

PROJECT LOOK SHARP



April 2025 Newsletter

PLS Newsletter at a Glance

New Media Decoding Lessons:

- For High School Math: [Bias in Charts](#) and [Social Media and Trigonometry](#)
- For Early Elementary: [Way to Go! Decoding Media about Transportation](#)

Lessons for Earth Day

Lessons for Arab American History Month

Lessons Related to Some of President Trump's Executive Orders

Call to Action: **Protecting our Libraries**

New Math Lessons:

[Bias in Charts: Race, Gender, Education, and Income](#)

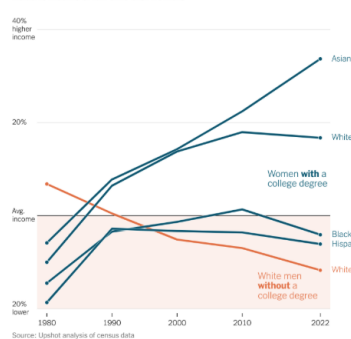
High School Math

By David Ebert

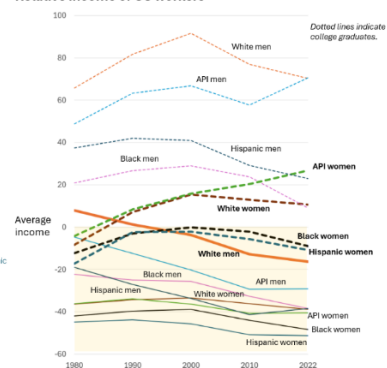
Students analyze charts from the *New York Times* and a blog post for messages about income related to race and gender and about credibility and bias in media construction of charts.

Media Decoding Questions:

Relative income of full-time U.S. workers

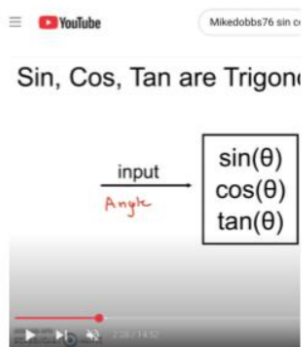


Relative income of US workers



Media Decoding Questions:

- 1) **What are the messages** in each chart about income inequality?
- 2) **Do you see bias** in the creation of each chart? If so, where?
- 3) Does the creator of each chart have any **motivation to attempt to mislead** with the chart?
- 4) **What have you learned** from this lesson about evaluating the accuracy and bias in charts in the media?



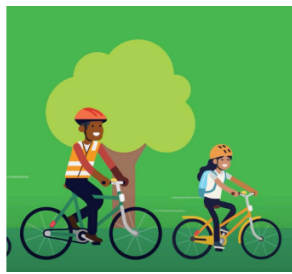
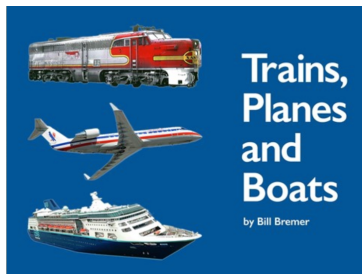
Social Media & Trigonometry: What's the Best Explanation? High School Math

Students analyze a YouTube video, an Instagram post and a TikTok video for messages about trigonometric functions and about the effectiveness of social media videos to learn and teach math.

Media Decoding Questions:

- 1) Based on these documents how would you **explain what sin, cos & tan** stand for?
- 2) Which of these videos is the **most effective way for you to learn** about sin, cos & tan? Why?
- 3) **Which social media form** would you say **is the best one to share math concepts** – YouTube, Instagram or TikTok? Why?

New Early Elementary Lesson:



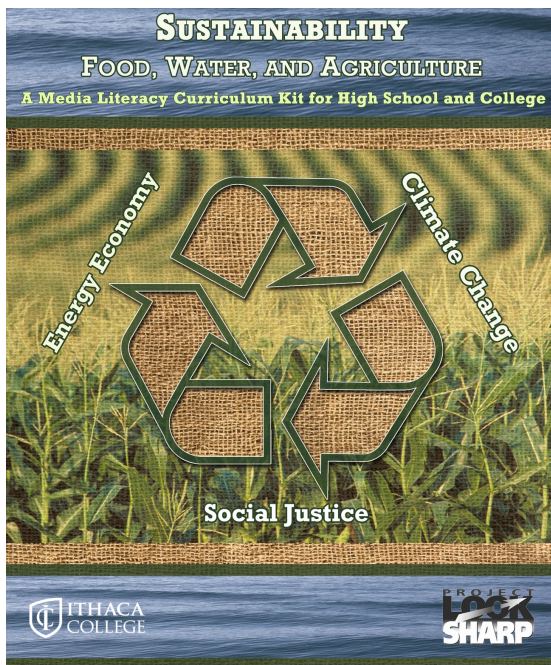
Way to Go! Decoding Media about Transportation

Early Elementary - By Betty Turpin

Students analyze an e-Book, an animated video and a "Kids News" video for messages about transportation choices, environmental impact, media forms, and target audience.

Media Decoding Questions:

- 1) **How often do you use** a form of **transportation**?
- 2) **Which do you like best** - the e-Book, animated video, or news report? Why?
- 3) **Who is the target audience** for each of these?
- 4) **What do the creators** of the e-Book, film, and report **want kids to think about**?



