MEDIA LITERACY

FOCUS: MEDIA LITERACY, BIASED REPORTING, DEBATE, CIVIC LITERACY
AGE: 18+
DURATION: 3 WEEKS
HOST CONTENT AREA: MASS COMMUNICATIONS, JOURNALISM
STANDARDS: MEDIA LITERACY

Understandings:

- “Media Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create and act using all forms of communication.” National Association of Media Literacy
- “Media literacy education empowers people to be critical thinkers and makers, effective communicators and active citizens” (NAMLE, n.d.; Mihailidis, 2018, pg., 154).

Related values/attitudes/issues: Agency, Caring, Persistence, Emancipation, Critical Consciousness

Key concepts (big idea): Democracy, Media Literacy, Civic Literacy, Society, Systems, Technology

Sources:

**Access / Resources:** What materials do we need to help us plan and teach this topic?

- Public Forum Debate Format, Video Access, Computer Access (Student Research), Timer

**Assessments routines and records:** What needs to be set up at the beginning of the unit to ensure:
- Systematic collection of assessment data
- Ongoing reflection and self-assessment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Data:</th>
<th>ML Survey (beginning of semester and another after the ML intervention)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progress Monitoring Data:</td>
<td>5 pieces of media analyzed through analyze/evaluate questions (Hobbs, 2010)</td>
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<td>Reflection Data:</td>
<td>Students will write a one-page reflection on why media literacy is important for a democratic society</td>
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**Analyze / Tuning in and preparing to find out:** What variety of activities will be used to:
- Engage all students in the topic?
- Access prior knowledge?
- Refine further planning?
- Lead into the ‘finding out’ experiences?

| For the next three weeks we are going to focus on media literacy and society – |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1: Media Literacy & Civic Media Literacy |
| Week 2: Media Literacy Skills & Research |
| Week 3: Debating Resolutions |

1. **Pre-Assessment (10 minutes)**
   - Disguised survey, at beginning of semester (before media literacy intervention)

**Week One**

2. **Intro (10 min)**

Write on the board.... *Politics* & *politics*

When we talk about politics with a big ‘P’ we are talking about political parties, campaigns and big ideas but we aren’t talking about the people.

When we say politics, with a little ‘p’ we are referring to the beliefs and attitudes enacted in our daily lives as citizens and people within our democracy. We are going to be political for the next three weeks and focus on social issues of our time and how to solve them.

- (Mirra, pg. 89, 2018)
3. **Media Literacy – (20 minutes)**
   - Brainstorm: What is media literacy? (5 min)
     (in pairs, on sticky notes and bring to main board)
   - Whole group discuss responses (5 min)
   - Watch “Media Literacy” (10 min)
     [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AD7N-1Mj-DU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AD7N-1Mj-DU)

   “Media Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create and act using all forms of communication.” National Association of Media Literacy

**Conversation Guiding Questions**
- How does the author of media influence it?
- How does the owner of media company influence what is reported on?
- How does media literacy make you a more informed citizen?
- How does media literacy benefit democracy?

4. **The Evolution of Literacy (10 minutes)**
   [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXf0F4GYzWQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXf0F4GYzWQ)
   - Penny Press - For the first-time information is accessible to everyone and the newspaper becomes a democratizing force
   - Yellow Journalism - Sensationalism over professionalism in journalistic ethics (staying away from the facts and leaning into drama and commentary)

**Conversation Guiding Questions**
- What happens when we rely on media?
- Should everyone have access to it?
- What happens if that access is exploited?

5. “**Median & the Mind**” (10 minutes)
   [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAdkzxB4WFo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAdkzxB4WFo)
   - Closure – Prior knowledge and the danger of misinformation
   - Two people watching same media, get different things from it
   - Media and familiar narratives

**Conversation Guiding Questions**
| How are humans vulnerable to misinformation?  
How are we biased?  
How do we confirm our own biases?  
How can our social medias influence our attitudes and behaviors?  
How can the algorithms influence our attitudes and behaviors? | 6. “The Dark(er) Side of Media” (10 min)  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rR7j11Wpj iw&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtM6jSpzb5gMN sx9kdmqBfmY&index=11  
- Advertisers, and PR people utilize campaigns to make people feel or act a certain way  
- Widespread coordination of people bent on shifting the media landscape through propaganda can take on evil features (supporting war, believing harmful stereotypes of others)  
- Government Propaganda Campaign  
- Disinformation Campaigns – Coordinated Campaigns |
|---|---|
| Create / Finding out:  
Experiences to assist students to gather new information about the topic. | Week 2 (Total Time 2 hr 20 min)  
1. Media Skills – Research & Analyzing Information (10 min)  
Each student will use their media literacy skills to analyze and evaluate 3 pieces of content from their news organization to prove unbiased reporting  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Be-A-sClMpg&index=12&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtM6jSpzb5gMNsx9kdmqBfmY |
## Essential Competencies of Digital and Media Literacy

