



LESSON PLANS

An online creative play experience

Edit your own TV show
Create your own pop star
Turn into a celebrity and see how it feels

Strengthen critical thinking skills about
the media and popular culture
...and much more!

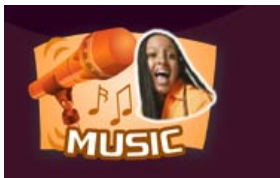
MyPopStudio.com

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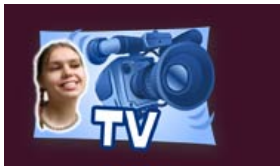
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WHAT IS MY POP STUDIO?

My Pop Studio is a creative play experience that strengthens critical thinking skills about television, music, magazines and online media directed at girls. Users select from four behind-the-scenes opportunities to learn more about mass media:

- In the **Magazine Studio**, users compose a magazine layout featuring themselves as celebrities. They choose sources to quote in an article. They also explore the power of digital retouching and reflect on the role of body image in today's culture.
- In the **TV Studio**, users edit a TV show where the story keeps changing but the images remain the same. They examine their TV viewing choices, comment on teen celebrities, and compare their daily screen time with others.
- In the **Music Studio**, users create a pop star and compose her image and song. They explore the power of music in selling a product and search for truth in media gossip. They comment on the values messages in popular music.
- In the **Digital Studio**, users test their multi-tasking abilities. They share their experiences with the challenges of digital life online. They consider the "what if's" of social networking sites and reflect on the power of media and technology in their social relationships.

My Pop Studio strengthens media literacy skills, promotes positive youth development, and increases awareness of the role of media in health promotion. Highly interactive creative play activities guide users through the process of deconstructing, analyzing and creating media. Video segments, flash animation, media deconstruction games and quizzes, and moderated blogs make the website lively, fun and educational.

THIS CURRICULUM GUIDE

The structured activities in this booklet promote reflection and dialogue designed to strengthen young people's media literacy skills. By using these activities, educators (in school and after-school settings) can help transform the playful game of My Pop Studio into a rich learning experience.

Educators in Reading/Language Arts, Communication and Technology will find these activities a valuable addition to their programs. My Pop Studio lesson plans are ideal for use with children and young people in an after-school technology center.

After reviewing the lessons, select the ones that you'd like to use. Parents might want to work together with their children on these activities. Teachers might have students work individually, with a partner, or a small team.

Each activity is designed to provide an opportunity for discussion, so be sure to use the discussion questions shown below to promote reflection and critical thinking. You can strengthen critical thinking skills by encouraging students to explain their work, listening carefully, and asking "why?" questions.



WHY IS MEDIA LITERACY NECESSARY?



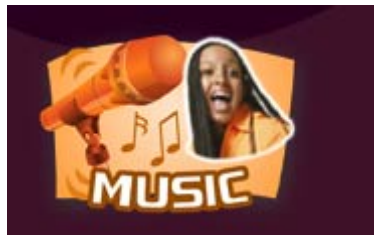
Entertainment media, popular culture, product placement, advertising, celebrity culture and online social interaction all have an influence on girls' social, mental, physical and emotional development. A recent study showed that 70% of people who work with children and youth (including educators and leaders of youth-oriented non-profits) believe that today's children are not well-equipped to deal with the current digital media and advertising environment. Few tools are available to address this need.

Children and young people are turning to the Internet for a wide range of entertainment and informational activities. Parents, teachers and peers are key agents of influence in shaping attitudes about nutrition, beauty and identity, social relationships, celebrity culture, health behaviors and the interpretation of media messages about these topics. Because many young people will play with My Pop Studio at home, parents have an opportunity to initiate dialogue about these issues by interacting with the program with their children. Educators can extend the online learning experience by using My Pop Studio lesson plans to jump-start active learning, writing, and discussion activities. These activities can strengthen critical thinking and communication skills while providing an opportunity to explore health issues like body image, nutrition and weight management, and positive youth development.

WHAT ARE THE LEARNING OUTCOMES?

The goal of My Pop Studio is to transform girls' experiences with the media messages they see on TV and in magazines, on the radio, and on the web, moving away from simple and passive scanning towards a more active, cognitive, reflective and critical response. Using My Pop Studio will:

- strengthen media literacy skills
- promote positive youth development, and
- increase awareness of media's role in health promotion.



