

Dear Elementary 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 that are appropriate for elementary school students. 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 [88 elementary level lessons](#) for incorporating [question-based media analysis](#) into the teaching of diverse subjects. For instance, teach about nutrition in K-1 using lessons in our kit, [Critical Thinking and Health](#), or teach core U.S. history and habits of questioning using lessons in the kit, [Causes of the American Revolution](#), for upper elementary.

Below are just some our **newest lessons** for 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?](#)

[Mr. Rogers: What Do We Do When Our Feelings Are Hurt?](#)

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

[What's in My Lunchbox?](#)

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

For Upper Elementary:

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

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

[Cyberbullying: How It Hurts & How to Help](#)

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

[How Women Got the Vote: Different Authors, Different Stories](#)

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

[Harriet Tubman Seizes Freedom – Many Stories](#)

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

[Climate: What Can We Change?](#)

[Benefits And Costs of Using Plastic Shopping Bags](#)

You can [search](#) our lessons by grade level, subject area and keyword and filter your search by media type, educational standards, and much more. All our lessons provide **rich media** - such as short video clips, social media posts, songs, paintings, sculptures, photographs, and excerpts from books, magazines, websites, films, TV shows, etc. – to **teach both core subject area content and media literacy**.

CONSTRUCTIVIST MEDIA DECODING:

Our [constructivist approach](#) is particularly effective for leading civil and reflective document-based analysis about **challenging topics**. Our lessons and methodology help students learn to habitually 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. Students need **continual practice** in asking [critical thinking questions](#) such as;

- *What are the messages here about _____?*
- *Who produced this for what purpose?*
- *Is the source and information believable? Why?*
- *What do you learn about yourself 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 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 classroom media decoding for different subjects. These include demonstrations of in-person as well as [virtual media decoding](#). Elementary level demonstration videos include:

- *Gender in children's commercials*
- *First contact between Europeans and Native Americans*
- *Paintings of King George and George Washington*
- *Decoding Money*
- *Elementary Level Online Media Decoding*

These videos are just part of our extensive free [professional development materials](#), including:

- [Handouts](#), including [Key Questions for Media Analysis](#) that can be made into posters for your library or classrooms.
- [Articles, webinars](#) and a [DIY Guide](#) for creating your own media decoding 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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