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Media Literacy

by Eva Efron

Our world is increasingly filled with powerful sounds, images, and words for a variety of forms of communication which are complex and multidimensional. These are meant to influence our understanding of the subject matter. The various formats include newspaper, television, computer games, and Internet messages.

Media Literacy is the tool to access, analyze, evaluate, and produce communication in a variety of formats, using critical thinking skills in order to be an effective communicator. It is needed in order to understand the various ways that words, images, and sounds influence how meanings are created and shared in our contemporary global society.

Media messages are the creator's representation of reality—designed with a specific goal or purpose in mind. Each form of media has unique languages, sounds, images, and text which will manipulate the message. The media-literate person recognizes these techniques, while using them to understand the message in an appropriate manner—for information, entertainment, and/or persuasion. It is essential to be able to analyze the message in order to determine the point of view embedded in the message—as well as the accuracy of the statements. In addition, the person must learn to use that message in both legal and ethical ways.

As an effective user, a media-literate person is able to create a media message by using the appropriate language and format to accomplish a specific goal. That person understands how media influences the way that meanings and perceptions of reality are created and shared.

In 1999, the state of Montana developed Standards for Media Literacy. Utilizing these standards, students are expected to know, understand, and perform in these four specific areas.



As the final goal, students are expected to demonstrate superior performance at the advanced level:

1. be thoroughly and independently able to evaluate and compare how different media messages are constructed,
2. be able to display originality and ease while creating, critically evaluating, and eagerly modifying the technical and aesthetic aspects of media messages for different audiences and purposes,
3. analyze and evaluate the appropriateness and influence of the media at a more complex level,
4. consistently be accountable in the ethical use of media, and thoroughly and thoughtfully evaluate media's content.

The Standards document is available at www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/standards/ContStds-Media%20Lit.pdf.

A media-literate person is actively inquiring and thinking critically about all messages received and created, and is continually thinking about how the message is constructed, the unique language used, the particular purpose, the embedded value, the perspective of the creator, and how the message influences attitudes, beliefs, values, behaviors, and the democratic process.

Data: What Does It All Mean?

In the last five years, testing has moved from fourth and eighth grades, to fully include grades three through eight as well as five Regents exams required for graduation. With this test data now available, are you taking full advantage of the information that is stored in the Instructional Data Warehouse (IDW)? Do you want to learn more about the IDW reports? If you are a member of the Instructional Data Warehouse service, **Fred Cohen (516-608-6640)** or **Rose Baum (516-608-6673)** will visit your district and review your district's assessments and Regents reports with the administrators.



During our visit, we will help your district's administrators to identify data trends and curriculum areas of strengths and weaknesses. Administrators will be shown how to analyze the data and drill down to underlying causes.

This service is FREE to members of the IDW. Questions? Please give us a call.

Test Scoring

Test Scoring has successfully piloted an online scoring program for the Social Studies 5 exam. Fourteen districts participated and scored their tests online, either in our Robert E. Lupinskie Center for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology, or in their own district locations. The pilot was being observed with a great deal of interest by SED and several RICS/Big 5 Centers across the state. SED has given us the "green light" to go forward with the same procedure for the 2010 administration of the ELA and Math tests. The project was led technically and logistically by Project



NASTECH News

New Hyde Park-Garden City Park UFSD hosted a site visit at the Hillside Grade School for interested districts to view their recently purchased A+ Mobile Science Lab. Coordinated by Director of Technology Judy LaRocca through the Nassau BOCES MicroComputer Support program, attendees heard firsthand from one of the district's science lab teachers, Lara Holzkamp, who instructs 33 classes in two buildings per week, grades one through six.

Mobile Science Labs are rugged rolling carts which are equipped with all the technology required to deliver hands-on, interactive science lessons including data sensors, eight HP iPAQ Pocket PCs, a digital projector, a portable document camera, an ultra-slim desktop PC, a Deskjet color inkjet printer, a Turning Point Classroom Response System, and a wireless network hub. Each of the district's four elementary school buildings has its own cart.

During the visit, Ms. Holzkamp demonstrated activities made possible with the cart, such as graphing results obtained using the various data probes (temperature, light, sound, humidity, pressure, motion, breathing, and heart rate), and raved about the impact that utilization of the Mobile Science Lab has had on her students. "It offers children an opportunity for hands-on learning and data gathering, and excites students about science and learning."

Manager, Rosemary Syren. We are extremely excited to see this project move forward. **For more information contact Rosemary Syren at rsyren@mail.nasbores.org.**

See all the latest Spring Professional Development offerings Nassau BOCES' CIT has to offer:
<http://nassauboces.org/cit/catalog/current/index.htm>

Media Literacy Videos from VITAL on Teachers' Domain

How do you help your students succeed in a media-filled world? Do they know how media is created? Can they analyze the messages that inform, entertain, and sell to us everyday? Have they created their own media messages? Click on this link to search for videos on Media Literacy. www.teachersdomain.org

Here are some samples:

Building Video Literacy: Video Logger

Help your students build video literacy with this interactive tutorial, developed in collaboration with EDC's Center for Children and Technology.



