

Lesson Plan: Your Digital Universe - Becoming a Media & Information Superhero

Subject: Media and Information Literacy (MIL)

Target Learner: 18-Year-Old Homeschool Student

Time Allotment: 90 Minutes

Materials Needed

- Laptop or computer with internet access
 - Notebook and pen/pencil
 - Student's smartphone (for reviewing their own media apps)
 - Pre-prepared list of scenarios for the Venn diagram activity (provided below)
 - Access to a digital whiteboard or a large sheet of paper for the Venn diagram
 - Optional: Access to a free design tool (like Canva) or a simple word processor
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Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

1. Analyze and share their personal media habits, preferences, and lifestyle.
 2. Explain how different forms of media and information affect communication styles.
 3. Differentiate the concepts of media literacy, information literacy, and technology literacy through a practical sorting activity.
 4. Create an editorial (in a format of their choice) that argues for the value of being a media and information literate individual.
 5. Define the characteristics of a responsible media user and a competent media producer within their creative work.
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Pre-Lesson Preparation (To be completed by the student)

The 24-Hour Media Diary: The day before the lesson, keep a simple log of all the media you consume. This doesn't have to be minute-by-minute! Just jot down the main things:

- **What did you watch?** (e.g., YouTube series, Netflix show, TikTok videos)
- **What did you listen to?** (e.g., Spotify playlist, specific podcast)
- **What did you read?** (e.g., news headlines on an app, a webtoon, a book, Reddit threads)
- **What did you interact with?** (e.g., commented on Instagram, played an online game, posted a story)

Bring this diary to the lesson. Be ready to talk about it!

Lesson Procedure

Part 1: The Hook - Your Media Footprint (15 minutes)

1. **Icebreaker - "Digital This or That?":** Start with a quick, fun warm-up to get the student thinking about their preferences. Ask questions like:
 - Scrolling on TikTok vs. Watching a YouTube deep-dive?
 - Podcast vs. Music Playlist for a long drive?
 - Getting news from a traditional news app vs. a social media feed?
 - Texting with full sentences and punctuation vs. using only lowercase, slang, and emojis?
2. **Media Diary Review:** Ask the student to share their "Media Diary."
 - **Guiding Questions:** "Was there anything that surprised you about how much or what kind of media you consume?" "Which platform did you spend the most time on?" "What was the most valuable or interesting piece of information you consumed?"
3. **Discussion - Media's Effect on Communication:** Connect their media habits to how we communicate.
 - **Guiding Questions:** "Think about the 'language' of TikTok or Instagram. How is it different from the language you'd use in an email to a professor? (e.g., memes, video replies, character limits, slang)." "How does receiving information in a 30-second video change your understanding of a topic compared to reading a long article about it?" This covers the objective of describing how communication is affected by media.

Part 2: The Core Challenge - Decoding the 'Literacies' (25 minutes)

1. **Brief Introduction:** Briefly define the three literacies. Use simple, clear analogies.
 - **Information Literacy:** The "Librarian Skill." It's about finding, evaluating, and using information effectively. Can you spot a reliable source?
 - **Media Literacy:** The "Detective Skill." It's about understanding the messages being sent to you through media. Who made this? Why? What biases might it have?
 - **Technology Literacy:** The "Mechanic Skill." It's about knowing how to use the tools. Can you operate the hardware and software effectively and safely?
2. **Activity - Three-Circle Venn Diagram:**
 - Draw a large three-circle Venn diagram on a whiteboard or paper, with circles labeled "Information Literacy," "Media Literacy," and "Technology Literacy."
 - Read the following scenarios aloud, one by one. The student's task is to decide where each scenario fits on the diagram (in one circle, or in an overlapping section).

Scenario List:

 1. Installing an ad-blocker on your web browser. (*Likely Technology*)
 2. Recognizing that a YouTube video is sponsored by a company. (*Likely Media*)
 3. Using a university's online database to find academic sources for a research paper. (*Likely Information*)
 4. Creating a viral TikTok video that cleverly critiques a political issue. (*Overlaps all three*)
 5. Fact-checking a news story you saw on Facebook by finding the original report. (*Overlaps Information and Media*)
 6. Protecting your personal data by setting up two-factor authentication. (*Overlaps Technology and Information*)
 7. Choosing the right font and color scheme to make a powerful protest poster. (*Likely Media*)
 8. Troubleshooting why your Wi-Fi is not working. (*Likely Technology*)
3. **Debrief:** Discuss the student's choices. The most important part is their reasoning. "Why did you place 'creating a viral video' in the middle?" This hands-on task clarifies the similarities and differences through application.

Part 3: The Creative Mission - Become the Messenger (40 minutes)

1. **Introduce the Main Task:** Explain that instead of writing an essay, the student will create a persuasive piece of media about media. They can choose ONE of the following:
 - **Option A: The Podcast Script.** Write a script (approx. 300-400 words) for a 2-minute podcast episode titled "Level Up Your Digital Life."
 - **Option B: The PSA Storyboard.** Sketch a 3 to 5-panel storyboard for a Public Service Announcement video. Each panel should have a visual idea and a line of narration or dialogue.
2. **The Creative Brief (The Goal):** "Your mission is to **editorialize**—that means to persuade and share your opinion on—the value of being media and information literate. Your message must also include:
 - A clear description of what a **responsible media user** does. (e.g., 'A responsible user doesn't just share; they verify first.')
 - A clear description of what a **competent media producer** does. (e.g., 'A competent producer cites their sources and is clear about their intentions.')
3. **Work Time:** The student works independently on their chosen project while the teacher acts as a guide and sounding board.
 - **Prompting Questions to Help:** "What's the 'superpower' you gain from being media literate?" "What's the biggest risk of *not* being literate?" "How can you make this message engaging for someone your age?"

Part 4: Showcase and Reflection (10 minutes)

1. **Presentation:** The student shares their work. If it's the script, they can read it aloud with expression. If it's the storyboard, they can walk through it panel by panel.
2. **Final Reflection (Assessment):** This is the summative assessment, focused on their understanding.
 - "What is the single most important idea you wanted to get across in your editorial?"
 - "After thinking about all this, what is one thing you might change about your own media habits starting today?"
 - "In your own words, what is the biggest difference between just *using* technology and being *literate* in media and information?"