

Media Literacy Workshop

Design Documents

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Phase I: Problem Research and Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Media Literacy Workshop is an educational, multimedia environment designed for use in high school classrooms to help students practice and improve their media literacy skills. A preliminary version exists and can be demonstrated; however, there is still a lot of work to be done both in the design of the instruction itself and in the design and implementation of the software and its interaction with the user.

Some instructional design models depict design as a cyclical process in which the steps—analyze, design, develop, implement, evaluate—or some variation of them—feed back into another iteration of themselves, so that evaluation of the first version leads to analysis in preparation for a new version. By this way of thinking, *Media Literacy Workshop* is on its second repetition of the cycle.

Following this introduction, the “Research and Analysis” section of this document describes the current project and some areas for development during its “second cycle” of instructional design. Next, the “Program Analysis” section describes and critiques other projects that are relevant in various ways to *Media Literacy Workshop*. The “Project Development Plan and Calendar” gives a timetable for completion of each step in this cycle of instructional design and development. Finally, a chart developed during the first cycle of design is included as an appendix. This chart shows, for each instructional objective, the cognitive tasks involved in accomplishing this objective, the media attributes that allow these tasks to be accomplished, and the features that have been implemented in the program to enable the accomplishment of the tasks.

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

A. The learning needs or problems the program will address, including background and justification for addressing these

Because high school students still need to acquire a lot of objective, domain-specific knowledge, many high school teachers choose methods such as lecture and textbook instruction to teach information as efficiently as possible from a single source. However, due to the popularization of the Internet, and to some extent the proliferation of cable television channels, a

wider range of sources of information than in previous decades is available to the public (including to adolescents). This makes media literacy skills more important since there are more diverse perspectives to negotiate. Students need to be scaffolded so they can bridge the gap between passive acceptance of information and critical analysis of it.

B. The general purposes of the project

Media Literacy Workshop aims to provide students with an “environment” for practicing and improving their media literacy skills. This environment should provide adequate scaffolding to aid students in critical analysis. In this context media literacy is defined as the abilities to 1) understand information in the media, 2) identify and compare points of view and how they affect the presentation of information, 3) identify and understand techniques for using media to persuade; and 3) use media sources to form personal understandings of the issues discussed and communicate this understanding to others.

C. The learning goals and objectives to be established

In order to support the development of media literacy skills in the students, the instruction should enable them, by the time they complete the activities, to be able to

- *interpret information in the media.* This includes comprehension of relevant background issues and of specific vocabulary in the context of the sources. It also involves being able to identify key people, places, and terms as used in the sources. Most important, it includes developing procedures for self-instruction, such as recognizing and looking up information students do not know but need to know in order to understand the message being communicated.
- *identify the point of view of a source and how this affects the source’s presentation of information.* This includes identifying the creator and purpose of the message and the possible biases of the creator. It may also involve examining how sources are alike and different.
- *identify and understand techniques for using media to persuade.* This involves thinking about how choices of language, image, content, or focus may create a particular bias or slant.
- *use media sources, picking and choosing among the information presented, to help form a personal schema related to the issues and events discussed.* A personal understanding

of the events and issues consists of a factual schema regarding what happened where and when, an ability to describe the different points of view on any controversies relating to the events, and a personal reaction, either emotional, intellectual, or both, to the events. It may also include ideas about which aspects of the general topic are more significant and should be emphasized. The ability to communicate an understanding of the events and issues to others is treated as part of this objective, although it could, in itself, be considered a separate objective. Explaining, mapping out, or, in this case, writing one's ideas for an audience not only enables evaluation but also helps the student solidify his or her knowledge.

D. The content of the project

Following is an outline of the tentative content of *Media Literacy Workshop*.

I. Introduction

User sign-in.

- Repeat users access main menu.
- First-time users
 - receive an overview of their task (“You have been asked to contribute an article to a new electronic newspaper.... Using the resources provided on this CD, you will research, plan, illustrate, and ‘publish’ your article”) and instructions on how to use the CD.
 - are then allowed to practice using the writing and illustration tools in a humorous way that allows them to see how messages are manipulated (for example, they may be given images to manipulate in the style of the *National Enquirer*).

