Science Multimedia Analysis

Why should you teach your students to analyze science multimedia?

All media has a purpose. In science, it may be to educate you or to persuade you to think a certain way or take specific actions. As students reference multiple types of media to build their science knowledge base, it is important for them to be able to recognize the purpose and the resulting message of the media. *By increasing students' awareness of the intersections between media and science, we give them tools to think like scientists*. They develop critical thinking skills, ask informed questions, evaluate data and its sources, and make informed decisions.

To practice these skills, have students focus on a select number of questions while watching a media piece.

PRODUCER AND AUDIENCE

- Who made this piece?
- Who paid for this piece to be made?
- Why was this made?
- When was this made?
- Who is the target audience and how do you know?

MESSAGE

- Is the information complete? Does the author present enough information for the audience to make an informed decision?
- Are data, statistics and evidence presented completely? Are they clear and easy to understand? Does the evidence help support the ideas in the piece?
- Does the author cite the sources of the factual information that is included in the piece? Are the sources credible? How do you know?
- Are there different sides to the issue? How much time is devoted to each? Are they given equal amounts of time? Should they be given equal amounts of time?
- Are there ideas, values or points of view that are promoted? What are they?
- What information and points of view are excluded?
- Who might benefit from this piece? Who could be harmed?
- How might different people understand this message differently?
- If a different person or organization presented this piece, would it be viewed differently?

PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

- What level of vocabulary is used? What kinds of language are used?
- How does music contribute to the feeling of the piece?
- Who is narrating the piece? What effect does the narration have?
- Are people in the piece? Who are they? Who is speaking and who is not? Do the people affect the message of the piece?

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