Free Media Decoding Lessons for Earth Day/Environmental Education

Each comes with a lesson plan, handouts, and all the media needed for classroom analysis using a curriculum-driven, student-centered, [question-based](#) methodology we call [Constructivist Media Decoding](#).

176 lessons for [High School](#)

167 lessons for [Middle School](#)

41 lessons for [Elementary level](#)

You can FILTER your SEARCH by *Keyword*, *Media Type*, *Lesson Duration*, *NGSS Standard*, etc.

Sample lessons for decoding media and content about environmental issues:

- [History of Chemicals in the Environment](#)
 - + history of [Endangered Species](#), [Resource Depletion](#), or [Climate Change](#) in the media
- [GMO Yes or No - Decoding Movie Trailers](#)
 - + other lessons on challenging issues including [GMOs](#), [Fracking](#), [climate](#), etc.
- [Vaccine Safety - Exploring Our Own Biases](#)
 - + other [Health lessons](#) related to [Social Media](#), [Vaccines](#), [Nutrition](#), [Disinformation](#), etc.
- [Video Games & Climate: Analyzing Constructions of the Future](#)
 - + climate lessons decoding [Memes](#), [Magazine Covers](#), [IPCC Reports](#), or [Movie Posters](#)

A Timely Issue:

[What is the Role of the Federal Government in Protecting the Environment?](#)

Middle School through High School

Students analyze 3 short news reports for conflicting messages about the Environmental Protection Agency.

Lessons for [Arab](#) American History Month

Including:

[The "Magic" of Stereotypes](#) - Middle School through College

Students analyze stereotypes about Arabs in the introduction to the Disney film *Aladdin*.

Media Decoding Questions

- 1) What are the messages about the Arab World?
- 2) Are these stereotypes? Explain.
- 3) Why might Disney use stereotypes?



4) What impact might they have on our views?



[Picturing the Middle East](#) - Middle School through College

Students decide whether photos are from the Middle East or not before reflecting on their own misconceptions.

[Ancient Egypt - Ancient Media?](#) - Upper Elementary through Middle School

Students analyze images of things found in ancient Egypt to determine which might be considered media and to explore how the cultural characteristics of places change over time.

Critical Thinking & Media Decoding **Lessons** Related to Some of President Trump's **Executive Orders**

NOTE: All of these lessons engage students in analyzing different and often conflicting perspectives on important issues.

ORDER: **[Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History](#)**

Lesson: [Mapping Ancient Civilizations: Who's Included and Who's Not?](#)

Upper Elementary through High School

Students analyze the bias and techniques used in maps of ancient civilizations.

Lesson: [Remember the Alamo](#)

Middle School through High School

Students analyze feature film, educational video and TV news clips for the reasons behind the 1836 Battle of the Alamo, the credibility of media messages, and how cultural and historical context shapes how history is presented and viewed.

Lesson: [Teaching the Enslavement of African People in the Americas](#)

High School through College

Students analyze a summary of a research report, an opinion piece, and an online post for messages about how and why we teach about the history of slavery.

Lesson: [Veterans' Statues: Reading the Messages.](#)

Upper Elementary through High School

Students analyze sculptures of war veterans for messages about purpose, point of view and meaning.

Lesson: [Historical Monuments: Whose History? Whose Choice?](#)

High School through College

Students analyze excerpts from a television series, a news report and a web video for messages about controversies surrounding historic monuments/statues in the U.S., Australia, and Latin America.

ORDER: **[Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship](#)**

Lesson: [Censoring Seuss: Cancel Culture or Cultural Respect?](#)

High School through College

Students evaluate pages from Dr. Seuss books that were removed by the family for perpetuating stereotypes then analyze tweets that include support and criticism for censoring those images - discussing both the issues and the civility of the comments

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Lesson: [Trusting Web Videos on COVID-19 \(Or Not\)](#)

Middle School through College

Students analyze for credibility four video clips from March 2020 of people giving prevention advice during the Covid-19 crisis: President Trump, Dr. Anthony Fauci, a primary care doctor, and a naturopathic doctor.



A Call to Action for our Libraries:

On March 14th the Trump administration “shuttered” the [Institute for Museum and Library Services](#) (IMLS) that facilitates federal support for libraries and provides library-related grants. [Project Look Sharp](#), in partnership with [AASL](#) and [NAMLE](#), is leading a current IMLS Grant: [ML3: Librarians as Leaders of Media Literacy](#). We are near the end of this 2-year *Planning Grant* that has enabled us to develop an exciting *Implementation Plan* for scaling [Constructivist Media Decoding](#) nationwide through the leadership of school librarians in all states.

Project Look Sharp recently submitted a new proposal to IMLS to implement that plan. The closing of IMLS wastes the time, effort and resources that went into planning, and is an inefficient use of our tax dollars. More importantly, it harms our democracy and our students by eliminating a systematic approach to the development of [habits of critical thinking](#) – through the leadership of school librarians - nationwide.

Please consider following the steps under “[What I Can Do](#)” on the ALA website about this important issue and/or sign this [ALA petition](#).

