

EXTENSION MEDIA LITERACY ACTIVITY: GRADE 7/8

Extension to use with the ETFO Body Image Curriculum

Extension to Grade 7/8 Lesson 5 – Media Literacy Understanding the Effects

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

Media Literacy

By the end of Grade 7and/or 8, students will:

- produce a variety of media texts of some technical complexity for specific purposes and audiences using appropriate forms, conventions and techniques (e.g. a website about the school for new students)
- identify what strategies they found most helpful in making sense of and creating media texts and explain how these and other strategies can help them improve as media viewers/listeners/producers

BODY IMAGE EXPECTATIONS

Student will:

- Critically examine and deconstruct media images and messages targeted at adolescent audiences affecting self-esteem and body image
- Construct a media text that promotes accurate representation of the population and peer group, and challenges typical stereotypes found in media aimed at adolescents

Materials

1. Access to computer lab and software programs or online tools that aid in development of websites
2. Paper, pencils, etc.

Lesson Outline

1. Upon completion of the activities included in Lesson 5- Media Literacy Understanding the Effects, introduce the students to the concept of The Three “R’s” of Responsible Media. Helping students to develop critical literacy skills that encourages them to identify and challenge stereotypes presented in the media as well as consider the messages they create/produce in their own media texts is an essential skill. Encourage the students to discuss the The Three “R’s” of Responsible Media—what do the terms mean? What is their understanding of each of the three “R’s”?

Reliable: Can the media text be relied upon for the information that it contains/conveys and the depictions it provides? Does it state or make obvious its intent, purpose and bias? Can it be trusted?

Respectful: Does the text treat its subject(s) and its readers/viewers/listeners/ handlers with fairness, decency and respect, even if it is critical or satirical?

Representative: Does the text offer an inclusive portrayal—or make clear that it doesn't and suggest or explain why it doesn't?

(adapted from Ian Esquivel's Media Literacy course, Toronto District School Board, 2009)

1. As a whole class, ask the students to reflect on the work they completed in Lesson 5, as they created their own advertisements. Discuss orally the types of stereotypes, biases, etc. they encountered when examining magazine ads and/or television commercials. What overt and/or implied messages did they receive from the various advertisements?
2. Encourage the students to extend their thinking to include websites. What types of images, texts, etc. are included on the websites that they frequently visit? Who is the intended audience for these websites? Do the websites meet the “three R’s” of responsible media?
3. Introduce the task of creating a website that would “advertise” their own school for prospective students who may be thinking of attending the school. As a whole class, brainstorm what types of information may be included on a website that would advertise a school (e.g. information about school hours, library privileges, student expectations, etc.). Ask the students to include information that would pertain specifically to adolescents (e.g. activities offered, clubs, dress code, etc.).
4. In groups of four, students work to create a basic website layout that advertises their school to new students. If access to a computer lab with website software is available, students create a basic website including text, graphics, photos, video, music, etc. Alternatively, students may create a layout for a website using paper and pencil materials. Students should be reminded to consider The Three “R’s” of Responsible Media- what content, images, ideas, etc. should be included on the website in order to accurately portray the school?
5. Each group creates a brief presentation to display their websites to the class.

Assessment

Websites may be evaluated using a self-reflection tool that incorporates The Three “R’s” of Responsible Media. Using the following criteria, create a checklist that could include student self-assessment, peer assessment, teacher assessment and/or administrator assessment for the websites.

- **Reliability:** Does the group’s website include reliable information about the school? Is the intent of the website clearly stated and is the purpose easily identifiable?
- **Respect:** Does the website treat the viewer with fairness, decency and respect? What are some examples? If not, how could the website’s content be adjusted?

- Representation: Does the website offer an inclusive portrayal of the population of the school? How is this achieved?
- Metacognition: What aspects of the planning process were most important to the success of your media text? What elements did you need to consider when planning the website- what information was most beneficial to the viewer? What challenges did you face when choosing information and images to include?

TAKING THE LESSON FURTHER

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Each group creates a brief presentation to “sell” the website to the school administration and invite administrators and/or other teaching staff (e.g. teacher-librarian, special education and/or ELL teachers) to a presentation. Encourage the adult audience to provide feedback to the students.