



National Media Literacy Alliance Joint Statement on Media Literacy Education

In celebration of U.S. Media Literacy Week, to be held virtually October 26-30, 2020, the undersigned members of the National Media Literacy Alliance, representing school and community educators, administrators, advocates, and nonprofit organizations, value media literacy education as a vital component of each of our respective disciplines. At a time when misinformation threatens civil discourse and the very nature of our democracy, the Alliance continues to work to ensure that students across our nation have the critical thinking skills necessary to engage with all forms of media as both a consumer and a producer. The Alliance believes there are broad connections between media literacy education and the development of the habits of inquiry, the skills of expression, critical thinking, social emotional learning, empowerment, collaboration, and perspective taking defined by each disciplines' educational standards. These competencies connect explicitly to behaviors and actions within the classroom (e.g., class projects, homework, assessments, and social interactions) and decisions made outside of the classroom (e.g., civic engagement, health and safety practices, consumer choices and behaviors, and extracurricular activity participation).

The Alliance strongly encourages members of each of our networks to explore the intersection of media literacy within their discipline and identify ways to integrate media literacy education practices into their existing curriculums and lessons. To this end, the Alliance has conducted a review of Alliance member organizations' student learning outcomes, teaching standards, and/or best practices in order to identify the specific intersections between media literacy within each discipline:

Media Literacy + Early Childhood Education

Media Literacy and early childhood education both emphasize inquiry, and critical thinking in the form of reasoning, questioning, self-reflection, and self-expression. Young learners are encouraged to engage with diverse media forms, explore storytelling, and engage in activities that help them understand what media is and that media is created by people and represents diverse perspectives.

Media Literacy + English Education

Much like traditional literacies of reading and writing, media literacy education aims to teach students how to interpret media messages including the ability to understand how the message was constructed, who created the message and their intended audience, how the author wanted their audience to think, feel, or act, and how the information might have embedded points of views, ideologies, or representations. A deeper analysis of media messages, like the written word, will explore cultural, political, ideological, and socioeconomic implications.

Media Literacy + Journalism Education

Both media literacy and journalism education have an overarching mission of helping students to think critically about mediated messages and to be active participants in our democracy. Each discipline focuses on media, its construction, influence, and role in society with a particular emphasis on modes of storytelling, understanding sourcing, evaluating credibility, appreciating diversity, asking questions, being curious and reflective, and producing media.

Media Literacy + Libraries

The many priorities of all types of libraries involve inquiry, curiosity, developing questions, and critical analysis and evaluation of sources for accuracy, validity and context. An emphasis on perspective taking, self-reflection, and ethical decision making, for both the consumer and producer of information is critical to media literacy education and the work of libraries. School librarians equip learners to think critically, to question and synthesize information for accuracy and possible bias, and develop the skills needed to curate all forms of information. The ability to decipher, gauge and analyze information is necessary to an understanding of the importance of creating credible information to disseminate to others ensuring savvy and informed consumers as well as ethical creators of content/ information.

Media Literacy + Mathematics Education

As data are continuously analyzed and interpreted by various media, the connections between media literacy and mathematics education become increasingly important. As media consumers, mathematical and statistical reasoning are essential skills required to be an informed citizen and consumer. Developing analytical thinking, reflection, and identification of patterns and/or (ir)regularities in data represented in a variety of ways allows individuals to use and apply mathematics in real-world situations. In order to be a responsible creator of information, students must develop the ability to formulate questions and collect, organize, and display data and engage in discussion and perspective taking to help develop connections and understandings. Further, each and every student should develop a deep mathematical understanding to be better positioned to understand and critique their world.

Media Literacy + Public Television

PBS' mission is to serve the American public with programming and services of the highest quality, using media to educate, inspire, and entertain and express a diversity of perspectives. Drawing on its trusted programming and an emphasis on engaging teachers, PBS and its member stations provide classroom resources and professional learning opportunities for teachers that encourage the analysis, evaluation and creation of media, reflecting the mission and goals of media literacy education.

Media Literacy + Science Education

Media literacy and scientific inquiry are both partially characterized by critical/logical thinking, open-mindedness, objectivity, skepticism, replicability of results, and honest and ethical reporting of findings. Similarly, a media literate person and a scientist are both guided by habits of mind such as intellectual honesty, tolerance of ambiguity, skepticism, and openness to new ideas and the use of digital media to analyze and communicate scientific information. As part of being a consumer and producer of content in the modern media landscape, students must possess data analysis, problem solving, reasoning and proof, and representation tools that significantly expand their capacity to model and interpret physical, social, and mathematical phenomena.

Media Literacy + Social Studies Education

There are many strong connections between media literacy and the standards for social studies education especially through the C3 Framework and its Inquiry Arc, which includes developing questions and planning inquiries; connecting to disciplinary tools and concepts; evaluating sources and using evidence; and communicating conclusions and taking informed action. Additionally, the global nature of media literacy provides a platform for the analysis of the economy of incentives, benefits and influences, as well as the influence of media messages on public perceptions of important topics like the environment and global issues. Social studies education recognizes that in order to be active media consumers and producers, students must be able to develop the skills necessary to critique and question claims, communicate one's ideas using diverse sources, provide evidence, identify target audiences and take action both in and outside the classroom using digital technologies and social media.

Media Literacy + ISTE Standards

Media literacy and the ISTE Standards for Students share common purpose and approach. They both empower young people to participate responsibly and actively online while critically examining digital resources, data and media and support student innovation, collaboration and creation. Both best serve students to be digital citizens when they are integrated across the curriculum throughout their academic career.

The National Media Literacy Alliance will be working together and independently within their respective networks throughout U.S. Media Literacy Week and beyond to advance media literacy education in both formal and informal settings. Visit the U.S. Media Literacy Week [website](#) to learn more about the events taking place throughout the week as well as resources for incorporating media literacy education into your home, school, and community.

The National Media Literacy Alliance, organized by the National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE), is a network of leading education organizations united in an effort to advance media literacy education as a necessary element of a complete 21st-century education in America. Members of the Alliance include:

[American Association of School Librarians \(AASL\)](#)
[International Society for Technology in Education \(ISTE\)](#)
[Journalism Education Association \(JEA\)](#)
[National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#)
[National Association for Media Literacy Education \(NAMLE\)](#)
[National Council for the Social Studies \(NCSS\)](#)
[National Council of Teachers of English \(NCTE\)](#)
[National Council of Teachers of Mathematics \(NCTM\)](#)
[National Science Teaching Association \(NSTA\)](#)
[National Writing Project \(NWP\)](#)
[Public Broadcasting Service \(PBS\)](#)
[Young Adult Library Services Association \(YALSA\)](#)