


Media Literacy and Body Image

Overview

Students will critically explore media messages and images. They will work together to identify media influence over their body image and well-being. With that knowledge, they will create their own media message that supports a body-inclusive culture.

 **Suggested grade level** Grade 4/5 with adaptation suggestion for grade 6/7.

Big Ideas

- Understanding ourselves and the various aspects of health helps us develop a balanced lifestyle. (Physical and Health Education Grades 4-5)
- Personal choices and social and emotional factors influence our health and well-being. (Physical and Health Education Grades 4-5)
- We experience many changes in our lives that influence how we see ourselves and others. (Physical and Health Education Grades 6-7)
- Learning about similarities and differences in individuals and groups influences community health. (Physical and Health Education Grades 6-7)
- Questioning what we hear, read, and view contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens. (English Language Arts Grades 4-9)
- Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are each unique languages for creating and communicating. (Arts Education Grades 2-8)

Key Concepts

- Media messages often depict unrealistic or idealized body types
- Media can influence how we perceive our own bodies and self-worth
- Developing media literacy skills helps us recognize and resist harmful messages
- Maintaining a healthy body image is important for physical and mental well-being

Curricular Connections

Core Competencies

- **Communication** - Communicating, Collaborating
- **Thinking** - Creative Thinking, Critical and Reflective Thinking
- **Personal and Social** - Personal Awareness and Responsibility, Positive Personal and Cultural Identity, Social Awareness and Responsibility

First Peoples Principles of Learning

- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires the exploration of one's identity.

Social Emotional Learning

- Self-awareness
- Social awareness
- Responsible decision-making

Curriculum Learning Standards

- Physical and Health Education Curricular Competencies
 - Describe factors that positively influence mental well-being and self-identity (Grade 4)
 - Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being, for self and others. (Grades 5-8)
- Physical and Health Education Content
 - Media messaging and body image (Grade 4)
 - Factors that influence self-identity, including body image and social media. (Grade 4)
 - Influences on individual identity, including sexual identity, gender, values, and beliefs (Grades 5-6)
 - Sources of health information (Grades 5-6)
- Career Education Curricular Competency
 - Recognize the intersection of their personal and public digital identities and the potential for both positive and negative consequences (Grades 4-5)



Lesson Outline

Guidelines for creating an environment that is inclusive and trauma-informed to talk about this topic.

Guidelines PDF

🕒 Time

30 Minutes

📋 Materials

1. Slides: Media Literacy and Body Image [PowerPoint Slides \(PPSX\)](#) and [Notes \(PDF\)](#)
2. Activity Sheet: Media Literacy
3. Pencil

Opening

- Start the slides “Media Literacy and Body Image” which go over:
 - the definition of media literacy and its importance
 - common techniques used in media to portray idealized body types
 - how media influences body image

Activity

- Provide students with the activity sheet.
- Use images from the slides as examples to discuss as a class.
- Encourage students to consider each example's message, target audience, and potential impact on body image.
- Ask students to reflect on and respond to the questions in the activity sheet.
- Facilitate a discussion on their answers and help students recognize the patterns and techniques used in the media.
- Share the remaining “Let's review” slide to wrap up this part of the session.

Closure (could extend into a multi-day project and share out)

- Create your own media message with a partner. You can choose to:
 - act it out
 - plan a commercial
 - create a hand-drawn poster
 - design a digital version
- Think about the key elements you would include. Explain why you think this message would promote a body-inclusive environment.
- Invite students to complete one of the exit slips found on beingmebeingus.ca

Additional Information

Adaptations for grades 6/7

- Show this [Reverse Selfie Video](#)
Discuss the questions:
 - What message is being promoted?
 - Why was the message made? (Is it to educate? Entertain? Sell a product? To get views? Other?)
 - Was the image edited, or changed in any way to highlight unrealistic beauty standards? How can you tell?
 - What does this message want you to believe or feel? How might it make other people feel about their bodies?

Resources

- Being Me, Being Us: Creating a school community where every body belongs

Visit website at beingmebeingus.ca

- [Embody BC - Media Literacy Infosheet](#)
- [Media Smarts - About Digital Media Literacy](#)

Further discussion

- What are some ways that media affect how people think about their own bodies and self-worth?
What can we do to create change that supports a body-inclusive school community?



Connect to Support

If you or a student is looking for emotional support or more resources on this topic, visit NEDIC.ca. It connects you to a confidential telephone helpline or live chat.

Adapted with permission from the National Eating Disorder Information Centre ([NEDIC](#))
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Media Literacy & Body Image Activity Sheet

Name

Date

As you view the images, fill in this sheet:

	For Image 1	For Image 2
What is the message in this image?		
Why was the message made? (Is it to educate? Entertain? Sell a product? To get views? Other?)		
Was the image edited, or changed to show unrealistic beauty standards? How can you tell?		
What does this message want you to believe or feel? How might it make other people feel about their bodies?		

What are two ways that media affects how people think about their own bodies and self-worth?

1. _____

2. _____