II. View Sources

Students will view many sources reporting on a single social issue. Each source will include text, image, and in some cases audio or video. In the right margin will be a vocabulary list of terms that students might need to look up, along with suggestions of places (online) where they can do so and space for filling in the definitions. Students will also be able to enter their own vocabulary terms.

A research guide will be available at all times to suggest sources of additional information.

For each source, students will be asked to answer three main questions (the same three for every source).

- What message is being communicated by this source?
 - Are there any words used in source that are new to you? Any people, places, or events that you haven't heard of? (If so, use the research guide to find information on these.)
 - What factual information is provided?

- What analysis or interpretation of the issue does this source provide?
- Which of this information is most useful for you in writing your own article?
- Who created this message and for what purpose?
 - What person, organization, or publication is responsible for creating this message? What do you know about this person/organization/publication?
 - For whom is the message intended?
 - Why did the creator of this message choose to communicate about this particular issue?
 - What is the purpose of the message? What values or lifestyle are being promoted?
 - Which of this information is most useful for you in writing your own article?
- How do the choices of words and/or images help convey the message?
 - To which words or phrases in this message do you react most strongly?
 - What is left out of this message that might be important to know?
 - If photos or graphics are used, why do you think these particular images were chosen?
 - Which of this information is most useful for you in writing your own article?

The first source will have the questions answered for the student and the vocabulary definitions filled in.

III. Compare Sources

This needs to be developed further. It will likely include either a table or a Venn diagram showing student responses to above questions arranged in a way that visually encourages comparison among the sources.

IV. Write Article

Using the notes in the comparison table (see the “Compare Sources” section above), which will be accessible at all times, the student will write an article on the events described by the sources. The process for doing so will be modeled by the CD in the following steps.

- Organize Information: Using a template provided on the CD, the student will outline his or her article, choose a title for it, and write a topic sentence for each paragraph. The following scaffolding may aid the learner:
 - First, summarize the issue events as you understand it.
 - Second, summarize the differences in points of view on these events.
(_____ claims that _____, while _____ argues that _____)
 - Third, explain to the reader why he or she should care about the issue. What is its importance? How do you feel about it?
- Write: The template will expand to allow room to elaborate on each topic sentence.
- Choose a photo: Students will select a photo from a gallery of photos previously seen in the sources. They will also be guided in writing a caption for the photo they select.
- Check your work: The entire text of the article, along with the photo and photo caption, will be presented again in editable format and the student will be

prompted to read the article one more time to check for errors or sections that need to be reworded.

- **Publish:** This is the reward for all of the learner's hard work. The article will be presented in a newspaper-like layout similar to that of many newspaper websites. This will be printable and may even be converted to HTML for display on a school website.

E. The probable medium of delivery

Media Literacy Workshop will be a CD-ROM-based application. It will be created in Macromedia Director 8.5 and will be able to run on either a Mac or PC-compatible computer. Internet access required for background research.

F. The relevant characteristics of the learners to be addressed

The target audience for this instruction will be high school students, ages 14–18, in high schools throughout the United States. An informal poll of high school teachers suggests that issues related to race and gender roles interest them strongly.

G. The educational setting and context in which program is likely to be used

Media Literacy Workshop will be used as part of a high school course, most likely a course in English class or contemporary issues/current events.

H. Potential instructional uses of the project in that setting and context

Most likely, *Media Literacy Workshop* would be used as a short unit on media literacy, lasting approximately one week, in which students would use class time in a computer lab or at classroom computers to complete the activities.

I. Supporting and supplementary materials that may be required

A teachers' guide would be useful, since *Media Literacy Workshop* is an in-class activity.

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Based on my own evaluation of version 1 of *Media Literacy Workshop* and on suggestions from others, I identified the following areas for development during this “second cycle” of instructional design and development:

- Instructional design:
 - Design an advance organizer that will give students practice using the “Write Article” interface and will illustrate how media messages can be manipulated.
 - Design the not-yet-developed “Compare Sources” section, which takes learners from “raw” notes written in response to questions about each source, to the point where they are actually ready to begin writing.
 - Further develop the “Write Article” section to better aid students in the writing process.
 - Consider having students work in groups to produce their newspaper articles. This way they could scaffold each other in the process and debate the issues in a more interactive way.
 - Evaluate and revise design of the entire application based on analysis of student tasks from start to finish.
- Software design/implementation:
 - Implement new design of the advance organizer and the “Compare Sources” and “Write Article” sections, and revisions identified above.
 - Evaluate usability and redesign interaction/navigational features to facilitate ease of use.

