Philosophy

Now more than ever, it is vital that students develop an ability to analyze what they see and hear. Media is a central force in shaping both our culture, as well as, our democracy. Furthermore, the growth of media industries, commercial culture, and new technologies offers a challenge to us all. With the overwhelming abundance and proliferation of information sources the skills of media literacy are a necessary addition to our schools curriculum.

We believe that teaching students to critically examine the abundance of media models they encounter everyday will lead to a healthier cultural awareness based on a foundation of the respect for different perspectives. It is essential that we help students investigate media in a way that credits its content while at the same time acknowledging the motives of the source and the shaping of its medium. Our goal is to help students become not only more critical as consumers of mass media but also more engaged as citizens who accept responsibility for the shape and direction of media culture.

Goal

To research and evaluate the accuracy, relevance, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, and bias of electronic information sources concerning real-world problems.

(NETS Performance Indicator #10 for Technology Literate Students in grades 6 - 8)

Academic Content Standards

Reading Process: Concepts of Print, Comprehension Strategies, and Self-Monitoring Strategies   (4 - 7) and (8 - 10)

1) Determine a purpose for reading and use a range of reading comprehension strategies to better understand text.
2) Apply effective reading comprehension strategies, including summarizing and making predictions and comparisons, using information in text, between text and across subject areas.
3) Make meaning through asking and responding to a variety of questions related to text.
4) Apply self-monitoring strategies to clarify confusion about text and to monitor comprehension.
5) Demonstrate comprehension of print and electronic text by responding to questions (e.g., literal, inferential, evaluative and synthesizing).

**Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text
(4 -7) and (8 - 10)**

1) Use text features and graphics to organize, analyze and draw inferences from content and to gain additional information.
2) Recognize the difference between cause and effect and fact and opinion to analyze text.
3) Identify arguments and persuasive techniques used in informational text.
4) Analyze information found in maps, charts, tables, graphs, diagrams, cutaways and overlays.

Academic Content Standards

**Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text
(4 -7) and (8 - 10)**

5) Assess the adequacy, accuracy and appropriateness of an author's details, identifying persuasive techniques and examples of bias and stereotyping.
6) Identify an author's purpose for writing and explain an author's argument, perspective or viewpoint in text.
7) Analyze whether graphics supplement textual information and promote the author's purpose.

Writing Processes   (5 - 7)

1) Clarify ideas for writing assignments by using graphics or other organizers.
2) Use revision strategies to improve the overall organization, the clarity and consistency of ideas within and among paragraphs and the logic and effectiveness of word choices.
3) Edit to improve fluency grammar and usage.
4) Prepare writing for publication that is legible, follows an appropriate format and uses techniques such as electronic resources and graphics.
5) Use technology to compose text.
6) Conduct background reading, interviews or surveys when appropriate.

Academic Content Standards

Writing Applications (5 -7)

1) Write informational essays or reports, including research, that present a literal understanding of the topic, include specific facts, details and examples from multiple sources, and create an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience and context.
2) Produce informal writing (e.g., journals, notes and poems) for various purposes.

Writing Conventions (5 - 7)

1) Use correct spelling conventions
2) Use conventions of punctuation and capitalization in written work.
3) Use grammatical structures to effectively communicate ideas in writing.

Research   (5 - 7) and (8 - 10)

1) Formulate open-ended research questions suitable for inquiry and investigation and develop a plan for gathering information.
2) Locate and summarize important information.
3) Organize information in a systematic way.
4) Acknowledge quoted and paraphrased information and document sources used.
5) Communicate findings orally, visually and in writing or though multimedia.
6) Evaluate the usefulness and credibility of data and sources.

Academic Content Standards

Communication: Oral and Visual (5 - 7) and (8 - 10)

1) Use effective listening strategies, summarize major ideas and draw logical inferences from presentations and visual media.

2) Explain a speaker's point of view and use of persuasive techniques in presentations and visual media.

3) Vary language choice and use effective presentation techniques including voice modulation and enunciation.

4) Select an organizational structure appropriate to the topic, audience, setting and purpose.

5) Present ideas in a logical sequence and use effective introductions and conclusions that guide and inform a listener's understanding of key ideas.

6) Give presentations using a variety of delivery methods, visual materials and technology.

7) Identify and explain the persuasive techniques (e.g., bandwagon, testimonial, glittering generalities, emotional word repetition and bait and switch) used in presentations and media messages.

8) Analyze the techniques used by speakers and media to influence an audience, and evaluate the effect this has on the credibility of a speaker or media message.

9) Evaluate the content and purpose of a presentation by analyzing the language and delivery choices made by a speaker.

10) Determine the credibility of the speaker (e.g., hidden agendas, slanted or biased material) and recognize fallacies of reasoning used in presentations and media messages.

