

Dear Secondary ELA Teachers,

For over 2 decades, [Project Look Sharp](#), a mission-driven not-for-profit **media literacy** organization at Ithaca College, has been collaborating with educators to provide free, inquiry-based, standards-aligned **media analysis lessons** that integrate core subject area content and skills with [habits of critical questioning](#).

Below you will find an overview of our lessons for secondary English language arts followed by an introduction to the purpose and pedagogy of [our approach](#), ending with information about our free professional development resources for [Constructivist Media Decoding](#).

## **THE LESSONS:**

We currently have [145 lessons](#) for incorporating [question-based media analysis](#) into the teaching ELA at the middle and high school levels. For instance, the lessons in our kit, [Media Constructions of Martin Luther King Jr.](#), use excerpts from King's speeches to teach about literary devices and media forms; a collection of images, video clips and music to analyze representations of King and the civil rights movement; and letters to the editor to reflect on the challenges of social change.

You can [search](#) our lessons by grade level, subject area and keyword, and filter your search by media type, educational standards, and more. All our lessons provide rich media documents to teach to both core subject area objectives and media literacy.

Here are just a few of our **newest lessons for teaching [ELA at the secondary level](#)**. Click on any title below to get a brief description and to download all the teaching materials.

["The Truth About Coronavirus" - Google Searching For COVID-19](#)

[Fact or Fiction? A Snopes.com and Urban Legends Activity](#)

[Covering Black Lives Matter: Front Page Constructions](#)

[Greta Meets Malala: How Different Media Forms Present the News](#)

[Female Superheroes: Changing Powers Over Time](#)

[Bob Dylan: Storytelling for Social Justice](#)

[Fact Checkers: How Do They Decide?](#)

[Pronouns & Gender Identity: Who Gets to Choose?](#)

## **CONSTRUCTIVIST MEDIA DECODING:**

Our [student-centered, inquiry-based approach](#) is particularly effective for leading civil and reflective document-based analysis about **potentially polarizing issues**. Our lessons and methodology help students learn to ask [key questions](#); assess **truth, credibility, and accuracy** in media messages; and become **metacognitive** about their own thinking.

We believe that the critical analysis of all media messages - from books to blogs, paintings to *Pinterest* - must become habitual for all our students. Students need **continual practice** in asking [critical thinking questions](#) such as:

- *Who produced this for what purpose?*
- *Is the source and information credible?*
- *What are the biases in this message?*
- *How does my own identity influence how I see this?*

For this kind of self-reflective critical analysis to become ingrained, we need to have students practice this questioning, in age-appropriate ways, from Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, and in diverse subject areas. And we need effective and **efficient methodologies and free materials** to support the integration of media analysis into the core curriculum – helping us to teach what we already teach in ways that **engage more students** more effectively.

Project Look Sharp has published over [500 media analysis lessons](#) on our website and over [70 professional development resources](#) for this purpose. All of our lessons – including the lesson plans, media materials, and other handouts – are grant-funded so we can make them available **FREE for educators** through the [Project Look Sharp](#) website. All you need to do is set up a [free account](#).

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES:**

Project Look Sharp also has short, annotated [video demonstrations](#) of in-person and online classroom media decoding for different levels and subjects including:

- *Examining Credibility and Bias in Web Sites*
- *Decoding “Last Words” by Nas*

Our extensive [free PD materials](#) about **curriculum driven media decoding** include:

- [Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Messages](#) and other handouts and posters
- [Articles and webinars](#) about Constructivist Media Decoding
- A [DIY Guide](#) for creating your own lessons

Please consider signing up for a [free account](#) to fully view our lessons and get added to our [email list](#) so that you will get periodic notices about new lessons and resources. And please pass

on the word about [Project Look Sharp](#). Together we can build a more civil, reflective and just society for all.

**Project Look Sharp**

Ithaca College,

Email: [looksharp@ithaca.edu](mailto:looksharp@ithaca.edu)

Web: <https://www.projectlooksharp.org/>