



Shorts 5: Family Films

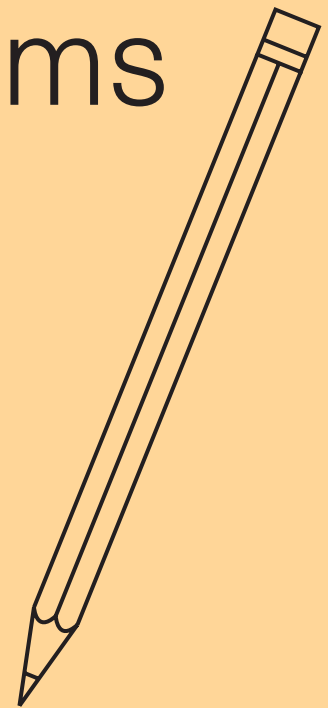
STUDY GUIDE

Content written by **Jessica Polaniecki**

Designed by **Camille Gwise, Jay Tiong, Soph Schultz Rocha, Keith Zwölfer**

All SFFILM Education materials are developed in alignment with California educational standards for media literacy. SFFILM Education welcomes feedback and questions on all printed study materials.

More info at sffilm.org/education

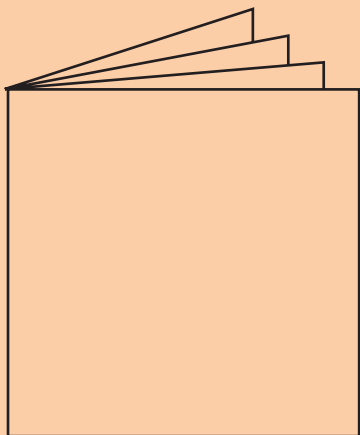






Index

- 02 About the Films
- 03 Animation Guide
- 04 Discussion Questions & Activities
- 05 Media Literacy Resources
- 06 California Media Literacy Standards





About the Films

Wondrous and whimsical shorts from near and far corners of the world grace our festival screen for the enjoyment of the entire family. The latest from Tonko House, Pixar, and independent filmmakers share central themes of innovation and curiosity. A wooden puppet embarks on a journey of self-discovery as she questions whether or not she fits in, while a mother-daughter rodeo duo connects to their roots and legacy. Explore where ideas and inspiration come from in thought-provoking found footage and experience the charming, and maybe a little gross, feelings of a young first kiss. These enchanting stories – true, not-so-true, and animated -- are sure to inspire laughter, curiosity, tears, and awe in both the youngest and most seasoned filmgoers.

Teaching the Films

Use this guide to continue the conversation and delve deeper into the films. The prompts below will help students learn to think critically about film in the same way they are learning to think about the texts they read in class. Essentially, each film is a text and you can use some of the same tools you already use when discussing stories. Furthermore, these films will help bring up topics that can be starting-off points for larger discussions around the themes of innovation, curiosity, and self-discovery. Please feel free to adapt and abridge the content as necessary to meet your unique learning objectives and circumstances.

Subject Areas

- African American Studies
- Art/Media
- English Language Arts
- French
- Latine Studies
- Peer/Youth Issues
- Physical Education/Sports
- Women and Gender Studies

Recommended for Grades K–6



Animation Guide: Understanding Film

Fiction vs Nonfiction in Live Action Film

- The term **Live Action** is used to refer to films that are not animated. Live action films feature real people, animals, or nature. For example, Sesame Street is mostly live action, though they occasionally have segments that are animated. Even puppetry, like Elmo, is considered live action. A movie like The Wizard of Oz is live action. A sitcom like Friends is live action. A nature documentary is also live action. A superhero movie like the Batman franchise, is live action, but relies heavily on special effects and computer generated imagery (CGI).
- Live action films can be fiction or nonfiction.
- A **documentary** is a non-fictional motion picture intended to document reality, primarily for instruction, education or maintaining a historical record. In today's landscape of AI and misinformation, it is always important to think critically about a documentary by asking "who made this?" "Who was it made for?" and "For what purpose?".
- For young students who are used to seeing animation, there can sometimes be a misunderstanding that all live action films are nonfiction. It's important to make the distinction that not all live action films are nonfiction.
- The three live action films in this series happen to all be nonfiction, but that is not always the case.
- Animation can also be considered nonfiction if it is used in a documentary or to tell a true story.
- If you can't tell if a live action film is fiction or nonfiction, start by looking at the credits. Are there actors playing roles? Was there a scriptwriter?

