinking!" is a directive that teachers frequently hear, but "How?" has long been the unanswered question. As Brad Koepenick, the 2006 California Charter School Teacher of the Year, said, "Administrators have asked me what my 'secret' is in successfully reaching and teaching my students. I tell them, it's using the CML MediaLit Kit." (Rubenstein, 2008).

CML invites you to explore all of the resources from the CML MediaLit Kit, addressing how to design modular curricula around media deconstruction, as a companion to this e-book.

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