PROGRAM ANALYSIS

A. Introduction

In order to get ideas for my project I analyzed two existing “programs.” The first, *Decisions Decisions Online*, is a website containing complete multimedia lessons in which students make decisions about issues currently in the news. My main purpose in reviewing *Decisions Decisions Online* was to see how it dealt with controversial issues and how it helped students critically analyze various points of view on these issues. Next, I looked at *A Pollution Solution*, a CD-ROM-based multimedia environment in which students analyze multiple points of view on an environmental problem and prepare written recommendations regarding the solution. Like *Decisions Decisions Online*, *A Pollution Solution* deals with a controversial issue and

multiple points of view, so I was interested in comparing it with *Decisions Decisions Online*. In addition, *A Pollution Solution* asks students to take notes and write a final report. Since one of the main areas for development in *Media Literacy Workshop* is the scaffolding of students in going from notes to a final document, I wanted to see how *A Pollution Solution* handled this. In addition to *Decisions Decisions Online* and *A Pollution Solution*, I also looked at various media literacy–related lessons to see what specific educational methods they seemed to have in common. I wanted to get an overview of the methods used to teach media literacy to high school students by looking at a sampling of the many media literacy–related lesson plans available from teachers and through various organizations.

B. Decisions Decisions Online (Website: <http://ddonline.tomsnyder.com/>)

Decisions Decisions Online, available to the public by subscription, has two target audiences: teachers of grades 5–10 and their students. Teachers accessing the site will find that it contains complete lesson plans, as well as the materials needed to teach the lessons—downloadable handouts and quizzes and online activities for students. Students access the site as directed by their teachers to complete online activities. Each lesson, including online activities as well as readings and classroom discussion, is meant to be completed during one class period, although follow-up activities may extend the lesson beyond that length of time.

The site is “designed to help teach current events topics in social studies and science, while students practice decision-making skills” (from the *Decisions Decisions Online* website). It aims “to promote independent, thoughtful decision making inside and outside of the classroom” (from the *Decisions Decisions Online* website). The stated objectives are that students will

- practice and build critical-thinking skills.
- connect current events with key concepts in social studies & science.
- participate in meaningful classroom discussions.

Before beginning to teach a lesson, the teacher chooses from one of approximately seventeen topics as diverse as Internet censorship, political parties, and genetically engineered food. The teacher then downloads the appropriate handouts and makes enough copies to distribute to the students. Instructions for the teacher are also provided.

The first step for the students is to select, on the site, the appropriate topic. After choosing the topic, students are given a role in a specific scenario related to the topic (example: “You are the mayor of a town and must decide whether or not to require schools in the town to

use Internet filters”). Students, acting in their role, are guided through a five-step decision process:

1. Meet advisors.
2. Prioritize goals.
3. Learn the issue.
4. Vote.
5. Consequence.
6. Poll Results.
7. Activities.

In the “Meet advisors” step, students view an online video segment in which various advisors, who are stakeholders in the decision, present their opinions on the issue. So, for example, in the “Internet Censorship” topic, the advisors include a parent, a civil libertarian professor, a seventh-grade student, and a teacher. The advisors are shown interacting and debating with each other, so students get a sense of their different viewpoints in relation to each other, rather than in isolation.

In the “Prioritize goals” step, students use an online form that helps them prioritize their goals regarding the issue. This gives them better focus in analyzing the information in the next step, “Learn the issue,” a step that includes watching another video of the advisors, reading memos from the advisors, and discussing these memos in groups. In the video, the advisors model the use of facts and logic to back up their opinions. The advisor memos are distributed so that each student within a group of three or four has a memo from a different advisor. While the students do not have to agree with their advisor, they are asked to explain his or her point of view to their group. Thus, students practice articulating these often-clashing opinions to each other.