Types of Animation

Animation is created by a series of images or drawings which, when played in sequence, create the illusion of movement. One second of animation is usually made up of 12 or 24 images. While a film or episode of TV is made up of thousands of individual images.

- **Flip books**
- **Traditional or 2D Animation:** The Princess and the Frog, most Anime like Pokemon or Spirited Away
- **CGI or Computer Animation:** Toy Story, Coco, Encanto, Frozen
- **Stop Motion Animation:** The Nightmare Before Christmas, Coraline
- **Cut-out / Silhouette Animation:** South Park
- **Claymation:** Wallace and Gromit, Chicken Run
- **Motion Capture:** Avatar 2: The Way of the Water
- **All of the above!** Today, many films use different types of animation and filmmaking combined. For example, Spiderman: Into the Spideverse uses a mix of 2D animation, CGI animation and motion capture. Some of the films we saw in the SFFilm series also employ multiple techniques.

[Here](#) is a short, fun video that explains the different types of animation.



Discussion Questions

General tip for discussing films: The questions in this guide will encourage students to interpret what they saw on the screen. Respond to students' answers with "What makes you say that?" or "What did you see that makes you say that?". In other words, ask students to back up their answers with evidence from the film. This method helps students avoid assumptions that can be based on biases or preconceived notions so it is especially important when watching films about other cultures.

If you attended in person:

1. Was this your first time in a movie theater? What was it like?
2. How does it feel to watch a movie in a movie theater? What do you like or dislike about going to a movie theater?
3. Was it your first time at the SFFILM Festival?
4. How would you describe your experience at the SFFILM Festival?

If you attended virtually OR in person:

5. In what ways are these films similar or different to other films you have seen?
6. In what ways are these films similar to or different from videos you see on TikTok or Youtube?
7. Why do you think a filmmaker might choose to make a short film?
8. Pick a film from the program - why do you think the filmmaker might have wanted to tell this story?
9. Which film did you like the most and why?
10. Which film did you like the least and why?
11. Is there something you would want to change about any of these films?
12. Do any of the films remind you of something you are learning or have learnt in school? What was it?
13. Was there anything unexpected or surprising in this series of films?
14. What does a filmmaker do? In what ways is the job of a filmmaker similar to the job of an author? In what ways is it different?

15. Just like the books we read, each film can be considered fiction or nonfiction. Look at the list of films and label them as fiction or nonfiction.
16. How can you tell if a film is fiction or nonfiction? If you aren't sure which one it is, how would you try to find out?
17. Which film was the strangest to you? What made it strange? Did you like it?
18. We saw a few films made using stop motion animation. Has anyone ever tried stop motion animation before? How is it made? (Here is a [video](#) that explains how stop motion is created)
19. Which character would you want to sit next to in class? Why? What do they think they would bring in their lunchbox for lunch?
20. What words would you use to describe this series as a whole? What common themes can you find? Do you think these films were interesting to watch together? Did any seem out of place?
21. Did you enjoy the Family Films series? What more do you want to know about these films? What questions do you have about how they were made?



Activities

1. Consider the credits: Each film was made by a team of people coming together to tell a story. The credits at the end of each film tell us the names of the people who made the film, and what their job was. Pick a job from the list below to research. Write a paragraph about what they do. Think of a movie you liked, find out who did the role you picked and learn about their career. What other movies have they worked on? How did they learn to do this job?

- Director
- Character Designer
- Stop Motion Animator or puppet maker
- Computer Animator
- Editor
- Sound Designer
- Composer
- Lighting Designer
- Cinematographer
- Special Effects Designer

2. Think - Pair - Share

- Ask students to think quietly about which film was their favorite and what they liked about it.
- Break up into pairs or small groups and have students discuss their favorite films.
- Provide students with ideas for questions to ask each other like "What did you like about that film?" "How did it make you feel?"
- Have students share what they discuss with the class.

3. Get Critical

- Have students each pick a single film from the series. It can be their favorite, their least favorite, or anything in between. Have students spend time writing their own critique of the film. Share examples of film reviews ([like these](#)) to familiarize students with the concept. Have students write reviews using the following format:
 - Begin with a brief description of the film (2-3 sentences).
 - The writer shares their personal opinion of the film, and explains why they feel this way (3-5 sentences). Provide specific examples from the film.
 - End with the writer's recommendation; should people go see the film? Should they skip it? Why? Who do you think might like this film?



