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Media Literacy Strategies for Content Creators & Consumers

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www.BeMediaLiterate.com
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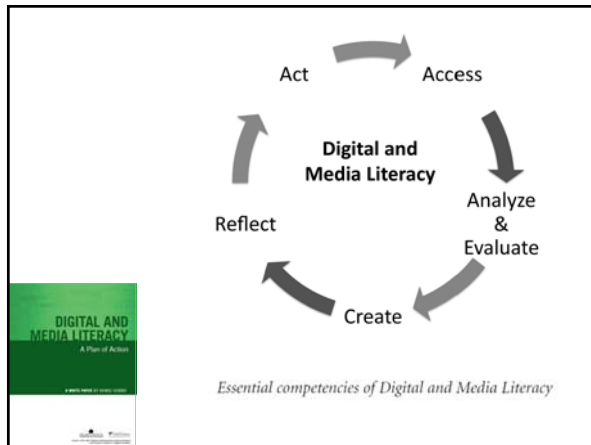### What is media literacy?

Media literacy expands the definition of print literacy – the ability to read and write – to include the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create communications in all forms using media and digital technology.

Media literacy individuals can reflect on media they consume and create and take action to share knowledge and solve problems.

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Act → Access

Digital and Media Literacy

Analyze & Evaluate

Reflect

Create

DIGITAL AND MEDIA LITERACY
A Plan of Action

Essential competencies of Digital and Media Literacy

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Media Literacy — Critical Thinking Competencies
Digital Literacy — for the 21st Century

Access:	Make responsible choices using media and technology tools and apply critical thinking skills to find and share appropriate, relevant and reliable information to guide your knowledge, beliefs and actions.
Analyze:	Know how to decode and make sense of information and examine the content to ascertain purpose, point of view, accuracy, and currency.
Evaluate:	Determine value and quality of the content for yourself and for others while considering potential effects of messages.
Create:	Produce your own messages with awareness of purpose, audience, creative techniques, and potential effects – web page, social network, video, images, blog, podcast, twitter, text, app, IM, e-mail, flyer, interview, press release, memo, proposal, report, etc.
Reflect:	Apply social responsibility and ethical principles to your identity and personal experience and to your communication behavior.
Act:	Take social action individually or collaboratively to share knowledge and solve problems and to participate in one's community locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Adapted from The Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program,
Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action, Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, November 2010

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DIGITAL and MEDIA LITERACY

Core Concepts

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**Media Literacy
5 Core Concepts**

- All media messages are constructed.
- Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.
- People experience the same media message differently.
- Media have embedded values and points of view.
- Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.

DIGITAL and MEDIA LITERACY

Key Questions

Media messages are constructed.

- **Who created this message?**
- Who wrote, edited, designed, produced, and distributed the message?
- How credible is the source? How do you know?
- When was it created, posted or shared? How do you know?
- Who is the target audience? How do you know?

Different people experience the same media message differently.

- **How might people understand this message differently?**
- What meaning might different people take away from the same message based on their individual skills, knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, and personal experiences?
  - *age, gender, sexual identity, education, income, race, ethnicity, religion, upbringing, politics, abilities or appearance, etc.*
- Who might benefit from this message? Who might be harmed?
- What does this message mean to you? How do you interpret it? How might it affect your knowledge, feelings, and actions or how you relate to other people?

Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.

- **What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?**
- Which medium, format, and techniques are used to create and distribute the message?
- Why are certain artistic, creative and/or technical features and formats used to communicate the message? What gets the audience's attention?
  - *headline size, photograph, color, font, layout, lighting, camera angle, sound effect, music, setting, subtitles, celebrity endorsement, digital retouching, animation, emoticom, acronym, clipart, chart, infographic, icon, logo, slang, slogan, selfie, "likes," hyperlinks, etc.*

Media have embedded values and points of view.

- **What values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in this message? What is omitted that might be important?**
- Is there implicit race or gender bias communicated in the message?
- How might the techniques or format used to create the message affect its representation of real life – whether it is fact, opinion, satire, dramatization or something else?

Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.

- **Why is this message being sent?**
- What is the purpose of the message – is it to inform, entertain, persuade and/or profit?
- To whom is our attention being sold? Who owns, profits from, and pays for the media message?
- How might the message serve a social, political, economic, historical or aesthetic function in society?
- How might it affect the democratic process?

5 Key Questions for Content Creators

- What is the purpose of the message?
- Which technology and creative techniques did I use to express myself?
- How might different people interpret my message?
- What does the message say about my values, beliefs, and behavior?
- How do the choices I make affect me?

What is the purpose of the message?

- Why did I create, post and/or send the message?
- Who did I want to reach?
- Do I expect a response?

Which technology and creative techniques did I use to express myself?

- **Why did I choose this form of communication** – text message, tweet, e-mail, IM, webcam, wiki, app, social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Google+, Snapchat, Youtube, LinkedIn, Reddit, Foursquare?
- What **creative techniques** or software did I use? If I use popular songs, video clips, clipart, logos, cartoons, artwork or other cultural artifacts, do I need copyright permission?
- What **terms or conditions** do I agree to when I use this technology tool?

How might different people interpret my message?

- Does the person or group who received my message understand it in the way I meant?
- Do I show respect for people's privacy? Do I hurt anyone's feelings?
- How might someone I did not intend to see this message interpret it – my parents and other family members, friends and classmates, teachers, coaches, school admissions, current or future employers, strangers, law enforcement?
- How do I feel about what other people think?

What does the message say about my values, beliefs and behavior?

- What type of person does it suggest I am? Is this what I intended?
- Does the message tell things about me that I should keep private?
- What did I include or leave out? Why? What didn't I say that I should have? Did I express implicit race or gender bias? What could I communicate differently?

How do the choices I make affect me, my reputation, and my privacy?

- What is my virtual identity? Is this how I want to represent myself online?
- What kind of attention might my message attract? Is it the kind of attention I want?
- How might what I share affect me, or my family and friends, now and in the future?
- How much control do I have over my online privacy? If I delete content, is it gone forever?
- Who owns what I create with a text, video or photo sharing platform? Who might profit from it? Did I break any laws creating, posting or sending content?