

Message, Audience, Production (MAP) Framework for Teaching Media Literacy Social Studies Integration

MESSAGE

Regardless of the media work you examine- a film, textbook or book, photograph or picture, newspaper article, news story, propaganda, advertisement, song or music- each carries a message and meaning. This message has an intended purpose and comes from a certain perspective, usually from the producer(s) of the media work.

Media Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate information in a variety of sources. In the context of social studies, this is imperative in analyzing history sources and understanding history. The MESSAGE component of the Media Triangle asks you to focus on perspective and analysis of media sources. Using the MESSAGE guiding questions below will provide you with tools and a framework on *how* to read representations of history.

Pre-viewing Questions

Answer the following questions before your students read the media message.

1. What type of medium is used for the message?
2. What kind of genre does the work fit?

Post-Viewing Questions

I. After reading the media text the first time and how the message is conveyed and answer the following questions:

Literal Phase

1. What is the specific message of the media you are examining? What is the broad message?
2. What is the purpose of the message (Is it to instruct, inform, sell, persuade, explain, argue or entertain)?
3. How do you know what the message and purpose is, that is, what elements contribute to the message (pay attention to the form of the medium such as the usage of color, sound, language or cropping- refer to the Media Triangle)?

II. Examine the text again paying attention to how the content is represented and answer the following questions:

Analytical Phase

1. How are people, places, events and cultures portrayed?
2. Are there people, places, events or cultures left out?
3. Are there generalizations or stereotypes present?
4. How are the values behind the message implied?
5. Whose interest benefits from this message? Whose is damaged?

III. After having examined the media message, ask students to draw their own conclusions using prior knowledge.

Summarizing Phase

1. What is the validity of the representation?
2. What evidence do you have to support your opinion of the piece?
3. Review the source of the media and check its background. When was it made and by whom? How does this inform our analysis of the media message?

Learning Extension

After having discussed the media and its message, ask students to draw their own conclusions using prior knowledge and examining other media sources of the *same* content.

Central Questions for Comparing Sources

1. What do the media works have in common?
2. How are the stories different?
3. What other information do you need to know to determine the validity of the representation?
4. If you could hear another character's story, which character would it be and why?
5. What other questions do you still have?
6. What does this tell us about history and its different media representations (film, text, etc.)?

Vocabulary

When encountering different sources of information, consider the following issues by asking the following questions:

- *Perspective* From whose point of view is the story told?
What is the author's opinion about the topic?
- *Stereotype* Are groups of people portrayed in an untruthful or general way?
- *Distortion/
Omission* Is there important information that is not included or adequately emphasized?
- *Ethnocentrism* Does the text contain biases towards a particular culture or set of values?
- *Racism* Does the text use language or reflects attitudes which perpetuate subordination based on race, ethnicity or nationality?
- *Sexism* Does the text use language or reflects attitudes which perpetuate Subordination based on sex or gender?