Battery Mommy

Directed by Seungbae Jeon, South Korea, 8 min

Animation

1. How would you describe this film to someone who hasn't seen it? Try to describe the story and also what the film looked like and sounded like.
2. Where does this film take place? Or, What is the setting of this film?
3. Who is the main character of this film and what do we know about them?
4. Why do you think the filmmaker titled this film Battery Mommy?
 - a. Come up with some other film title suggestions
5. What is a battery? How do batteries work? What items in your home use a battery?
6. For most of the film, the characters don't speak. How are you able to know what the characters are feeling or thinking?
7. What do you think inspired the filmmaker, Seungbae Jeon, to make this film?
8. What questions do you have about this film? What would you like to ask the filmmaker?

Activity

1. For most of the film, the characters don't speak, but the audience can understand what they are thinking or feeling based on their facial expressions and body language.
2. Break up into small groups or pairs and take turns acting out expressions or feelings for your partner to guess.
3. Examples for kids to act out: surprised, angry, hurt feelings, missing someone, daydreaming, bored, anxious.

Further resources:

[This](#) video explains how batteries work, and includes some stop motion animation.



Bottle George

Directed by Daisuke 'Dice' Tsutsumi, Japan/USA, 13 min

Animation

This film deals with the heavy topic of parental alcoholism. We trust that you know your class best and can decide what level of conversation on the topic will feel appropriate.

1. How did you feel while watching this film? Did your feelings change from the beginning, to the middle, to the end?
2. Who are the characters in this film?
3. The little girl in the film, finds a creature, George, in a glass bottle. How would you describe this creature?
4. Why do you think the young girl decided to keep George as a pet?
5. What happens when George does not make it home in the end?
6. Does the cat like George? Why do you think that is? How can you tell?
7. Why do you think the filmmakers chose to make this film using animation? How would this film be different if they made it in live action, with actors?
8. Did this film remind you of any other films you've seen or books you've read?

The young girl in this film is dealing with a parent who is not able to take care of her. If you or anyone you know are in a similar situation, reach out to someone in school or a grown up that you trust for help.



Coach Pancake

Directed by Gabriel Olson, USA, 6 min

Live Action, Documentary

1. Is this film fiction or nonfiction? How can you tell?
2. This type of film is called a DOCUMENTARY, which uses real people to tell real stories. The people on screen are not actors, and they were answering questions as opposed to reading from a script.
 - a. Have you seen a documentary before?
 - b. Do you like to watch documentaries? Why or why not?
 - c. Filmmakers make documentaries to tell the audience about something they think is important. Why do you think the filmmaker wanted to share the story of Coach Pancake?
 - d. What or who else would you like to see a documentary about?
 - e. What or who would you like to make a documentary about?
3. How did Coach Pancake get his nickname?
4. What would your superhero name be?
5. What are your real-life super powers?
6. How would you define a hero?
7. What is something heroic you did this week?
8. How was this film similar or different to other films in this series?

Activity

- To make this film, the filmmaker asked the subject, Coach Pancake, questions and recorded the answers. Think about someone you would like to make a documentary about, they could be someone you know, someone famous, someone from history, or a fictional character from a book or movie. Make a list of questions you would want to ask them in your documentary.

