

Medium: *A form of communication; a storytelling environment.*

Media Education: *An educational approach that gives media users greater freedom and choice by teaching how to access, analyze, evaluate and produce media.*

- 1 "Reality" Construction:** Media construct our culture and involve "trade-offs" (goods AND bads). *ASK: What "reality" does this medium/text construct? Who produced this media? How accurate is this "reality"? What "untold stories" are missing?*
- 2 Production Techniques:** Media use identifiable production techniques. Advertisers, the public relations industry, corporations, and other powerful media makers spend BIG time, energy and money carefully constructing media to influence the ways we think, feel, behave, and buy. "Deconstructing" or analyzing production techniques – camera angles, lighting, editing, sound effects, colors, font styles, symbols – can build awareness, leading to more careful and "literate" production and consumption of media. *ASK: What kinds of production techniques does this medium/text use?*
- 3 Ownership:** Media are business, corporate, commercial interests. Most media are produced within the commercial industry – researching questions of ownership, production, and distribution is vital to understanding media's influence. *ASK: What are this medium/text's commercial motives? Who owns and/or paid for this medium/text?*
- 4 Value Messages:** Media contain ideological and value messages. Some value messages are intended, while others are unintended. Messages can be positive or negative, and messages target specific groups.. *ASK: What kinds of value messages does this medium/text promote?*
- 5 Individual Meaning:** Media users construct their own meanings from media. Good media education considers how individuals interpret media messages. *ASK: What meanings do YOU find in reflecting on this medium/text? What differing meanings might other individuals/groups find?*
- 6 Emotional Transfer:** Most media operate primarily at an emotional level and are designed to transfer emotions from a medium/text onto whatever that medium/text is selling. *ASK: What emotions does this medium/text tap?*
- 7 Pacing:** TV runs at 30 frames per second and movies run at 24 frames per second (and getting faster). The conscious brain can process 8 frames per second. New digital image-driven media tend to keep us from conscious analysis and reflection. *ASK: What do you observe about this medium/text upon reflection (showing media multiple times, or slowing down or stopping media regularly for discussion.)*