Each student identifies which point of view best meets his or her goals, and votes online. Note that this vote is only step three of seven. After making a decision, the student views another video of the advisors reacting to the decision. No matter what the students decide, some advisors are pleased and others are disappointed. All discuss the ramifications of the decision. This mimics a realistic scenario in which decisions have consequences, some of them social (pleasing or disappointing other people). Next, students view poll results, in the form of pie charts broken down by region, showing how other students across the United States and beyond voted on the issue. Finally, students have the opportunity to engage in more activities related to the topic. These include drawing or analyzing a political cartoon or participating in a discussion board with other students who completed the activities on the same topic.

How does *Decisions Decisions Online* accommodate for its learners, students in grades 5–10? This is a diverse population; however, some assumptions do seem to have been made. For one thing, students have Internet access in their classroom (or a computer lab in which their class is meeting) and must know how to use a mouse and Web browser. In most cases, students move through the site in linear fashion and the navigational “next step” is obvious, but in a few cases, students have to know to hit the back button on the browser to get back to where they need to go. High speed Internet access is a plus, since the videos take a long time to download.

Although the site is accessible to English-speaking students with Internet access throughout the world, some of the content is specifically American—the most blatant example of this being the topic “political parties,” which is based on the American political system. However, it is evident from the discussion board that a few students from outside the United States have used the site to learn about, for example, the American political system, and their perspectives on the discussion board are likely to provide valuable perspective to American students.

The topics on the site are presented in a way that attempts to make them as relevant as possible to students in this age group. For example, in the topic “Internet Censorship,” the group of advisors includes a student who is concerned that the use of Internet filters in her school would deny students the opportunity to learn how to screen and evaluate content in the “real world.” The discussion board for this topic shows that students do feel strongly about it, at least after having completed the activities. In addition, the “Discussion Tips” in the “Teachers Guide” say that teachers should “Feel free to critique the way the scenario mirrors reality with your students.”

Decisions Decisions Online uses a variety of techniques to make complex issues “digestible” to students in a short period of time. The questions that students consider in each topic are specific applications, (or cases) that enable them to experience the issues in context. The use of video gives students a sense that the various opinions belong to actual people with personalities. These people communicate their attitudes both verbally and nonverbally, with facial expressions and gestures. Students also get a sense of why, for example, a parent might be for Internet filters, while a student might be opposed to them. The videos and advisor memos focus on just a few main points related to each topic, and these points are repeated in different formats (verbal and written) so that students are likely to remember them.

The choice to use multimedia (video and text) is appropriate for this diverse group, because it appeals to different modality preferences. The variety of ways in which students process information about the topics—gathering information from the various sources, synthesizing advisor memos into main points to explain to other classmates, debating and voting

on issues, taking a quiz, and drawing and analyzing political cartoons, accommodate for different learning styles.

How well does *Decisions Decisions Online* meet the stated objectives? The first objective, “practice and build critical thinking skills,” seems to be well-supported. Students are scaffolded in their analysis of the various points of view by the five-step process, and critical analysis of each advisor’s point of view is modeled by the other advisors, who often criticize or comment on each other’s statements. The advisors on the video and in the memos use logic and facts to back up their statements, setting an example for students to do the same.

Regarding the objective “connect current events with key concepts in social studies & science,” the *Decisions Decisions Online* claims that these concepts are

- Interpreting statistics
- Consulting primary sources
- Separating fact from opinion

Although at least one topic (“Gun Control”) includes statistics to be analyzed, not all of the topics have this. The teacher would have to hunt for a topic that includes statistics. While the videos and advisor memos simulate primary sources in one sense, students learning to consult primary sources would ordinarily have to learn where to find them and how to determine their authenticity, topics not relevant to these lessons. Separating fact from opinion is a relevant skill here, although it is not emphasized in any of the student activities or the “Teacher’s Guide.” Therefore, this objective seems to have been added after the fact to justify the use of these lessons in the classroom. The objective could be better supported by suggesting commonly-available primary sources to be used to supplement the advisor memos (for example, the Bill of Rights). Students could be assigned to find the primary sources in the library and analyze their points of view. Alternatively, authentic primary sources could be included on the website itself.

The last objective, “participate in meaningful classroom discussions,” is supported by the site. As explained above, debate is modeled on the video by the advisors, and, before making their final decisions, students summarize their advisors’ points of view to other students and debate among themselves about how to vote. The guidelines provided to teachers help them keep the discussions on track and deal with inappropriate or unproductive behavior. Although clearly different from classroom discussion, the discussion board gives some idea of the nature of student comments. On the discussion board, students’ use of facts and logic to back up their opinions is uneven. Some give supporting information while others simply state their opinions. The general level of discussion could be improved if teachers went on the discussion board and asked

questions that challenged students to support their statements, so it is likely that this is also necessary in the classroom.