Surviving Winter

In this media-rich activity designed to enhance literacy skills, students learn about the various physical and behavioral adaptations that animals rely on to help them survive changing environmental conditions, such as the arrival of winter.

Upcoming Events

Lunch & Learn with Acuity

(Formative Assessment Solutions to Improve and Inform Student Learning)
When: February 5

Breakfast Briefing with BASCOM

(Internet Filters and Web 2.0 in K-12 Schools: Can't they just get along?)
When: February 8

Find detailed flyers here:

www.nassauboces.org/cit/it/mcs/TRS/trs_events.htm

Celebration of Teaching & Learning 2010

CELEBRATION OF
TEACHING &
LEARNING
2010

Come share your knowledge and be inspired at a premier professional development conference that brings more than 8,500 educators together. The Celebration of Teaching & Learning is a NYSED CoSer aidable professional development opportunity presented in partnership with BOCES of Eastern Suffolk, Western Suffolk, Nassau, Southern Westchester, Putnam/Northern Westchester and Rockland Counties. Presented by THIRTEEN and WLIW21.

When: March 5-6

Where: Hilton New York, New York City

More Information: <http://thirteencelebration.org>

To register: <http://tiny.cc/e80Ro>

Tech Toys

Picnik makes your photos fabulous with easy-to-use, yet powerful editing tools. Tweak to your heart's content, and then get creative with oodles of effects, fonts, shapes, and frames.

www.picnik.com/app#/home/welcome



Livescribe's Pulse Smartpen is a voice recorder that can take notes and then let you synchronize and upload them to a computer for later reference. Or maybe it's a note-taker that also records audio...Or a tablet PC without the tablet and PC parts...It depends on how you look at it.

www.livescribe.com

Roku's little video player is a fantastic way to get movies and TV shows off the Internet and onto a TV. It's cheap, inconspicuous, and ridiculously easy to set up and use. All you need is a Netflix subscription and a high speed Internet connection.

www.roku.com

Media Literacy Video from Discovery Education

We all need to be more media literate and to be able to read the messages that are presented to us via advertisements and the media. These clips discuss some of the images presented in the media, and how they can affect our thoughts and actions.

In **Lights, Camera, Language Arts!**, students take on the roles of professional adults in a television production class. Students increase their media literacy skills and learn to write and edit scripts, research their subjects, develop questions, improve their listening skills, and help each other by giving and taking constructive criticism.

Literacy and Science highlights the “journaling strategy.” This versatile strategy involves all four components of literacy: reading expository text, listening to teacher and peer explanations, communicating about the experience, and writing in various journal formats. Although demonstrated in a science classroom, the “journaling strategy” is applicable in any content area at any grade-level. www.discoveryeducation.com



Media Literacy Publications and Resources

The Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Media Literacy Education document is a code of best practices that helps educators using media literacy concepts and techniques to interpret the copyright doctrine of fair use. Fair use is the right to use copyrighted material without permission or payment under some circumstances—especially when the cultural or social benefits of the use are predominant. It is a general right that applies even in situations where the law provides no specific authorization for the use in question—as it does for certain narrowly defined classroom activities.

www.centerforsocialmedia.org/resources/publications/code_for_media_literacy_education

Digital Storytelling in the Classroom: New Media Pathways to Literacy, Learning, and Creativity author, Jason Ohler, is one of the nation’s premier digital storytellers and an incredibly popular presenter. By combining passion, humor, and intelligence with 25 years worth of experience, his presentations do more than simply inspire and engage, they demonstrate practical ideas for transforming your classroom.

www.jasonohler.com/storytelling/index.cfm

The Don't Buy It Web site encourages young people, especially those 9–11 years old, to think critically about media—television, radio, magazines, the Web, etc.

<http://pbskids.org/dontbuyit>

The Center for Media Literacy provides a wealth of resources to learn and practice new ways of helping kids interact with these powerful media influences in their lives.

www.medialit.org/focus/par_home.html

Media Smarts: Kids Learn How to Navigate the Multimedia World helps teachers discover the value of imparting media-literacy skills, from critical analysis of news programs, commercials, and films to basic design and video-production techniques.

www.edutopia.org/media-literacy-skills-video

For information on any of CIT’s programs, including back issues of CIT Response, up-to-date education news, NCLB, special reports, new services and more, visit the Curriculum, Instruction and Technology Web site at:

www.nassauboces.org/cit

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