

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN ANALYZING MEDIA MESSAGES

DEVELOPING HABITS OF INQUIRY

AUTHORSHIP

Who made this?

PURPOSES

Why was this made?
Who is their target audience?
What do they want me to do?
What do they want me to think (or think about)?

CONTENT

What are the messages about ___?
What ideas, values, and information are overt? Implied?
What is left out that might be important to know?
How does this compare/contrast to other media messages on this topic?

TECHNIQUES

What techniques are used to communicate the messages?
How effective are those techniques? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
Why might they have chosen to use those techniques?

CONTEXT

When was this created?
Where and how was it shared with the public?
What aspects of cultural context are relevant to consider?
How does this amplify or counteract existing patterns (on the topic, by the author, etc.)?
How does the media form (social media, print, TV, etc.) impact the message?

ECONOMICS

Who paid for this?
Who might make money from this?

CREDIBILITY

Is this fact, opinion, or something else?
How credible is the information?
What are the sources of the ideas or assertions?
Is this a trustworthy source about this particular topic?

EFFECTS

Who might benefit from this message?
Who might be harmed by it?
Whose voices are represented or privileged?
Whose voices are omitted or silenced?

INTERPRETATIONS

What is my interpretation of this?
How do prior experiences and beliefs shape my interpretation?
What do I learn about myself from my interpretation or reaction?
How (and why) might different people interpret this differently?

RESPONSES

How does this make me feel?
What kinds of actions might I take in response to this?

And....

What's my evidence?
Why might that matter?
Why do I think that?
What else do I want (or need) to know?
How could I find that out?

