

Dear **Elementary Librarians**,

For over two decades, [Project Look Sharp](#), a mission-driven not-for-profit **media literacy** organization at Ithaca College, has been collaborating with educators to provide free, question-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 **elementary library and information literacy** 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](#).

LESSONS FOR INFORMATION LITERACY:

While all 500+ Project Look Sharp lessons teach to AASL standards, many of the lessons will be particularly useful for library-based activities. Below are just some of the **newest** of our [20 lessons](#) tagged for **Information Literacy** at the **elementary level**. Click on any title below to get a brief description and to download all the teaching materials.

For Early Elementary:

[Internet Messages About Toys: What's the Purpose?](#)

[Wash Your Hands – What's the Right Way?](#)

[Liquids in Spiderman vs. Hydroman](#)

[First Contact: Who's Telling the Story?](#)

[What Does the Dollar Bill Tell You About the United States?](#)

For Upper Elementary:

[YouTube Recommendations: What Do I Do?](#)

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

[Incan Religion – What Sources Should I Use?](#)

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

[Tidal Waves & Tsunamis in Film: Fact & Fiction](#)

[Ancient Egypt - Ancient Media?](#)

CONSTRUCTIVIST MEDIA DECODING:

Our [constructivist approach](#) is particularly effective for **engaging all students** in learning core content and developing critical thinking skills at **all levels**. 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, TV to TikTok - must become habitual for all our students. They need **continual practice** in asking [critical thinking questions](#) such as:

- *Who produced this and for what purpose?*
- *How does it make me feel??*
- *What is included and what is left out?*
- *Is the information accurate, is this a good source?*
- *What do I learn about myself from this lesson?*

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 12th 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 our lessons – including the lesson plans, media materials, and student handouts – are grant-funded so we can make them available **FREE for educators** through the [Project Look Sharp](#) website. All educators need to do is set up an [account](#).

LIBRARIANS AS LEADERS FOR MEDIA LITERACY:

School librarians are in a unique position to help prepare our students for a world filled with powerful media messages that educate, entertain, persuade, and too often misinform. School librarians, with their **expertise** and training in information literacy, their broad **perspective** on the curriculum and their **contacts** with all teachers, are uniquely placed to lead this work.

At Project Look Sharp we are working closely with school librarians to develop the strategies, materials, and support that will assist them in becoming effective instructional leaders and coaches for the integration of question-based media analysis across the curriculum.

Consider pushing out our [Guides by Subject/Grades](#) to your teachers. Please be in contact with us if you have suggestions for how we can be most successful in this work. We are always

interested in **feedback** and in **collaborations** with librarians. Also, check out our PD resources designed to support teachers to practice effective student-centered questioning.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES:

Project Look Sharp also has short, annotated [video demonstrations](#) of in-person and online classroom media decoding with 4th graders, including:

- *Elementary Level Online Media Decoding* – YouTube Recommendations
- *Gender in Children's Commercials*
- *Decoding Money*

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](#) to your teachers. Together we can build a more civil, reflective and just society for all.

Project Look Sharp

Ithaca College

Email: looksharp@ithaca.edu

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