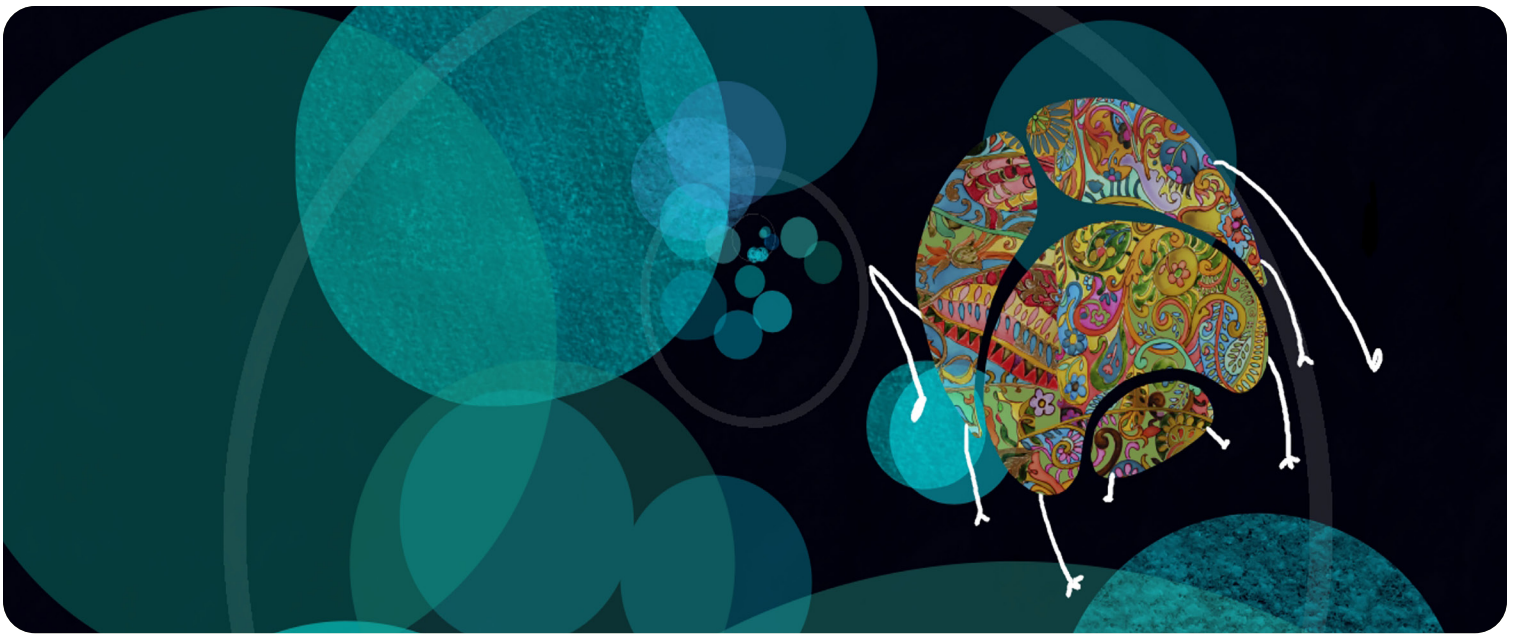


Dynasty and Destiny

Directed by Travis Lee Ratcliff, USA, 7 min

Live Action, Documentary

1. Is this film fiction or nonfiction? How can you tell?
2. This type of film is called a DOCUMENTARY.
 - a. Have you seen a documentary before?
 - b. Do you like to watch documentaries? Why or why not?
 - c. Filmmakers make documentaries to tell the audience about something they think is important. What would you like to make a documentary about?
3. Did you learn anything new from this film?
4. What did you learn about Kanisha Jackson and Kortnee Solomon, the subjects of the film?
5. Kanisha and Kortnee have a special bond over horses and horseback riding. Do you share a special bond with any of your family members or friends? What is it?
6. Why do you think the filmmaker wanted to share this story in a documentary?
7. What else do you wonder about Kanisha and Kortnee? What questions would you want to ask them?
8. Some parts of this film were in black and white. What did that make you think of?
9. What is a rodeo? Have you ever been to a rodeo?
10. Have you ever ridden a horse? What was it like?
11. Kortnee says she feels a lot of pressure. Why do you think that is?
12. Is there anything that you feel pressure about?
13. What do you think the title DYNASTY AND DESTINY might mean?



A Little Beetle Returns

Directed by Elene Sebiskveradze, Georgia/Norway, 4 min

Animation

1. Where was the beetle at the beginning, middle, and end of this story?
 - a. At first the beetle was:
 - b. And then the beetle was:
 - c. In the end the beetle was:
2. The title of the film is A Little Beetle Returns. Where did the beetle return to?
3. The film ended with the words "to be continued". What do you think might happen next?
4. Why do you think the filmmaker chose animation to tell this story?
5. Would it be possible to tell this story using a real beetle?
6. What challenges might you face if you wanted to tell this story using a real beetle?
7. How do you feel when you find a bug in your home? What do you do?

Activity

1. Draw beetles on construction paper, cut them out, glue it to a popsicle stick and create a beetle puppet show. Where will the beetle go?
2. [Let's learn about beetles' survival superpowers.](#) Some species can survive getting squished, dried out or even eaten
3. What do you think it feels like to be a bug in a home? Write a few sentences from the perspective of the beetle in this movie. What do you think they are thinking? What would they want to tell us?



