

# **HS Intro to Social & Online Media Lesson: Media Literacy Pt. 1**

**Learning Target: Understand the basics of media literacy and how it affects everyday life.**

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# Video Option For this Lesson

Link written out: <https://youtu.be/7wbW-oeWcU>

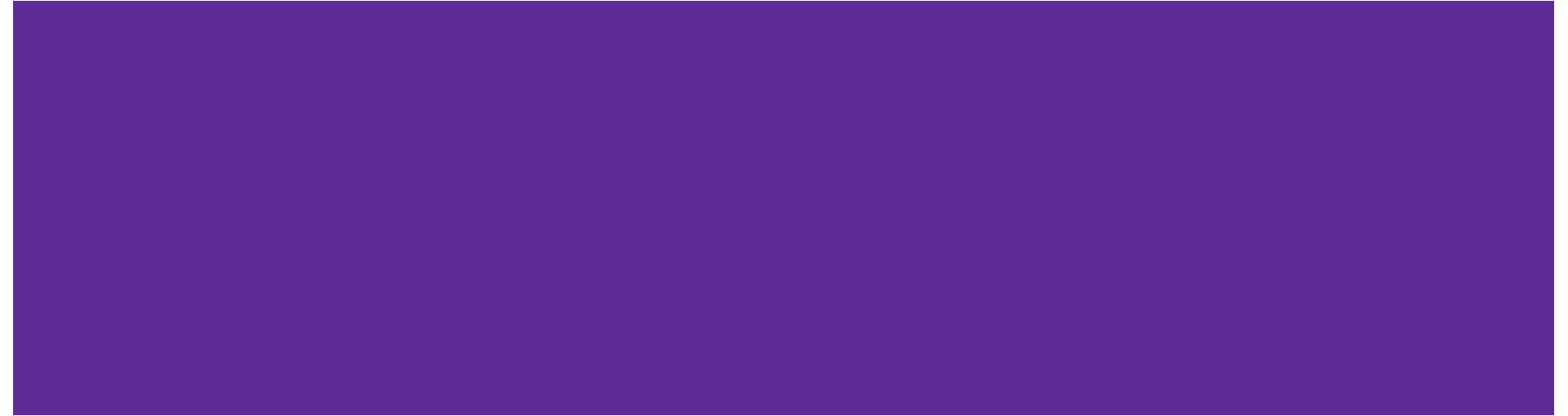
# Bell Ringer

Do you consider yourself to be “media literate”?

What does that term mean to you?

# Media Literacy

Understanding Media's Role in Society



# What is Media Literacy? Why is it important?

- In this generation and generations going forward media literacy might be the most important things you learn. Media exists everywhere, all the time. Music, television, video games, magazines, newspapers, websites are all forms of media and all of them can strongly influence our perception of the world.
- Media Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and produce media. It is the core concept that this class teaches.
- The importance of media literacy is that we now live in a media driven society. Our current President uses media to guide policy decisions. Social media has created a digital self as important as the physical self. As a society we consume media at a higher rate, almost triple the rate than at any other point in our history. Many of the future jobs will require a basic level of media literacy.

**Media are constructions**



# Media are constructions

- All media is created by an individual or individuals. They choose what to include and what to leave out. They decide how they will present it. Their decisions and choices on this level are generally influenced by other media they have experienced within their life. Those experiences help shape and form their ultimate decisions. This means that a media product will not ever be 100% accurate. Even if they strive for complete accuracy decisions still have to be made and will have been influenced by prior experience.
- This is at odds with the way we traditionally view media. Our mind wants to believe it is real, and our first instinct is to think that media is accurate.

# Always ask yourself these questions

- Who created this media product?
- What is its purpose?
- What assumptions or beliefs do its creators have that are reflected in the content?

You should apply these questions to all media you consume to gain a better understanding of the content itself. It is fine to actively consume biased and inaccurate accounts as long as you understand them for what they are.



**Audiences negotiate meaning**



# Audiences negotiate meaning

- The creator of the media will always have an intended message or meaning. However, the audience plays a role in the meaning as well. It is the audience's interpretation that is often times the most important. This allows for the fact that different audiences will pull different meanings from the same product.
- To understand meaning and interpretation look at the many factors that go into it such as age, gender, race, and social status. All of these things help mold and shape our experience and outlook at the world which will obviously lead to us experiencing things in a different way.

# Questions to help establish meaning

- How might different people see this media product differently?
- How does this make you feel, based on how similar or different you are from the people portrayed in the media product?

These are good questions to ask yourself when you consume media. They are even better questions to ask yourself when you create media. When you are posting on social media it's good to think about these things. It will often help you decide how to word or present your message.

**Media have commercial implications**



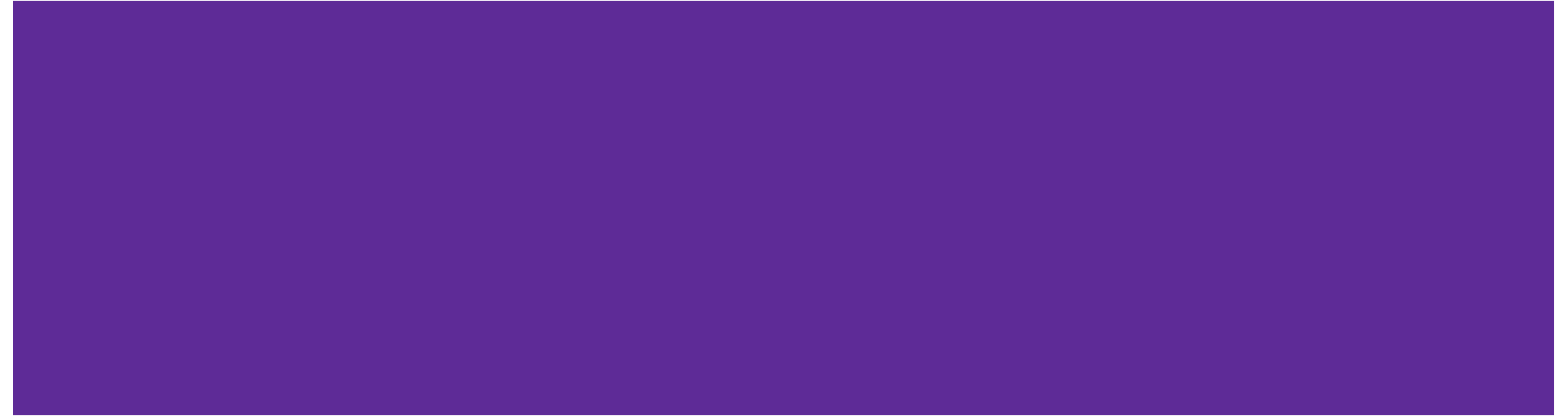
# Media have commercial implications

- Generally all media exists at the base level to generate a profit.
- Media industries often belong to a powerful network of corporations who will exert their own influence on content and distribution.
- Ownership & control are central topics. A relatively small number of individuals ultimately control what we see, watch, and hear.
- Even in cases where profit is not the central motivation (Youtube video or facebook posts)...the way the content is distributed is almost always distributed with profit in mind.

# Questions to ask about commercial influence

- What is the commercial purpose of this product? (in other words how will it help someone make money?)
- How does this influence the content and how it's communicated?
- If no commercial purpose can be found, what other purpose might the media product have (for instance, to get attention for its creator or convince audiences of a particular points of view)?
- How do those purposes influence the content and how it's communicated?

# **Social and Political implications**



# Social and Political Implications

- Media convey ideological messages about values, power, and authority. Thinking about who or what is absent is almost always as important as who or what is present. Sometimes these messages are conscious but just as often they are unconscious biases which can have significant impact on what we think or believe.
- This means media can greatly influence politics and social change. TV news coverage and advertising can greatly influence the election of a leader based on image, representations of world issues, both in journalism and fiction, amount of attention received. Society's views towards certain groups can be influenced by how and how often they appear in media.



# Questions to ask

- Who or what is shown in a positive light? In a negative light?
- Why might these people and things be shown this way?
- Who and what is not shown at all?
- What conclusions might audiences draw based on these facts?

**Each medium is different**



# Aesthetic differences in mediums

- The content of the media depends in part on the nature of the medium. This includes technical, commercial, and storytelling demands of each medium. For example: the interactive nature of video games leads to different forms of storytelling and different demands on media creators than you might see in film or television.

# Questions to ask

- What techniques does the media product use to get your attention and to communicate its message?
- In what ways are the images in the media product manipulated through various techniques (lighting, camera angle, photo manipulation, etc.)
- What are the expectations of the genre?

**Real example of  
media literacy's  
importance**

# Read this story

**Written out link:**

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/01/julie-irwin-zimmerman-i-failed-covington-catholic-test/580897/>

## **How do we use media literacy to draw conclusions about this situation?**

- When the first video starts the social media outrage what should have been our first thoughts?
- After hearing that the students were taunted first do you believe that completely excuses their actions?
- Now as both sides are starting to entrench themselves on either side of this issue do you think it's probably more complex than simply this was wrong or this is right?

# Assignment

- Find at least three social media posts about the Covington Catholic school incident. Then decide what that poster's motivations are and what you think may be influencing their thoughts and ideas.