	Primary Learning Outcome	Secondary Learning Outcomes
Music Studio	<p>Recognize that value messages are present in entertainment messages (through the lyrics, the music genre, and the performer's image).</p> <p>Appreciate that people interpret media messages based on their life experiences and social background.</p> <p>Understand that media messages help to create and maintain a wide range of different moods, feelings and emotional states for audience members.</p> <p>Learn that media producers make many different choices in constructing media messages, including musical elements of the song as well as musician's appearance.</p>	<p>Recognize that media messages may present ideas that glamorize substance abuse or depict altered mental states as desirable.</p> <p>Understand that lyrics express aspects of social and romantic relationships that can have positive or negative values, including gender stereotypes. Pop music employs stereotypes of women and men and people of different races in order to appeal to target audiences. These stereotypes may affect people's ideas about themselves and others.</p> <p>Recognize that pop musicians are "constructed" (through appearance, fashion, genre and lyrics) to represent a specific image and to appeal to a specific target audience. Celebrities display some traits and qualities (like vanity and self-centeredness) that are not really appealing in real life.</p> <p>Understand that "popularity" has economic value in the media marketplace because the music industry relies on direct sales from consumers. Music is often used to sell products by associating a product with a feeling.</p> <p>Increase a sense of competence by learning to use a simple music-making tool and realize that to do something well takes a lot of practice to develop skills.</p>



**TV
Studio**

Recognize that people make media messages with specific goals and objectives in mind. They construct messages according to various genre formats, which have their own "rules."

Understand that television shows are constructed through the editing process. The order and sequence of events can be manipulated. These decisions are made in order to tell a story with a specific purpose and point of view.

Learn how character stereotypes are created by selective emphasis and omission in the editing process.

Gain greater awareness of the amount of time they spend in front of screens (TV, movies, videogames & the Internet).

Recognize the power of making effective choices about consumption behavior.

Know that many young people use media messages to learn about how to behave in situations they have not yet experienced.

Recognize that media messages may depict social relationships in realistic and unrealistic ways.

Gain knowledge about less familiar media messages (including books, movies, videogames TV shows, and websites).

Increase a sense of competence by learning to use a simple video editing tool.



Magazine Studio

Recognize that digital image manipulation can be used to create impossible ideals and stereotypes that are unrealistic, unhealthy and undesirable in real life.

Learn that people shouldn't evaluate their own body shape or size by comparing it to what they see in women's magazines and on TV.

Appreciate that celebrities are "constructed" through selective emphasis and omission of information about them.

Understand the importance of assessing the credibility and authenticity of informational media.

Recognize how marketing techniques are embedded in magazine content in ways that mask the message's real purpose.

Appreciate that women's magazines appeal to the need for self-improvement but may also create unrealistic ideals that can warp self-esteem.

Recognize how celebrity culture emphasizes certain traits and qualities that are different from traits valued in the real world.

Gain skills of finding trustworthy information.



Digital Studio

Gain greater awareness of the amount of time they spend using multiple media and engaging in multiple tasks at the same time.

Learn that people's attention and focus are altered when they have to work on more than one thing at a time.

Recognize the power they have to make effective choices about their media consumption behavior when they are online.

Appreciate that online communication enables people to behave differently online than in real life. Anonymity and lack of non-verbal cues create disinhibition effects which lead people to sometimes behave in socially inappropriate ways.

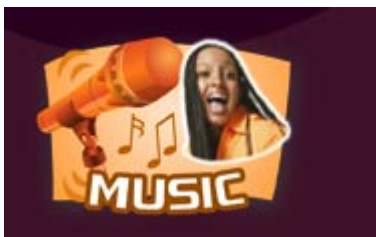
Recognize that people need to act responsibly in all aspects of their communication behavior.

Know that many young people use online chat or IM to learn about how to behave in situations they have not yet experienced in face-to-face situations.

Recognize that the Internet enables social relationships to develop through building a sense of community but that these relationships should not interfere with or displace real-world relationships with family, neighbors and school friends.

LESSON PLAN

Compose an Original Song



After playing Pop Star Producer, students write their own music lyrics, using the format of the game. Students write verses, a transition, and a chorus, counting out the number of syllables to fit the music. You might want to encourage students to write their lyrics so they rhyme. This activity strengthens language use, writing and creative imagination.

