

# ML3 National Newsletter #1 - May 2024

## Welcome!

This is the first in a series of periodic newsletters about the national ML3 initiative: ***Librarians as Leaders for Media Literacy***. While some of you have already been involved in ML3 in New York State, others may know very little about the history of ML3.

ML3 was born in the summer of 2021 when Project Look Sharp ([PLS](#)), received a 2-year grant from the Booth Ferris Foundation - in partnership with the New York State Library Association ([SLSA](#)) - to enable the integration of critical thinking and media literacy in schools across New York State through the leadership of K-12 public school librarians. To learn about that initiative see the [ML3 website](#).



### **Constructivist Media Decoding: (CMD)**

ML3 promotes the CMD model of inquiry-based, student-centered, curriculum-driven media analysis pioneered by Project Look Sharp over the last 30 years. Our very successful 2-year initiative (thank you SLSA) enabled our "original 19" ML3 librarians, together with hundreds of other school librarians across the state, to advise and collaborate with PLS to develop the ML3 model. In August of 2023 PLS, in partnership with the American Association of School Librarians ([AASL](#)) and in collaboration with the National Association for Media



in collaboration with the National Association for Media Literacy Education ([NAMLE](#)), received a 2 year planning grant from the federal Institute for Museum and Library Services ([IMLS](#)) to develop a plan for scaling our ML3 work across the nation.

**Online CMD Course for School Librarians:**

Based on feedback from the NYS ML3 initiative, Project Look Sharp's Executive Director, Cyndy Scheibe, led the creation of a new online course that gives school librarians the inspiration, knowledge, resources, and practice to integrate constructivist media decoding into their work with students and/or teachers.

The 15 hour course includes 4 self-paced modules with engaging activities, videos, readings, and reflections. The course begins and includes the crafting of individual activity plans, sharing with and responding to peers, and individual coaching and office hours.

We ran the *Online CMD* course as a pilot in the summer of 2023 - to rave reviews.

***CMD has changed the way that I approach teaching media with students. Having the option to do it virtually made it possible for me.***

School Librarian in the *Online CMD* Course

In response to this success we piloted three other sections of the course in the spring 2024; one for school librarians across New York State, a second course for participants in Washington State, and a third course for school librarians in 24 other states. The response to these courses has been overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing our plan to offer the Online CMD Course across the country through state school library organizations.

If you are interested in being notified about future offerings of the CMD Course for School Librarians please email us at: [looksharp@ithaca.edu](mailto:looksharp@ithaca.edu).

**Hybrid CMD Course for Teachers Facilitated by a Trained ML3 School Librarian:**

This fall through winter we also piloted a version of the Online CMD Course taught by ML3 school librarian, Bridget Crossman, which she led with 8 teachers in her Lake George, NY school district. In

addition to the 4 self-paced modules, the Hybrid version included 4 face-to-face sessions where each teacher led a brief "practice decoding" with debriefing facilitate by Bridget. As you can see from the following quotes from participating teachers - the course was a success.

***This approach fosters critical thinking and promotes deeper understanding. Students are constantly asked to navigate a complex world filled with media; in short this will be some of the most important work we do with students.*** Kaylee S. – MS English Teacher

***Before I took this class I thought that I did a good job teaching students to analyze media. Now I realize that decoding is SO much deeper than that.*** Kelly C. – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher

***After doing this work I can see how the habits of questioning presented through media decoding have the potential to enhance all our instructional strategies.*** Sarah O. - 7-12 Teacher/Librarian

***It can be incorporated in EVERY subject and at EVERY grade level. Student engagement skyrockets.*** Jen J. - HS Math Teacher

***Constructivist Media Decoding may be the most important thing we can teach our students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*** Johnathan L. - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher

We are currently working on developing a *Train the Facilitators PD* so that school librarians who have completed the *Online CMD Course* can get the additional training needed to prepare them to lead the *Hybrid CMD Course* for teachers in their schools.

If you are a graduate of the *Online CMD Course* or one of the year-long ML3 Cohort Groups, and you are interested in possibly facilitating a *Hybrid CMD Course* for educators in your district, please email us at: [looksharp@ithaca.edu](mailto:looksharp@ithaca.edu).

**New Decoding Lessons Inspired and Authored by School Librarians:**

At the same time as we have been developing these new PD courses and trainings, we have been collaborating with school librarians to produce and publish new free media decoding lessons for the PLS website. These include:

Lessons for Elementary Level:

- [Winter Holidays Around the World](#)
- [Climate, SEL, and Media Literacy](#)
- [Genres in Book Covers: K-2, 3-5](#)
- [Columbus "Discovers" America....](#)

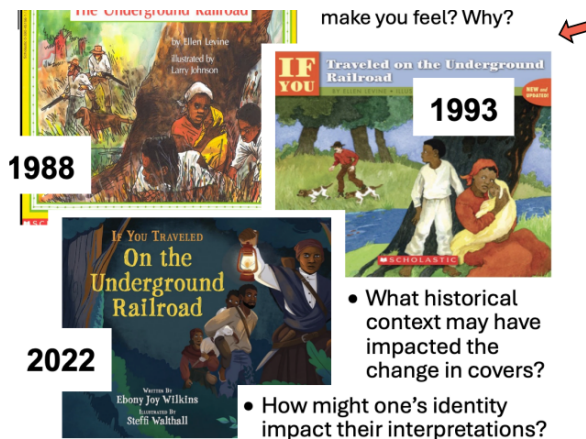


- What do you notice about this holiday?
- What questions do you have about this?
- What is similar and different about these holidays? Why might that be?



- How do the different cover

**Lessons for Secondary Level:**



- [Picturing the Underground Railroad: Historical Context on Book Covers](#)
- [Fyre Festival: Gender, Wealth, and Happiness in Social Media](#)
- [Deepfakes: What do we Believe? What do we Share?](#)
- [TikTok Timebombs](#)
- [Political Memes and Bias](#)
- [Global Perspectives in Movies](#)
- [Censoring Seuss: Cancel Culture or Cultural Respect?](#)

If you have a suggestion for a Project Look Sharp media decoding lesson that will fill a gap in our collection of 870+ lessons, or you would like to collaborate on creating a lesson, email us at: [looksharp@ithaca.edu](mailto:looksharp@ithaca.edu).

## Next Steps:

With continued piloting and refining the *Online CMD Course* for school librarians and the *Hybrid CMD Course* for teachers led by school librarians, and with the development of accessible *Train the Facilitators PD* for school librarians to run the CMD course with educators in their district, we will be poised to scale this work up across the nation.

Stay tuned for more information about this work as we seek funding to bring habits of critical thinking about media messages to all students through the leadership of school librarians.

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**ML3 National** is a collaboration between [Project Look Sharp](#) and the [American Association of School Librarians](#) in collaboration with the [National Association for Media Literacy Education](#), funded in part by a grant from the [Institute for Museum and Library Services](#).