Little Fan

Directed by Elene Sebiskveradze, Shad Lee Bradbury, Germany, 4 min

Animation

Some of the films we saw in this series were made with stop motion animation, where real objects or puppets are moved and photographed to create the illusion of movement. While this film might look like it was made with real objects, it was made with computer animation (see examples on the Animation Guide).

1. Why do you think the filmmaker chose animation to tell this story?
2. What do you think the little fan would say if they could speak?
3. The background music in a film is called a SCORE. How does the SCORE in Little Fan help us understand the way the fan is feeling?
4. What is the little fan's goal? What do they want, or what are they trying to accomplish? What makes you think that?
5. Pick three adjectives to describe the little fan.

Activity

- Inspired by Little Fan, pick a household (or classroom) object and write a short story about it coming to life. What is the object's goal? How does it accomplish that goal? Or try acting out your story with the object, like a puppet show.
- Learn about the different skills that went into creating this film by watching a [behind the scenes video here](#).

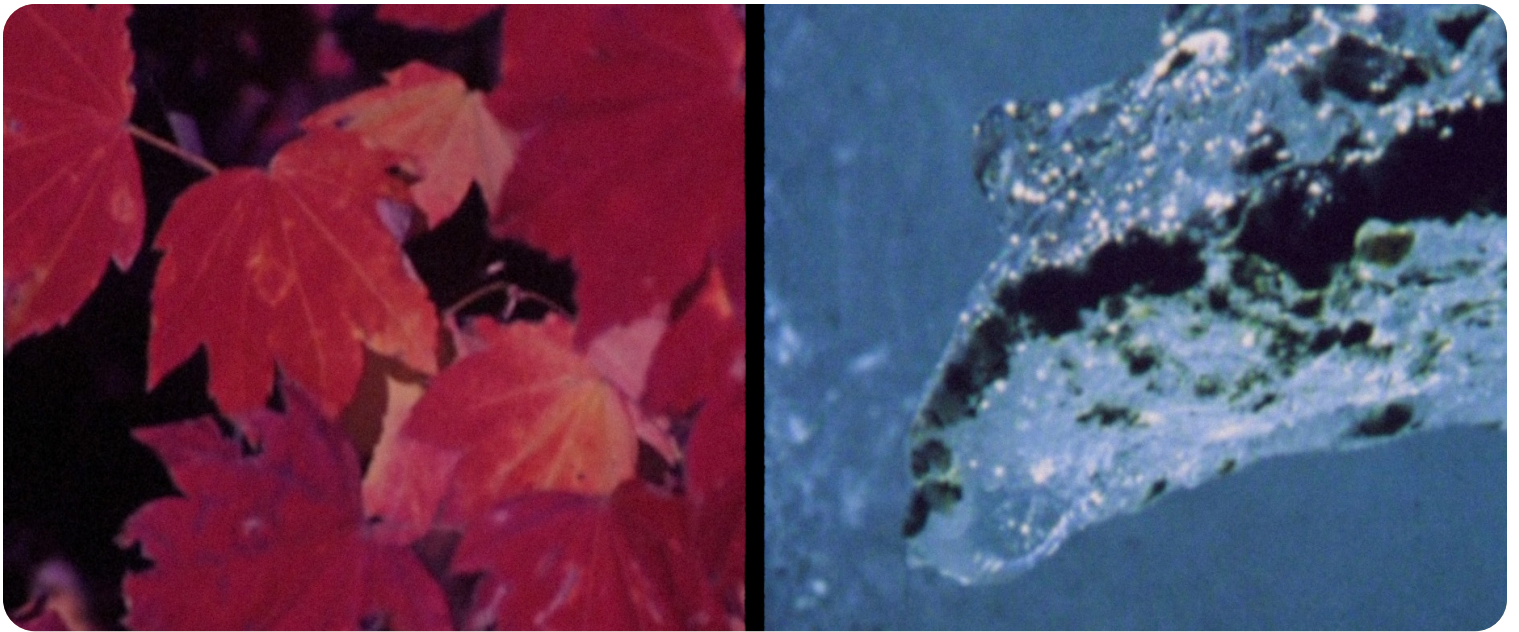


Self

Directed by Searit Kahsay Huluf, USA, 7 min

Animation

1. Summarize this film in two or three sentences.
2. In this film we never hear the characters speak. How do they communicate with each other?
3. What happens when the main character tries to communicate with the others?
4. What do you think the main character might have been feeling or thinking when she couldn't communicate with the others? What makes you think that?
5. How does the main character respond or react to the situation she is in?
6. Does the main character have a goal or desire? What is it and why do you think she wants it?
7. Have you ever felt like you were different from everyone around you? What did it feel like? How did you react? Did anything change?
8. What happens after the main character gets a new hand?
9. What decision does the character make in the end? Why do you think she might have made that decision?
10. Do you think the main character would have any advice to give after this experience? What do you think she might say?
11. Why do you think the filmmaker chose animation to tell this story?
12. The main character is animated using stop motion animation, while the other characters are animated with computer animation. Could you tell the difference? Why do you think the filmmaker might have made this choice?
13. How would you describe the setting of this film? In what ways is it similar and different from the world/city we live in?
14. How does the character design contribute to the overall story of this film?



Where Do Ideas Come From?

Directed by Joysi Olijhoek, Netherlands, 5 min

Live Action, Experimental

1. This film is about ideas. How would you answer the question “where do ideas come from”?
2. What was going through your mind while watching this film?
3. Did you get any ideas while watching this film?
4. Did any images from the film stand out to you? What were they?
5. Filmmakers are always thinking of new ideas for films. What ideas do you have for a film?

Activity

- This film is a lot like a collage. Find some magazines, newspapers, catalogs, or other materials to cut up and create a collage inspired by this film. Pick a single idea or theme for your collage and try to find imagery that fits your theme. Give the collage a title and write it at the top of the collage in cut out letters.



Yuck!

