

Dear **Science and Environmental Studies** Teachers,

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, 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 **Science and Environmental Studies** 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 [133 lessons](#) for incorporating [question-based media analysis](#) into the teaching of science and environmental studies for grades 6-12. For instance, our extensive kits, **Media Construction of...** [Chemicals in the Environment](#), [Resource Depletion](#) and [Endangered Species](#) each contain image rich lessons overviewing the history of that topic in the media, as well as collections of article excerpts and songs about controversial issues. Our **Sustainability** kits for [middle school](#) and [high school](#) and our **Global Warming** kit include dozens of lessons using rich media - such as short video clips, social media posts, photographs, and excerpts from books, magazines, websites, films, TV shows, etc. – to teach and reinforce both core science content and critical thinking about media messages. These are in addition to many dozens of stand-alone lessons.

Below are just a few of our **new lessons** for teaching secondary science and environmental studies using the methodology we call, [Constructivist Media Decoding](#). Click on any title below to get a brief description and to download all the teaching materials.

[The Physics of Star Wars: Can the Millennium Falcon Make Light Speed?](#)

[Apocalyptic Weather Systems in Movies: Science Fact or Science Fiction](#)

[Geoengineering: Can Techno Fixes Save Us From Climate Change?](#)

[Volcanoes: Can We Protect Cities from Lava Flows?](#)

[COVID-19 & Climate Change: Graphing the Connection](#)

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

[Teaching About Climate Change: Why Does the Source Matter?](#)

Healthy Food: Who's Telling Me What I Should Eat?

Climate Disaster: Young People Act

Green Transportation: Electric Cars vs. Bicycles

Corporate Greenwashing? Exxon and Greenpeace

Wind Farm Site Selection: A Community Debates the Issues

Refrigeration Management: A Global Solution to Reverse Global Warming

Oil Pipelines: Indigenous Water Rights & Safe Energy Transport

Carbon Sequestration: Solutions to Climate Change

Meat or Veggies? The Impact of Diet on Climate

Food Waste: What's the Problem? What's the Solution?

Environmental Justice – For Whom, How and Why?

The Urgency of Climate Action

Reforestation: Carbon Sequestration

Black Lives Matter and Climate Change: What's the Connection?

You can [search](#) our lessons by grade level, subject area, keyword, and filter your search by media type, educational standards, and much more. For instance, searching [Physical Sciences + High School](#) will lead you to 45 lessons, [Middle School + Life Sciences](#) – 37 lessons, the keyword [“Justice” + Environmental Studies](#) – 8 lessons.

CONSTRUCTIVIST MEDIA DECODING:

As you will see from the titles above, we have a particular focus on climate and other **“controversial” issues**. [Our approach](#) is to give teachers the materials and support they need to lead students through a critical, informed and self-reflective examination of how we know what we know, to keep an open mind to new evidence, and to always seek more complex understandings of the world.

We believe that the critical analysis of all media messages - from scientific papers to *Facebook* posts, TV to *TikTok* - must become habitual for all our students. Students need **continual practice** in asking [critical thinking questions](#) such as:

- *Who produced this and 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 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 of 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](#).

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:

- *The Great Global Warming Swindle*
- *Hydrofracking, Media and Credibility*
- *Farming, Community and Sustainability*

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

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