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>ACCESS</strong> Finding and using media and technology tools skillfully and sharing appropriate and relevant information with others</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>ANALYZE &amp; EVALUATE</strong> Comprehending messages and using critical thinking to analyze message quality, veracity, credibility, and point of view, while considering potential effects or consequences of messages</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>CREATE</strong> Composing or generating content using creativity and confidence in self-expression, with awareness of purpose, audience, and composition techniques</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>REFLECT</strong> Applying social responsibility and ethical principles to one’s own identity and lived experience, communication behavior and conduct</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>ACT</strong> Working individually and collaboratively to share knowledge and solve problems in the family, the workplace and the community, and participating as a member of a community at local, regional, national and international levels</td>
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Fig. 1 - Renee Hobbs (2010)

2. **Teacher Lead Example** *(10 min)*

- **Access:** (Donald trump calling coal ‘clean’)
  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJiE9xg25Oo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJiE9xg25Oo)
Analyze:
1. Who created this message what is the purpose?
The white house
2. What techniques does it use to attract and hold attention?
Deceptive and misleading language
3. What lifestyles, values and points of view does it depict?
That creating cleaner ways to burn nonrenewable resources like coal is more important than focusing on renewable, clean energy.
4. How might different people interpret this message?
People without energy knowledge would hear this use of language and think cleaning coal is a great idea because it is ‘clean’ and ‘beautiful’
5. What is omitted or left out?
The fact that coal is a nonrenewable resource and cannot be replaced. The fact that even when chemically cleaned the coal still pollutes the environment. The fact that burning fossil fuels is the main cause of global warming and climate change. That natural disasters like wild fires and severe weather are directly related to the burning of fossil fuels.

Evaluate:
1. Relevance: Does the content serve the purpose?
It serves as persuasion for nonrenewable resource use.
2. Accuracy:
3. Bias:
   Donald shared one side of the clean coal issue and alluded to the idea that all coal is clean –
4. Reliability:
   Reliable for the coal industry, harmful to the environment and humanity

Create: Discuss the issue with my friends and family, or I could share it online.
Act: What is my responsibility to my community? How can I solve problems in the family, community, or work place? Am I a participating member of my family, community, or workplace?
Each student will research pieces of content from their news organization to prove they are unbiased when reporting. To determine how biased or unbiased content is, students will use Hobbs (2010), analysis and evaluation questions.

CNN vs. Democracy Now
FOX vs. The Progressive
MSNBC vs. Mother Jones

Individually you will analyze and evaluate each piece of content to prove your organization is unbiased in reporting.

Create a word document to save you content link as well as the answers to each of the analyze/evaluate questions

**Analyze**
- Who created this message what is the purpose?
- What techniques does it use to attract and hold attention?
- What lifestyles, values and points of view does it depict?
- How might different people interpret this message?
- What is omitted or left out?

**Evaluate**
- Relevance: What purpose does this content serve?
- Accuracy: Check the facts with other sources, list them here with
- Bias: Is the author biased? Or commenting opinions?
- Reliability: Who owns this corporation? Is it trustworthy?

4. **Debate Prep (10 min)**

Split students into 5 groups of 10 people and pass out a topic/resolution to each group – each group must then split into two groups of 5 –

Teams will be arguing why “their news network” does a better job in providing unbiased news.
Fig. 2 Public Forum Debate Format

Explain to students that debating is not insulting or bullying - When a clash of ideas does occur, it must be communicated in a manner that is respectful and backed with factual information.

The debate should include:
- Solid logic, lucid reasoning, and depth of analysis
- Utilize evidence without being driven by it
- Present a clash of ideas by countering/refuting arguments of the opposing team (rebuttal)
- Communicate ideas with clarity, organization, eloquence, and professional decorum

Explain to students that they should pick five pieces of media to analyze that can be used as evidence to support their resolution.

5. **Student Research** *(30 min + homework)*
| Reflecting / Sorting out: Activities to assist students to process and work with the information and ideas they have gathered about the topic (including exploring values). | **Week 3 – Public Forum Debate**  
Each group will debate the topic/resolution  
- After the debate each student should turn in their 5 pieces of content and analysis  
**Post-Assessment (15-20 minutes)** |
| --- | --- |
| **Making Conclusions:** Activities to ‘put it all together’, to demonstrate what they have learned and reflect on their learning  
**And**  
**Action:** Activities to link theory to practice. To empower students to act on what they have learned and make links to their daily lives. | **Reflections (Homework)**  
Students should write a one-page reflection on why media literacy is important for society |
| **Process areas used:**  
**Arts:** media, visual arts  
**Math:** measurement, chance and data, tools and procedures  
**English:** text, contextual understanding, linguistic features and structures, strategies  
**Technology:** information, systems |
| **Going further:** Activities to challenge and extend. (These may be in the |  |
| form of further shared experiences, individual or group projects, etc.) |   |