Directed by Loïc Espuche, France, 13 min

Animation

1. What do you think it means when the characters' lips turn bright pink in this film? What makes you think that?
2. How would you describe the way the group of kids reacted to the adults kissing?
3. Why do you think they reacted that way?
4. Why do you think they continue to seek out and watch other people kissing?
5. Have you ever seen something that you thought was gross, but you wanted to keep looking anyway?
6. What are some things that make you say YUCK?
7. What happened when the two kids', Lucy and Leo, friends saw them kissing? Why do you think their friends reacted like that?
8. How does the film end?
9. Why do you think some of the characters say that kissing is gross, but they actually want to try it?
10. Do you think the scenario of this film could apply to other situations?
11. Have you ever felt pressure to say you did or didn't like something, just to fit it with other people's opinions? Maybe it was a type of food, a tv show, or a pop star. This can be a private journaling exercise, or class discussion prompt.
12. What advice do you think the directors of this film might give to kids who are embarrassed to admit how they feel or what they like?
13. There is a kids book called "Don't Yuck my Yum". What do you think this phrase means? How does it apply to the film Yuck?

Activity

Yuck vs Yum

- Teacher - draw two columns on the board, one for YUCK and one for YUM
- Ask students to list things that make them say Yuck, and tally how many students agree (yuck) , and how many disagree (yum)

Think - Pair - Share

- Break up into pairs or small groups to discuss the prompt of What makes you say "yuck"?
- Come up with one thing you both agree makes you say "yuck" and write down three reasons why it makes you say "yuck"
- Share your yucks with the class and give your classmates the opportunity to respond. Does anyone disagree with your yuck?



Media Literacy Resources: Screening with Meaning

We live in a world where technology mediates a large portion of human interaction and the exchange of information. Every projected image, every word published on a page or a website, and every sound from a speaker reaches its audience through the language of the medium. The ability to parse the vast array of media messages is an essential skill for young people, particularly in a mainstream commercial culture that targets youth as a vulnerable, impressionable segment of the American marketplace. Many students already have a keen understanding of the languages different media use and the techniques they employ to inspire particular emotions or reactions, but they often lack the skill or awareness to fully deconstruct the messages they continuously receive. Analysis of a media message, or any piece of mass media content, can best be accomplished by first identifying its principal characteristics:

1. **Medium:** the physical means by which it is contained and/or delivered
2. **Author:** the person(s) responsible for its creation and dissemination
3. **Content:** the information, emotions, values or ideas it conveys
4. **Audience:** the target audience to whom it is delivered
5. **Purpose:** the objectives of its authors and the effects of its dissemination.

Students who can readily identify these five core characteristics will be equipped to understand the incentives at work behind media messages, as well as their potential consequences. Media literacy education empowers students to become responsible consumers, active citizens and critical thinkers.

MEDIA LITERACY STANDARDS

MEDIUM

All Media Is Constructed.

