

## Get Media Literate

What You  
Need to  
Know

## 5 Questions to Ask about Media Messages\*

Key  
Questions

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented, or omitted from, this message?
4. Why is this message being sent?
5. How might different people understand this message?

Each question corresponds to a media core concept

\*Media Literacy Key Questions and Core Concepts (c) Center for Media Literacy www.medialit.org

## All media messages are constructed

Authorship

## Who created this message?

Who wrote, photographed, edited, designed, produced and distributed the message?

Who posted, commented or shared it?

Is it a friend or someone you know?

Is it a media company?

TV network or movie studio?

Magazine? Advertiser?

Podcaster? News outlet?

Game developer? Celebrity?

Social media influencer?

Celebrity you follow?

Or did you create it?

## Media are constructed using a creative language with its own rules

Content

## What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?

Were bodies *digitally altered*?Were *filters* used to enhance appearance?What *words* are used to describe appearance, food or fitness?

What images or words got your attention?

selfies or other photos, brand, celebrity endorsement, graphics, artwork, headlines, fonts, layout, colors, music, sound effects, lighting, animation, camera angles, voice-overs, slogans, icons, logos or something else?

## Media have embedded values and points of view

Format

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

What is the message about appearance, weight and food?

What body shapes and sizes should we aspire to achieve?

What eating and exercise behaviors are rewarded?

What does it suggest someone do to achieve that certain look?

Do people really look and act this way?

What's implied but not said or left out?

What might be important that is not included?

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

Purpose

## Why is this message being sent?

What is the purpose of the message –

Is it to inform? Entertain? Educate?

Persuade? Make money?

Or to be socially responsible?

Who is the target audience? How do you know?

Who is served by or benefits from the message –

The public? Private interests? Individuals? Institutions?

Who controls the creation and transmission of this message?

Who owns, profits from, and pays for the message? To whom is our attention being sold?

Different people experience the same media message differently Audience

*How might different people understand this message differently?*

How might it make someone feel about their body – a person who doesn't look like that or struggles with disordered eating?

If you post it, how might people you know interpret the message – friends, family, teachers, current or future employers, social media followers?

Who might be harmed by the message?

Who might benefit?

What might it mean to strangers and people with whom you did not intend to share it?

Ask yourself: *What does the message mean to you?* Your Take

How does the message make you feel about yourself?

Does it make you compare your body image with others?

Does it make you want to change something about your body?

Might you delete or digitally alter a photo of yourself that you think is unflattering?

How do people's appearance affect the way you relate to them?

What are your expectations about someone who looks a certain way? Do you treat them differently?

What can you do to promote healthy and more diverse body images in the media?

Talk Back to Media What You Need to Know

Advocate for positive body talk

You can make a difference!

Report body shaming

Shout out to celebrate natural looks, healthy body size, and diverse body shapes that support realistic body norms – Call out ones that don't!

Compliment authentic and diverse body messages

Criticize unrealistic body ideals

Don't buy brands that promote unrealistic body messages and let them know

Practice Media Self-Care What You Need to Know

Choose and use media mindfully Media Mindfulness

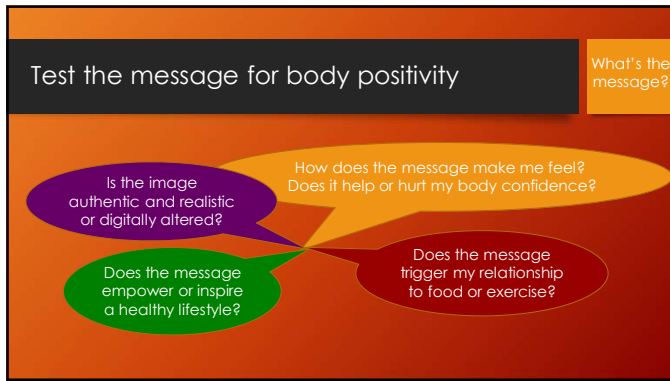
Be selective about your media use – where you go and who you know

Choose media that supports your values and builds self-esteem and body confidence

Balance media time with non-media activities

Take a digital detox every week!

Think critically about what you share – Protect your self-image Post uplifting quotes to inspire friends



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**social media**

**Get REAL! DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY TOOLKIT**

National Education Media Literacy Center (NEMLC)