When students have created their lyrics, encourage them to go to Pop Star Producer and practice singing their own lyrics with the different types of characters created on the Song Charts.

Discuss: What was hard about writing lyrics? What was easy about it? Which parts were harder to compose, the verses, the transition or the chorus? Why?

Try This. Be sure to ask students to write down the value message of the song they create. Students might tear off the bottom of the page where the value message is written and share their lyrics with peers. Others can try to guess what the value message is.

Discuss: Do listeners identify the same value message that the writer intended to communicate? Why or why not?



NAME: _____

COMPOSE AN ORIGINAL SONG

After playing Pop Star Producer, get creative and compose your own lyrics for an original song. Use the format below and, when you're done, try singing your song while your pop star performs!

VERSE: The verse is usually the "story" of the song. Create two phrases or sentences. Each phrase or sentence needs to have 9 – 14 syllables. A syllable (a word or part of a word) is a short sound that can be said without interruption. For example, the word "original" has 4 syllables.

Verse 1:

Verse 2:

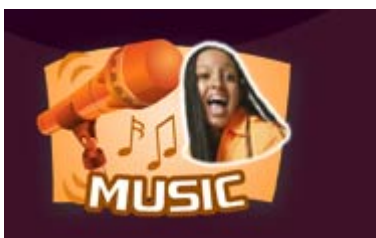
TRANSITION: This part of the song connects the verse to the chorus. Write two phrases, each 10 syllables long. You can use the back of this sheet if you need more space.

CHORUS: The chorus is the musical highlight of the song, with a catchy phrase or "hook" that gives the song its title. Most choruses use repetition, so don't be afraid to use the same phrase more than once in your chorus. Write four 8 – 10 syllable lines.

THE VALUE MESSAGE: All songs have a value message. What is your song really saying?

LESSON PLAN

Pop Star Producer



After playing Pop Star Producer, students create a list of all the work and choices involved in composing a song and performing it. After students make their lists, help them organize the ideas into categories. For example, some categories might include: image, lyrics, sound, technology, performance, audience, and purpose. This activity helps students reflect on the different kinds of choices involved in music composition and performance.

You might want to review the vocabulary used in the game:

Lyrics = all the words in a song

Verse = the words in a song that tell a story

Transition = words in between the verse and chorus

Chorus = the repeated phrase that is the highlight or central theme of the song

Hook = a catchy word, beat or melody in the chorus that attracts listeners

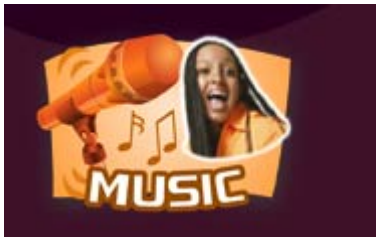
Try This. Students can also gain awareness of how online games (and videogames) are structured.

For example, when playing Pop Star Producer, students can only choose from a limited number of value messages, beats, instruments, and musical genres. Review students' lists and identify all the aspects of musical composition and performance that a real person would experience that were *not* depicted in the game. Looking at the students list, ask: Was that represented in the game or not?

Discuss: All games provide a limited number of choices as part of the play experience. What are some online games or videogames students have played that have limited choices? Why do games provide limited choices?

LESSON PLAN

Truth or Rumor – Scavenger Hunt



In the Truth and Rumor online activity, students learn about how music, marketing, and money intersect in the music business. Before students play the game, make copies and hand out the following “Scavenger Hunt” activity page. As students play Truth or Rumor, they should seek the answers to the “Scavenger Hunt.” Their answers should demonstrate an understanding of marketing and promotion in the music industry. Their answers

should also demonstrate an understanding of vocabulary words related to media, which pop up and can be “scrolled over” for the definition in some answers.

This activity supports online reading comprehension skills and provides an opportunity to discuss the intersection of music and money in popular music. In pairs or as a group, have students share their answers to the Scavenger Hunt. Then, consider the following questions to broaden the discussion:

Discuss: Is it important for people to know that popstars and musicians have a business interest in selling other things besides music? Why or why not?

Discuss: How might fans react when a star changes her name or look? Encourage students to imagine a wide range of potential fans and have them imagine their different responses. Are there other stars that changed their image after they became famous? If you became famous, would you change your image? Why or why not?

Discuss: What must musical artists do to “brand” themselves and make their name well-known to a wide variety of people? Encourage students to imagine how stars might promote themselves to different audiences.



NAME: _____

TRUTH OR RUMOR — SCAVENGER HUNT

Instructions: As you play Truth or Rumor, see if you can find all of the following things to complete your scavenger hunt! Good luck!

CAN YOU FIND...

1. An artist who sells *more* than just music?

Popstar: _____

What else she sells: _____

2. An artist who changed her *name* or her *look* to be more like a popstar?

Artist: _____

What she changed: _____

Why do you think she changed it? _____

3. A star who promotes herself in different ways? (Hint: Stars can promote themselves on TV shows, movies, or through products they sell).

Star: _____

Other promotions: _____

4. A word you don't know the meaning of? (find a word you can scroll over to find its meaning).

New word _____

What does the word mean (in your *own words*)! _____

5. An artist that has other talents besides being a popstar?

Artist: _____

Her other talents: _____

LESSON PLAN

Selling With a Song



After playing Selling with a Song, students watch TV and create a list of commercials that use popular music. The activity promotes dialogue about use of music to link products to specific emotional responses in viewers. It also improves students understanding of musical genres. Students can do this as “homework in front of the TV.”

Discuss: What is the most catchy song they remember being used in used in a commercial? What do they remember?

Students may or may not be able to use genre categories for popular music. You can support them by helping them use the appropriate labels for different types of music. Here are some examples:

- 1.1 Classical
- 1.2 Gospel
- 1.3 Jazz
- 1.4 Latin American
- 1.5 The Blues
- 1.6 Rhythm and blues
- 1.7 Rock
- 1.8 Pop
- 1.9 Country music
- 1.10 Electronic music
- 1.11 Melodic music
- 1.12 Ska, Reggae, Dub
- 1.13 Punk rock
- 1.14 Hip Hop / Rap
- 1.15 Heavy metal

Discuss: what other genre labels for music do students know?

Try This. Have students categorize the musical excerpts in Selling with a Song (there are 30 sound clips) into categories. This will help students connect the genre names with the specific sound of the different musical forms.

Try This. Encourage students to notice the differences in how music is used to identify the target audience for a product. Products for boys often use different types of music than product for girls, for instance. What patterns do students notice?

Discuss: Is it important for people to know that advertisers link their products with music to create strong feelings in viewers? Why or why not?



NAME: _____

SELLING WITH A SONG

While watching TV, keep track of all the commercials that use music. Write down the name of the product and then describe the music used. What patterns do you notice in your list?

NAME OF PRODUCT

THE MUSIC USED IN THE AD

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

LESSON PLAN

Female Stereotypes & Male Stereotypes



After playing Teen TV Producer, students identify examples of stock characters from TV and movies and discuss how stereotypes affect the process of storytelling. This activity promotes critical thinking about gender stereotyping in the mass media and provides an opportunity to explore the creative use of stock characters.

After creating lists of 10 female and male stock characters, you can encourage students to reflect on the process of creating the lists.

Discuss: Which stock characters were easy to find examples for? Which were hardest? Why?

Try this. Have students try to find examples of female TV and movie characters who fit the stock characters depicted on the male stereotypes list. For example, can they remember seeing a female “whiz kid” on TV? Then try to generate examples of male TV and movie characters from the stock characters depicted on the female stereotypes list. Have they encountered the character of the “dumb blonde” in a male character?

Discuss: What other stock characters are common for teen TV shows?

Try this. Have students make up a story involving these stock characters. You can invite them to use improvisational techniques to create a scene. Or you can have them write out the major plot conflicts in a graphic organizer.

Discuss: What kinds of stories can be told with these stock characters? What kinds of stories are hard to tell?



NAME: _____

FEMALE STEREOTYPES IN MOVIES AND TV SHOWS

TV comedies, dramas and reality shows all make use of stereotypes. **Stock characters** have existed since ancient storytellers first started using them in their stories. These stereotypical people are often used in the mass media because of they simplify the process of storytelling—everyone in the audience recognizes them instantly!

Work by yourself or with a small group to think up examples from TV and movies for the following stock character types.

STOCK CHARACTER

EXAMPLE

The **tomboy**: strong, smart, capable

The **dumb blonde**: beautiful but not bright

The **girl threesome**: they are always together

The **fool**: someone you laugh at

The **nurse**: takes care of others

For fun: make up a story that involves these stock characters. Be creative!

Then discuss: What kinds of adventures are possible with these characters? What kinds of stories are hard to tell using these stereotypes?



NAME: _____

MALE STEREOTYPES IN MOVIES AND TV SHOWS

TV comedies, dramas and reality shows all make use of stereotypes. **Stock characters** have existed since ancient storytellers first started using them in their stories. These stereotypical people are often used in the mass media because of they simplify the process of storytelling—everyone in the audience recognizes them instantly!

Work by yourself or with a small group to think up examples from TV and movies for the following stock character types.

STOCK CHARACTER	EXAMPLE
The school bully : mean, insecure and cruel	_____ _____ _____
The whiz kid : brainy sidekick to the hero	_____ _____ _____
The honest thief : only steals to live or to help	_____ _____ _____
The fool : someone you laugh at	_____ _____ _____
The womanizer : loves the ladies	_____ _____ _____

For fun: make up a story that involves these stock characters. Be creative!

Then discuss: What kinds of adventures are possible with these characters? What kinds of stories are hard to tell using these stereotypes?

LESSON PLAN

Facts about TV Viewing



After playing How Much Do You Love the Screen, have students read the facts about TV viewing (at the end of the game). Have them select the 3 most interesting facts and write a short essay describing their opinions, questions, and concerns about the facts they selected. This activity provides an opportunity for students to reflect more deeply on the impact of mass media on behavior and to develop their own ideas about the role of media in the socialization process.

Discuss:

- Why did you choose the facts you did?
- Which facts are most credible and believable? Why?
- Were there any facts that shocked you?
- Which facts do you have questions about?

Try This. Have students submit their essay to the local newspaper TV critic and invite him to quote from students' writing in an upcoming column.



NAME: _____

FACTS ABOUT TV VIEWING

After playing “How Much Do You Love the Screen?” scroll through the facts about TV viewing. In the space below, note the 3 most interesting facts you find, explain why they are interesting, and list questions you have about them. Then, on the following page write an essay about these three facts. For each fact, write a paragraph that includes your opinions, experiences, and concerns about each fact. What about each fact concerns you? How does it affect you, your friends, or your family?

THE 3 MOST INTERESTING FACTS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WHY THEY ARE INTERESTING:

MY QUESTIONS:

LESSON PLAN

Celebrity Research



After playing *Celebrity You*, students conduct research on an unfamiliar celebrity, using the Internet as an information source.

This activity helps students evaluate source credibility, reflect on how the Internet represents celebrities, and explore how fans (and critics) actively participate in celebrity culture using their own creativity and talents.

As students gather information, they distinguish between different types of Web sites:

- magazine sites
- TV sites
- official celebrity sites, and
- fan (or critic) sites.

After completing the research, discuss: which information source was most useful in your research and why? Which sources were most trustworthy and believable? Why?

Note: This activity may lead students to a wide variety of Internet content, some of which may be inappropriate for them. Younger students may need active guidance in completing this activity. This activity can provide a useful forum for a frank discussion between adults and children about the wide diversity of content available online. Under some circumstances, you may prefer to do this activity by modeling the choices yourself. Older students may enjoy the opportunity to complete this activity individually or with a partner.

Try This. Invite students to write about their experiences using the Internet to gather information about their celebrity. This activity helps them to reflect more deeply on the delights and challenges of using the Internet for research and on the role of celebrity culture in contemporary society.



NAME: _____

CELEBRITY RESEARCH

Pick a celebrity that you don't know very much about. Then gather information on the topics below about the celebrity using the Internet. For each question, check where you found the information.

CELEBRITY NAME: _____

1. What new activity have they been involved in?

_____ magazine web site _____ TV web site _____ official celebrity web site _____ fan (or critic) web site

2. What new present have they bought themselves lately?

_____ magazine web site _____ TV web site _____ official celebrity web site _____ fan (or critic) web site

3. Fans are still talking about the time when this celebrity...

_____ magazine web site _____ TV web site _____ official celebrity web site _____ fan (or critic) web site

4. What positive thing has this celebrity done to transform into a role model or hero?

_____ magazine web site _____ TV web site _____ official celebrity web site _____ fan (or critic) web site

5. Which information source was most useful in your research and why?

_____ magazine web site _____ TV web site _____ official celebrity web site _____ fan (or critic) web site

6. Use the back of this page to reflect on your experiences when using the Internet to gather information about your celebrity.

LESSON

Before and After



After playing Before and After, students look at the web site of a professional photo re-toucher and read and discuss a persuasive essay about the impact of digitally manipulated images on personal identity and cultural values. This activity strengthens reading comprehension, critical thinking, and writing skills.

After reviewing the vocabulary as a pre-reading activity, students read independently and complete the questions. Afterwards, they discuss the questions provided on the worksheet.

Before reading, students will benefit from studying the vocabulary words used in this article:

scantly	bare, usually referring to a small amount of clothing
repercussions	after-effects or consequences
adorn	to dress up or add something to make more attractive
positioning	to move into place
flattering	enhancing, improving (usually appearance)
discolorations	unattractive, off-color or poorly colored
fundamental	important
noteworthy	something worth paying attention to
provocative	sexually attractive
publicist	someone who helps get TV, magazine and newspaper attention for their client
warped	distorted
projection	an image

Discuss: Some students believe that the professional re-toucher will disagree with Hilary Rowland while others will think he agrees with her. Discuss the possible reasons behind these different opinions.

Try This. Have students create a photo collage using selected quotes from this article and images from fashion magazines. Through the juxtaposition of words and images, students can creatively subvert the meaning of these images to create a poster that promotes critical thinking about digital image manipulation.



NAME: _____

Before and After

Take a look at professional photo re-toucher Greg Apodaca's portfolio of work:

<http://homepage.mac.com/gapodaca/digital/blonde/blonde1.html>

Then read the excerpt below, taken from a persuasive article by Hilary Rowland from her online magazine. After reading, answer the questions below.

"As a child, I don't remember seeing **scantly** clad women on the covers of magazines as excessively as today. And I feel it's negative for young boys to grow up thinking that that's the standard of beauty. The long-term **repercussions** are not good at all."
- Nelly Furtado in Rolling Stone magazine

We all know that pop-stars, supermodels and actresses **adorn** magazine covers. They are revered for their 'natural' beauty--their look. What is not shown on these covers are the many hours of effort that go into achieving their flawlessness. In fact, their beauty isn't natural at all! It's manufactured by an army of makeup and lighting experts, stylists, photo editors, and often surgeons. Go behind the scenes and beauty amounts to highly controlled lighting, perfect **positioning**, stylists who find the perfectly flattering designer outfit and then stuff, tape and pin it, and make-up--lots of make-up.

Once the photos have been shot and developed, they are then digitally enhanced. Blemishes, scars, wrinkles, **discolorations** are all erased. It doesn't end there. It is also during this process that breasts are lifted and enlarged. Skin is enhanced with a glow, cheeks are blushed, stomach muscles are added and fat is cropped out--anything is possible. And this is the norm. This is done not only on *every* magazine cover, but every printed page, every billboard or advertisement, even every music video and movie star film close-up (yes, they do all this to film as well).

There is a **fundamental** issue that is steadily surfacing. Media has brainwashed society to value outward appearances over other qualities such as intelligence and personality. In fact, the individual's intelligence, character, moral worth--or lack thereof--plays not the slightest role in whether they should be (or are) made into a noteworthy icon. The media only considers the amount of skin one is willing to bare; and the more the better. To them, a person has no value unless she can be made to appear visually **provocative**.

It is through a person's outward appearance that people now judge her worth, attractiveness and potential. As long as you can smile at the cameras, are willing to show more skin than the next person, and fit the media's mold, no questions asked. In almost all cases, a person's achievements and intelligence are almost invisible to

the public eye. Being smart is never a requirement. If anything, too much brain can hinder a career--for fear of making everyone else in the industry look bad or speaking from the mind, or heart, rather than from a **publicist's** script. The values that *should* be used to measure an individual's distinction are instead cast aside. To be blunt, the media has formed an army of Stepford Wives, with hardly any room for the diversity that characterizes the real world.

We, the audience of mass media, are rapidly absorbing this **warped projection**--and its aggressive emphasis on appearance. The pressure to be thin, tanned and Barbie-esque is the message sent--and received. Loud and clear.

--by Hilary Rowland, Hilary Magazine
<http://hilary.com>

1. Why doesn't Hilary Rowland like photo retouching?

2. Persuasive writing is writing that tries to influence the reader to accept a particular point of view. Writers often use dramatic language, powerful phrases and attention-getting words to persuade. Write down three words or phrases that Hilary Rowland used in this article to stir up your emotions.

3. Greg Apodaca makes a living by manipulating photos. Would he agree or disagree with Hilary Rowland? Use your imagination and compose a brief email that Greg might write in responding to Hilary's persuasive essay.

LESSON PLAN

Are You a Multi-Tasker?



After playing Are You a Multi-Tasker, students create a list of the positive and negative aspects of multi-tasking. This activity provides a chance to reflect on the role of multi-tasking in everyday life.

After creating their lists, encourage students to consider how their ideas fit into categories. Have they considered the different aspects of multi-tasking at school, at home, for leisure, and work?

Try this. This activity is effective as a form of pre-writing. You can encourage students to compose a short essay on this topic and submit it as an opinion-editorial column to a local newspaper.



NAME: _____

ARE YOU A MULTI-TASKER?

Multi-tasking is the process of doing many things all at the same time. Working by yourself or with others, create a list of the pros and cons of multi-tasking. Think about things you have experienced in your life and what you have seen in the life of your family members. How many different positive and negative aspects of multi-tasking can you think of?

PROS

The positive aspects

CONS

The negative aspects

LESSON PLAN

Dear Diary



Dear Diary offers students an opportunity for students to reflect how much time they spend with media each day. In the game, students answer questions about their daily habits based on whether it is a School Day, Bad Weather Day, Sick Day, or Vacation day. They “write” their diary by making different choices from a list about what they would want to do on a particular day, from watching and reading media, to spending time with family and friends, or participating in other activities. At the end of the game, students are

provided a result that describes how “immersed” they are in media—from spending a little, some, or too much time with media.

After students play this activity, have them to keep a handwritten diary of their own life activities. Use the “My Life Diary” template on the following pages (this can also be downloaded from the Dear Diary game online). For three days, have students keep track of how they spend each day (including how much media they consume). Recording daily media use promotes awareness and reflection on the role of media consumption in everyday life.

After the three days, have students total up their hours for various activities and calculate averages—per day, and for the three total days. Ask students questions to reflect on the data they have collected, and generate ideas for possible changes they may wish to make in their media consumption behavior.

Discuss:

- What was difficult and what was easy about keeping track of your activities?
- How much of your day was spent in front of some type of (TV, videogame or computer) screen? How much of your day was spent with media?
- What are some of the health consequences of spending too much time in front of screens?

DAY 3: _____

*Write in the numbers by estimating the hours.
You can use percentages. For example: .25 = 15 minutes and .50 = 1/2 hour*

SLEEP

What time did you go to sleep last night? _____

What time did you wake up? _____

_____ total hours of sleep

SCHOOL

_____ number of hours

LIFE

_____ homework

_____ practicing/rehearsing or sports

_____ in an organized after-school activity program

_____ helping my family

_____ doing my own thing

_____ hanging out with friends

_____ using the computer or going online

_____ playing videogames

_____ watching TV

DESCRIBE YOUR DAY: List three adjectives about this day.



MY LIFE DIARY

MY NAME: _____

FOR _____

Dates _____

DAY 1: _____

*Write in the numbers by estimating the number of hours.
You can use percentages. For example: .25 = 15 minutes and .50 = 1/2 hour*

SLEEP

What time did you go to sleep last night? _____

What time did you wake up? _____

_____ total hours of sleep

SCHOOL

_____ number of hours

LIFE

_____ homework

_____ practicing/rehearsing or sports

_____ in an organized after-school activity program

_____ helping my family

_____ doing my own thing

_____ hanging out with friends

_____ using the computer or going online

_____ playing videogames

_____ watching TV

DESCRIBE YOUR DAY: List three adjectives about this day.

DAY 2: _____

*Write in the numbers by estimating the hours.
You can use percentages. For example: .25 = 15 minutes and .50 = 1/2 hour*

SLEEP

What time did you go to sleep last night? _____

What time did you wake up? _____

_____ total hours of sleep

SCHOOL

_____ number of hours

LIFE

_____ homework

_____ practicing/rehearsing or sports

_____ in an organized after-school activity program

_____ helping my family

_____ doing my own thing

_____ hanging out with friends

_____ using the computer or going online

_____ playing videogames

_____ watching TV

DESCRIBE YOUR DAY: List three adjectives about this day.

LESSON PLAN

Comic Maker: Extension Activities



Comic Maker allows students to explore potential problems of digital media in everyday life by making a short comic strip. Students can then submit their comic for approval to be posted on the site. Comic Maker can be extended in two ways: by encouraging students to **create** comics that reflect different dilemmas of media in everyday life, and by having students **comment** on other comics posted on the site.

Create!

Assign students to make a comic that has to do with one of the following scenarios about potential problems of media in everyday life. You might also have students brainstorm their own ideas about potential problems of media in everyday life and assign them to create comics based on their ideas.

- Have students ever argued with parents over using the TV or computer?
- Have students ever viewed a movie without telling their parents that they saw it?
- Have they ever been in a fight with a friend because of a misunderstanding regarding an instant message or text message?
- Did they ever pester family members to buy some new game, software or technology gadget?
- Did a picture on a cell phone get used the wrong way?
- Did they ever stumble across something really weird online?
- Have they ever had a conversation with a stranger that made them feel uncomfortable?

Comment!

Have students look through comics posted in the Comic Maker gallery. Ask students to find a compelling comic about how digital media can create sticky situations in real life. Then have students write a short essay describing the "story" of what is happening in the comic, explaining what they think the characters in the comic strip should do to help resolve the situation. Questions to consider for the essay:

- What was the "sticky situation" posed in the comic?
- How did people use media to create the "sticky situation"?
- What should the characters do about the situation?
- What advice would you give to the characters about how to use media?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Girls Health

<http://4Girls.gov>

This Web site to helps adolescent girls (ages 10-16) learn more about some of the unique health issues and social situations they will encounter during the teen years. Parents, educators and caregivers can learn more about these issues, too.

National Association for Media Literacy Education

<http://www.namele.net>

This organization is the national membership organization for media literacy. Members participate in a bi-annual conference to share their research and experiences helping people develop critical thinking and media production skills in responding to all forms of media and technology.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

My Pop Studio was created by a team of researchers and media professionals at the Media Education Lab, located at Temple University's School of Communication and Theater in the Department of Broadcast Telecommunication and Mass Media. Our mission is to expand and improve the practice of media literacy and to conduct research examining the relationship between media, technology, community and education in the lives of children and youth. For more information about us, please visit: www.mediaeducationlab.com

National Advisory Board

A group of national experts from the fields of adolescent development, women's studies, publishing, public health, new media studies and medicine contributed valuable advice and insight on the development of the site. Special thanks go to:

- Henry Jenkins, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
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- Nancy Gruver, New Moon Magazine
- Susannah Stern, University of California, San Diego
- Tanya Jackson, Philadelphia Communities in Schools

Regional Focus Groups

Teams of girls from different parts of the country gathered regularly to review the site and provide feedback during the development of the project. The diversity of the girls (ethnically, racially and socioeconomically) helped to assure that the site would speak to all girls. We are grateful to the 59 girls who participated in the formative evaluation process. Special thanks to our focus group moderators, including:

- Cyndy Scheibe, Project Look Sharp, Ithaca, NY
- Kim Baranowski, LeAp After School, New York, NY
- Stephanie Flores-Koulish, Loyola University, Baltimore, MD
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- Gwen Hoppe, Willard Alternative High School, Missoula, MT
- Terry Miller, Good Shepherd School, Beverly Hills, CA
- Sherri Hope Culver, Media Education Lab, Philadelphia PA

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Dr. Jonelle C. Rowe is the Senior Medical Advisor for Adolescent Women's Health with a special interest in the role of media and online technologies as tools to promote adolescent health. In addition to supporting My Pop Studio, Dr. Rowe has spearheaded the development of GirlsHealth.gov, an online effort to increase awareness about health, nutrition, and positive health behavior among young women in America today. For more information, visit: <http://www.girlshealth.gov>.

Production Credits

Executive Producer: Renee Hobbs

Producer: Sherri Hope Culver

Web Design: David T. Shaller, Educational Web Adventures



FEEDBACK

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