- What is the message, how is it delivered and in what format?
- What technologies are used to present the message?
- What visual and auditory elements comprise the media content?
- What expectations do you bring to the content, given its medium and format?

AUTHOR

All Media Is Constructed by Someone.

- Who is delivering the message?
- Who originally constructed the message?
- What expectations do you have of the content, given its author(s)?

CONTENT

Media Is A Language For Information.

- What is the subject of the media message?
- What information, values, emotions or ideas are conveyed by the media content?
- What tools does the author employ to engage the viewer and evoke a response?
- To what extent did the content meet your expectations, given the format/author?

AUDIENCE

All Media Messages Reach an Audience.

- Who receives the message?
- For whom is the message intended?
- What is the public reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- What is your reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- How might others perceive this message differently? Why?

PURPOSE

All Media Messages Are Constructed for a Reason.

- Why was the message constructed?
- Who benefits from dissemination of the message? How?
- To what extent does the message achieve its purpose?
- What effect does the message have on the audience it reaches, if any?



California Media Literacy Standards

K Standards

RI.K.2 With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

RI.K.3 With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

RI.K.9 With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

SL.K.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

1st Grade Standards

RI.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RI.1.2 Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

RI.1.3 Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

RL.1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

RL.1.3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

RL.1.4 Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.

SL.1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

SL.1.4 Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.

W.1.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

2nd Grade Standards

RI.2.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

RI.2.6 Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

RL.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

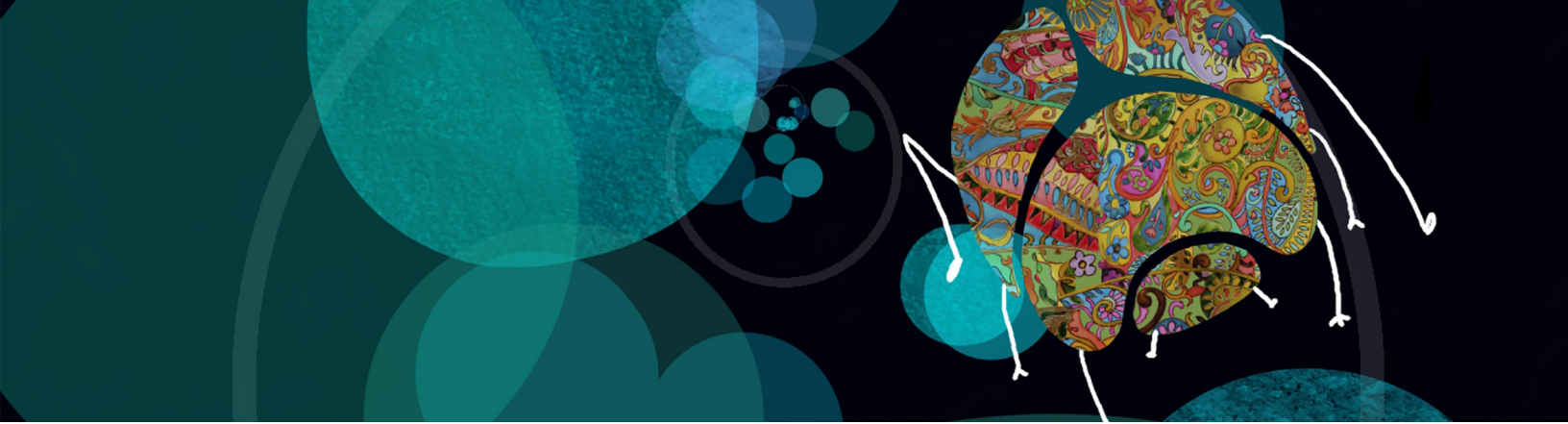
RL.2.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

SL.2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

SL.2.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

SL.2.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

W.2.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the work they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.



California Media Literacy Standards

3rd Grade Standards

- RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- RI.3.2 Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
- RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- RL.3.6 Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.
- SL.3.2 Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- W.3.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
- Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
 - Provide reasons that support the opinion.
 - Use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, for example) to connect opinion and reasons.
 - Provide a concluding statement or section.

4th Grade Standards

- RI.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- RI.4.2 Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
- RL.4.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
- W.4.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.
 - Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.
 - Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
 - Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

5th Grade Standards

- RI.5.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- RL.5.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
- RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).
- RL.5.7 Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
- RL.5.9 Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.
- SL.5.2 Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.
 - Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.
 - Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically).