

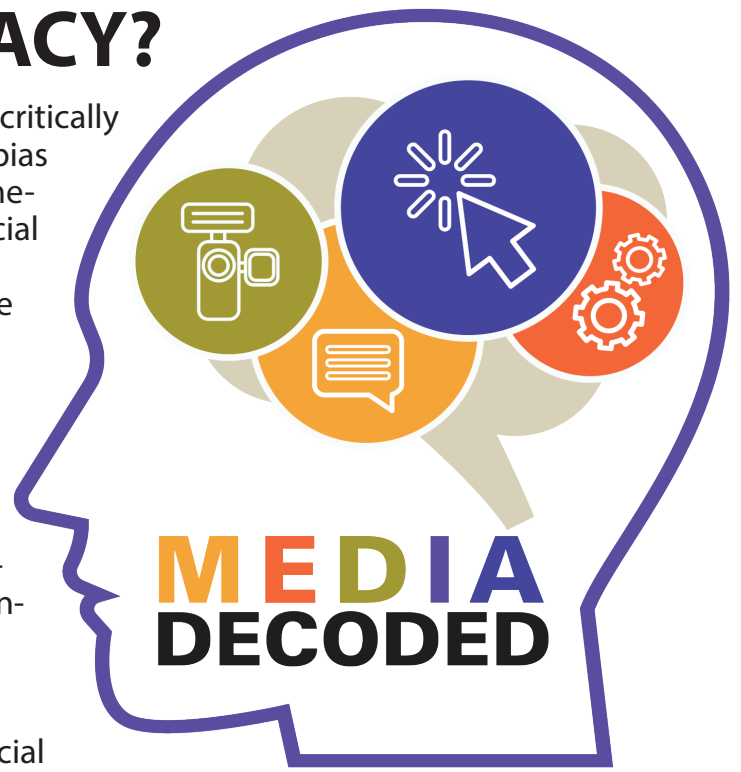
WHAT IS MEDIA LITERACY?

Media literacy is defined as "the ability or skills to critically analyze for accuracy, credibility, or evidence of bias the content created and consumed in various media, including radio and television, the Internet, and social media," according to the *Dictionary.com*.

Understanding media literacy also means ensuring we use a mental toolkit to question what we see or read. When consuming media you must recognize and fact-check to ensure a credible and unbiased news source. Developing these skills can aid you in understanding an author's intent, especially when the concept is hypothetical.

Media literacy can help distinguish between misinformation, propaganda, or fake news that a person encounters. A person could interpret the reliability of different sources, which can help make important decisions and participate in the election season.

In particular, being media literate helps when your social media algorithm serves you advertisements and articles based only on your political beliefs, creating a never-ending echo chamber, and preventing people from being informed about issues from all sides.



EXAMINE

INVESTIGATE MESSAGE TOTALITY

What are your perceptions?

- We depend on technology and the internet for information. We're so curious, we welcome the unknown. Start with examining the "about" page to find more information about a source.
- Along with being open, we must be cautious when consuming media. Don't trust everything you see. If it seems too good to be true, it likely is.

Who is your target audience?

- Know who the content is trying to reach to understand the messaging.
- Content changes based on who is targeted, consider who you are tailoring to, but also who is left out.
- Ask yourself what other media consumers would think of the messaging, or how they would interpret it.

What could others with differing views think?

- Fair content engages all sides of the conversation.
- Unbiased content generally reaches a wider audience.
- Diverse media consumers, means diverse perspectives. Welcome different viewpoints, but approach all media with skepticism.

QUESTION

ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Who created the media?

- Check your sources! Check who created the content, and examine what kind of audience they're trying to reach.
- If you question the content, fact-check it. If a story has a suspect headline, do a wider Google search to see what else is being reported on the topic.
- Develop a list of reliable sources based on your investigation.

ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS (cont.)

How is medium impacting the message?

- The message can transition through different channels: social media, blogs, radio stations, biased/unbiased news outlets, etc. The channel and format influences the message(s).
- Research that channel and see if the messages are always given the same context. Dissect the messenger.

What context does the message exist in?

- Back to the medium, the channels, checking out their deliverance and who they are reaching.
- The medium shapes the message on how it's supposed to be perceived.
- For example: the messages are supposed to get a rise out of you, some way, somehow.

INTERPRET

PROCESS THE MESSAGE

Who gains from this message?

- As media consumers, the message has to be delivered as news. What we mean by 'gain' is knowledge. The message has to provide awareness or be informative to the public.

Whose narrative is this message telling?

- Sometimes sources provide biased or unbiased information, especially with click bait titles. We use technology regularly with social media and the Internet when we come across a tragedy or unfortunate event, we see it everywhere. Even when we talk to our friends, family, and/or co-workers, everyone's having the same conversation. If it's your first time seeing something "breaking," it's most likely click bait.

Are we missing something?

- If the message doesn't give enough context or facts, understand there's a reason. By providing a lack of information, it leaves you questioning. If something is missing, you have to fact-check the sources, it's important. Confusion is contagious when spreading misinformation.

EXPLAIN

OFFER SYNOPSIS + CONTEXTUALIZE

What is the point of the message?

- The message has to educate, inform, and give context. Always think about the point of the message before consuming it. Same thing with sending your message as well, your points have to give context.

Why was the message necessary?

- If the message you're consuming feels important to you, that's why it's necessary. Everyone has their own opinions in terms of media consumption. But if the message resonates with you and provides accurate information, then that's why it's necessary.

What can be learned from this process related to the message?

- Finding, evaluating, communicating, and understanding the message is critical. Media literacy is a developed skill. Learning and becoming a critical thinker in media will guide you through the content, messaging, deep-fakes, click bait, biased/unbiased information, scams, social media, and news media outlets with a keen eye.