11) Identify the speaker's choice of language and delivery styles (e.g., repetition, appeal to emotion, eye contact) and how they contribute to meaning.

Instructional Objectives

1. Students will explore historical and modern definitions of media and its relationship to the study of communications.

2. Students will select and evaluate new information resources and technological innovations based on the relevancy and appropriateness for specific tasks (e.g. on-line databases, electronic resources, Internet- based resources).

3. Students will explore what forms media may take.

   a) print media

   b) radio media

   c) television media (including both entertainment and news)

   d) internet media

4. Students will research the history of various forms of media.

5. Students will research the "science" behind the creation of various mediums.

6. Students will reflect on the distinct uses of different medium types and critically evaluate the use of those types in the creation of effective media.

7. Students will research the current producers of various media mediums.

8. Students will reflect on the motivations of media producers by critically analyzing examples of modern media.

9. Students will explain the usefulness and accuracy of sources by determining their validity (e.g. publication date, language, bias) and define primary and secondary sources.

10. Students will explore the persuasive techniques media producers utilize.

11. Students will explore the propaganda techniques media producers utilize.

12. Students will recognize fallacies of reasoning used in media messages.

13. Students will research the laws that regulate modern media.

14. Students will reflect on the ethics behind the creation and consumption of media

Instructional Objectives

15. Students will reflect on media's effect on our culture through the analysis of both current and historical examples.
    a) television and violence
    b) media and sexuality
    c) media and the feminist movement
    d) media and the shaping of African American culture
    e) media and democracy
    f) media and social and/or economic class divisions
16. Students will reflect on media's effect on the individual through an analysis of personal experiences as well as through group discussions.
17. Students will reflect on their ability to effect media.
18. Students will reflect on their ability to create media.
19. Students will examine the role of technology in the development of strategies for solving problems in the real world.

Performance Objectives

1. Students will create their own definitions of media.

2. Students will create their own media using a variety of mediums.

3. Students will develop criteria for evaluating media.

4. Students will critique modern examples of media.

5. Students will create and critique their own media using a variety of mediums.

6. Students will practice responsible use of technology systems, information, and software.

7. Students will create media that attempts to shape and change society.

8. Students will increase their reading comprehension skills through the exploration of a variety of non-fiction texts.

9. Students will participate in the critical evaluation of informative text.

10. Students will use both informal and formal writing to explore, evaluate, and reflect on media.

11. Students will use graphic organizers and prewriting activities in the creation of a variety of media mediums.

12. Students will use the writing process in the creation of texts.

13. Students will analyze the use of statistics as a form of persuasion.

14. Students will research the methods of data collection as they relate to media.

15. Students will explore graphs and charts as a means of conveying data.

16. Students will analyze and create graphs as they relate to media.

17. Students will analyze and create charts as they relate to media.

18. Students will explore the ethical questions surrounding the collection and presentation of data in media.

19. Students will explore the history of various media mediums.

20. Students will explore media's shaping of western culture.

21. Students will reflect on media's relationship with democracy.

Performance Objectives

22. Students will research the scientific methods used to create various media mediums.
23. Students will gain an understanding of interpersonal communications skills through group discussion.
24. Students will practice public speaking skills through the development of group and individual presentations.
25. Students will explore mass communications through the analysis and creation of media.
26. Students will practice responsible use of technology systems, information, and software.
27. Students will use technology to locate, evaluate, and collect information from a variety of sources.

Cross-Curricular Connections

English:

1. Students will increase their reading comprehension skills through the exploration of a variety of non-fiction texts.
2. Students will participate in the critical evaluation of informative text.
3. Students will use both informal and formal writing to explore, evaluate, and reflect on media.
4. Students will use graphic organizers and prewriting activities in the creation of a variety of media mediums.
5. Students will use the writing process in the creation of texts.

Math :

1. Students will analyze the use of statistics as a form of persuasion.
2. Students will research the methods of data collection as they relate to media.
3. Students will explore graphs and charts as a means of conveying data.
4. Students will analyze and create graphs as they relate to media.
5. Students will analyze and create charts as they relate to media.
6. Students will explore the ethical questions surrounding the collection and presentation of data in media.

Social Studies:

1. Students will explore the history of various media mediums.
2. Students will explore media's shaping of western culture.
3. Students will reflect on media's relationship with democracy.

Science:

1. Students will research the scientific methods used to create various media mediums.

Communications:

1. Students will gain an understanding of interpersonal communications skills through group discussion.
2. Students will practice public speaking skills through the development of group and individual presentations.
3. Students will explore mass communications through the analysis and creation of media.

Technology:

1. Students will practice responsible use of technology systems, information, and software.

2. Students will use technology to locate, evaluate, and collect information from a variety of sources.