Overall, *Decisions Decisions Online* supports its goal of teaching current event topics and promoting decision-making skills. The social aspect of decision-making is emphasized through the use of video, classroom discussion, and the online discussion board. This topics are presented through specific cases, and the issues are narrowed down to a few main points, which makes them accessible, though it also risks oversimplification.

C. A Pollution Solution (Multimedia Software/CD-ROM)

A Pollution Solution is a multimedia environment created by Janet Mannheimer Zydney, a doctoral student in the Educational Communication and Technology program at New York University. Its intended use is 8th grade advanced science class. Although some of the content is still incomplete and some features are not yet fully functional, a preliminary version of the software demonstrates all of the intended features and has been tested with students.

Like *Decisions Decisions Online*, *A Pollution Solution* asks students to consider multiple points of view on an issue—in this case, industrial pollution—and then come up with their own solutions to a problem. The viewpoints presented in *A Pollution Solution*, as well as the tasks to be completed, are much more complex and authentic than those in *Decisions Decisions Online*; therefore, it is unlikely that students will be able to complete *A Pollution Solution* within a single class period. *A Pollution Solution* is designed to allow students to work in groups, which may be helpful given the level of complexity.

The goals and objectives of *A Pollution Solution*, as reported by its designer, are as follows:

Goal 1: Students will gain exposure to the complexities of solving environmental issues.

Objective 1.1: To understand the legal, ecological, sociological, economical, biological, and engineering perspectives of environmental issues.

Objective 1.2: To learn that there are multiple approaches to solving real-world problems and that there is not one "right" answer.

Goal 2: Students will improve their problem-solving and research skills by working through various cases for a fictitious client.

Objective 2.1: To improve problem-solving skills by backing up their recommendations with facts.

Objective 2.3: To solve cases by using their prior knowledge and reasoning from previous cases.

Objective 2.4: To develop a hypothesis and test its validity through research.

Goal 3: Students will gain an understanding of business and the corporate environment.

After signing in, the student receives notice that he or she has been accepted as an intern at the fictitious environmental consulting firm, “Enviro Consulting.” The “boss,” who appears on video, welcomes the student and explains the student’s task: to recommend a course of action for a client, Energy One, a utility company that is being sued by the Justice Department on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency for violating the Clean Air Act. The boss shows the student a video overview about acid rain, and then students turn their attention away from the computer to discuss the problem among themselves.

Next, students meet with Eric Cartman, VP of Sales at Energy One (also on video), who further clarifies the problem his company is facing. Because of some modifications the company recently made to its equipment, the EPA claims that, under the Clean Air Act, it should be held to higher standards regarding pollutants. The company is fined for every day it is considered noncompliant. Its public image is tarnished, and its stock prices are suffering. The options: fight the lawsuit, incurring large legal fees, or settle with the EPA and bring the plant up to code. Eric Cartman requests a report stating the intern’s suggestions about these options and about how to improve the company’s public image. Then the class pauses to discuss the ethical and legal issues presented.

After the discussion, the boss gives a short explanation of effective note-taking strategy (as modeled during the meeting with Eric Cartman) and student interns are shown to their office, where materials are provided to help in the gathering of facts and the writing of the report. The materials available for the student’s use fall into three categories:

- Help features—a phone help system provides specific suggestions on how to proceed based on the student’s current level of progress and e-mail provides an assignment and deadlines.
- Resources—Videotaped expert interviews present analyses of the problem from the points of view of a lawyer, an engineer, an environmental scientist, and an economist. An annual report provides background information on the client, and “Notebooks” provide Internet links to outside resources on law and politics, economics, technologies, environmental science, and relevant terms. There is also a notepad that students can use to take notes on these resources.
- Procedural Guide—The “research notebook” scaffolds the process, starting with students’ notes, of defining the problem, analyzing the data, and writing a final report. This process is broken down step-by-step so that the learner can focus on one task at a time. Because this process is a particular area of interest, I noted more details on each step:
 - Notes: any notes student took from various sources
 - Research plan:
 - Problem—What issues is your client trying to solve? What are your client’s objectives and goals? How do your client’s goals relate to the acid rain problem?
 - Hypothesis—ideas (compare w/ experts)
 - Plan—what info do you need
 - Resources—which will you consult?
 - Analysis: Comparative analysis chart—list alternatives (as explained by experts) with pros and cons
 - Final report: “Write your recommendation for how to solve the problem ... include a description of the problem, a recommended solution, your rationales for choosing your solution, an analysis, plan for implementation, and a plan for evaluation.”

The student may examine the materials as needed in any order, but must complete the first three steps of the research notebook before submitting the final report. Already we see a complexity beyond that in *Decisions Decisions Online*, which showed the advisor videos and memos in a specific order and summarized each point of view with a few bullet points. In *A Pollution Solution*, although the problem is fictional, the experts are real and are able to give authentic professional advice. Also, their interest in the decision is less obvious; they are experts

giving advice, not, for example, constituents with a stake in the town's school Internet filtering policy. The experts in *A Pollution Solution* do not argue directly with each other, nor do they, necessarily, address the same concerns. Thus, more work is left for the student to decide what to do with the advice.

The target learners for *A Pollution Solution* are somewhat more specific group than those for *Decisions Decisions Online*. They are in 8th grade—near the middle of the age range for *Decisions Decisions Online*—and are in an advanced science class. This means that their skill level in science, and perhaps their interest level as well, is higher than that of their peers. Therefore, it is probably appropriate for the videos of some of the experts to be more technical, explaining, for example, two smokestack filtering systems and their pros and cons.

Like *Decisions Decisions Online*, *A Pollution Solution* heightens student interest and learning by using video to simulate a social environment—in this case, an office. In order to make this environment even more effective, *A Pollution Solution* could include a final message of thanks from the client and the boss.

In general, *A Pollution Solution* scaffolds the learner less than *Decisions Decisions Online*. When this CD-ROM was tested with students the phone help system and office tour were not yet available, and students had some trouble finding information. (The office tour is meant to give an overview of what is where and the phone help system gives advice based on where the student is within the process). But even with these features, students have to decide what materials to view when—an authentic, self-directed task. This can be compared to *Decisions Decisions Online*, which reduced the cognitive load associated with the process of making the decision by forcing the student to view resources in a particular order.

How does *A Pollution Solution* meet its goals and objectives? The task given to the student interns certainly exposes them to the complexities of solving environmental issues. Through the expert interviews, they are exposed to legal, ecological, sociological, economical, biological, and engineering perspectives of environmental issues, and in order to complete their research notebooks, they must understand each perspective. Likewise, through the client's presentation of the various options, through the expert interviews, and especially through exposure to other classmates' solutions to the same problem, students learn that there are multiple approaches to solving real-world problems and that there is not one "right" answer.

Second is the goal of improving student problem-solving and research skills through work for the fictitious client. Students are given factual resources and are forced to back up their recommendations with facts. "Objective 2.3: To solve cases by using their prior knowledge and reasoning from previous cases," is unclear since there are no previous cases in this program.

Finally, the students gain an understanding of business and the corporate environment by being exposed to a client and a boss, as well as memos and other office documents. The use of video enhances the social aspect of the workplace, since the boss and client treat the student intern in a professional manner, and their tone and appearance are appropriate to a real workplace. Also, the level of trust and responsibility given to the student by the boss reflects the responsibility of a real world job and the use of the boss as a helper (through e-mail and the phone) encourages students to think of the boss as a mentor, not as a scary authority figure.

D. Various Media Literacy Lesson Plans

Many lesson plans and activities are now available on the Internet and elsewhere to teach media literacy. Because no one stood out as being particularly similar to *Media Literacy Workshop* in age group, medium, or objectives, I looked for what seemed to be common methods used to teach this topic.

Analysis of media examples—how is text, image, etc. used to create propaganda or to persuade?

- *Project Look Sharp* (<http://www.ithaca.edu/looksharp/>), a media literacy initiative based at Ithaca College, recommends (for high school students) analyzing “slang terms and implied messages of verbal content in the media” and also following current events to “compare the nature of coverage, implications about different cultures and countries.”
- The “Research Help and Instruction” section of website for the Library at CSU Monterey Bay (<http://library.csUMB.edu/instruction/icmodules/treat/persuade.html>) includes a section on “How Media Persuade: Verbally and Visually.” Here, political cartoons are displayed and the user answers multiple choice questions about the symbolism of specific images within the cartoons and the cartoons’ overall messages.

Student production of media

- A *New York Times* Daily Lesson Plan for October 17, 2001, “Spreading the Word: Analyzing the Use of Propaganda in the War Against Terrorism” (http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20011017wednesday.html?searchpv=learning_lessons), has students (grades 6–12) create their own “propaganda” collages benefiting a cause and damaging an opposing cause.

- A high school social studies teacher I corresponded with said “I ... have an assignment with my honors kids where we read *Time* magazine and make connections between the past and the present and have extended class discussions.”
- *Project Look Sharp* recommends (for high school students) “write opinion pieces about different media issues (media effects, government regulation, etc.)”
- *You Be the Editor*, a lesson plan for grades 8–12 created by the *London Free Press*, gives students scenarios in which they, in the role of editor of the newspaper, must decide how candid to be in news stories.
- As part of the New Mexico Media Literacy Project, a high school teacher posted a lesson plan (<http://lessons.ctaponline.org/~bchavanu/>) that teaches students to identify misleading information in advertising by having them create “counter-ads,” showing the negative aspects of a product such as cigarettes or fast food.

Identifying bias

- *Project Look Sharp* recommends that students ask six questions about any media message:
 1. Who is “speaking” and what is their purpose? (Who produced or sponsored the message?)
 2. Who is the target audience, and how is the message specifically tailored to them?
 3. What techniques are used to attract attention?
 4. What values and lifestyles are promoted? (What is communicated as good to be, or have, or do? What is not good to be, or have, or do?)
 5. What is implied without being specifically stated (especially about the credibility of the message)?
 6. What is left out of this message that might be important to know?

Clarification of personal ethics regarding bias and propaganda

- The *A New York Times* Daily Lesson Plan for October 17, 2001 has students read an article about leaflets that were dropped from planes into Afghanistan during the “war against terrorism” and discuss the reasons for and ethics of using propaganda in wartime.
- “How Media Persuade: Verbally and Visually” discusses and asks the learner to distinguish between bias, prejudice, racism, and jingoism. Through explanations and examples, students learn that, while “everyone has biases or preferences,” “Biases can

grow into prejudices,” and “prejudices can grow into unbridled hatred for a group based on ethnicity.”

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PLAN & CALENDAR

Phase I: Proposal: Problem Research and Analysis completed	September 27
Phase II: Instructional Design: Problem Solution	
Identify and study theories of learning and instruction, and associated instructional methods, relevant to the outcomes of the Proposal phase.	October 4
Identify and study the medium of delivery platform to be used, including its characteristics, attributes, and affordances, relevant to the outcomes of the Proposal phase.	October 11
Consider the interaction of the instructional methods selected and the characteristics, attributes, and affordances of the medium or platform selected, relevant to the outcomes of the Proposal phase	October 11
Decide on and describe the instructional design for the proposed program, relevant both to the outcomes of the Proposal phase and to the studies above (Phase II completed).	October 18
Phase III: Scriptwriting, Flowcharting, and Pre-production Management	
Scriptwriting, Flowcharting	October 25
Pre-production Management (Phase III completed)	November 8
Phase IV: Production, Programming, Post-production, and Management	
Production, Programming; Management	December 6
Post-Production; Management	December 13
Supporting & Supplementary Materials (Phase IV completed)	December 13 or 20

Phase II: Problem Solution

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Learning Theories

Bransford, J. D., et al. (1990). Anchored instruction: Why we need it and how technology can help. In D. Nix & R. Spiro (Eds.), *Cognition, Education and Multimedia*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bransford et al. make a case for the use of problem-based instruction based on the idea that competence-related knowledge is stored as “condition-action pairs,” like the if/then statements of computer programming or the “control strategies” of Collins, Brown, & Newman. From this perspective, problem-based instruction teaches not only skill or information (the “action”) but its practical application (“the condition”). Anchored instruction is a form of problem-based learning that situates problems within a larger context—often a narrative that involves multiple problems or multiple steps to solving a problem—that encourages students to see knowledge as a means to the larger end of problem-solving. The study cited in the article suggested that anchored instruction supported skills transfer. The use of the “school newspaper” scenario that frames the entire activity of *Media Literacy Workshop* is an example of anchored instruction (and also problem-based learning). The entire instructional unit takes place within that scenario, and, in that sense, the whole CD is a case or authentic task given to the learner.

Collins, A., Brown, J. S., & Newman, S. E. (1989). Cognitive apprenticeship: Teaching the crafts of reading, writing, and mathematics. In L. B. Resnick (Ed.), *Knowing, Learning, and Instruction: Essays in Honor of Robert Glaser* (pp. 453–494). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Cognitive apprenticeship applies some characteristics of traditional apprenticeship—expert guidance, immersion in a task’s culture, gradual shifting of more and more responsibility for a task to the learner—to the teaching of cognitive and metacognitive skills. Although cognitive apprenticeship can be used to teach all types of knowledge, it teaches domain knowledge and heuristic strategies (“tricks of the trade”) in the context of problem solving (i.e., learning is *situated*), and places particular emphasis on control strategies (monitoring, diagnostic, and remedial metacognitive skills) and learning strategies (procedures for learning). A cognitive apprenticeship “expert” will first model the task to be taught, making his or her reasoning explicit for the learner (providing a conceptual map) by “thinking out loud.” The “expert” will then “fade” slowly, coaching the student only as much as necessary while the student takes over more and more responsibility for performing the task. Cognitive apprenticeship takes place in *Media Literacy Workshop* with the use of leading questions that prompt the learner to consider certain aspects of the media examples. This is a form of modeling that can fade as the learner finds he or she no longer needs to access the additional scaffolding provided with he or she clicks on the “ideas” button.

Spiro, R. J., & Jehng, J. C. (1990). Cognitive flexibility and hypertext: Theory and technology for the nonlinear and multidimensional traversal of complex subject matter. In D. Nix & R.

Spiro (Eds.), *Cognition, Education and Multimedia: Exploring Ideas in High Technology*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

As a learner moves out of the novice phase, content in many domains becomes so irregular in its application that techniques such as rote memorization of facts and rules cannot possibly cover all situations in which the knowledge may have to be applied. With KANE, Spiro & Jehng offer an example of the Cognitive Flexibility Hypertext Approach as a more appropriate method for learners at “the intermediate stage of advanced knowledge acquisition,” in “ill-structures domains.” KANE exposes learners to a large number of (mini-)cases that illustrate particular themes in the film *Citizen Kane*, creating “variability of instantiation.” Students see both the similarities and the subtle differences in how each “mini-case” illustrates the theme, and therefore gain a rich understanding of the theme that can be applied to new instances. Furthermore, KANE is what Spiro and Jehng call a “criss-crossed landscape”; it is structured in such a way that each unit of instruction (“mini-case” or “region”) can “be revisited from a variety of vantage points, each perspective highlighting aspects of the region in a somewhat different way than the other perspectives.” This does justice to the complexity of connections that is inherent in an ill-structured domain and avoids the reductive approach of compartmentalizing the content. Because it allows for “random-access instruction,” in this case the spontaneous resorting of short segments of video, the videodisk as a medium enables Spiro & Jehng’s instructional methods in a way that traditional video, for example, would not. Although *Media Literacy Workshop* is not an example of cognitive flexibility hypertext per se, it does implement aspects of cognitive flexibility theory. In fact, cognitive flexibility is at the heart of the instructional goal. Media literacy requires the “the ability to spontaneously restructure one’s knowledge, in many ways, in adaptive response to radically changing situational demands”—new events and the media reports of them being the “radically changing situational demands.” Like a cognitive flexibility hypertext, *Media Literacy Workshop* presents multiple interpretive frameworks that could each be used to explain the whole and attempts to teach that one can gain a deeper understanding through knowledge and careful consideration of multiple interpretations.

B. Media Literacy Theory and Methods

Alverman, D. E. & M. C. Hagood. Critical media literacy: Research, theory, and practice in “new times.” *The Journal of Educational Research*, 93(3): 193–205, January/February 2000. Retrieved October 4, 2002 from the World Wide Web:

<http://vweb.hwhhttp://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/.com/>

Alverman and Hagood believe that the traditional “discourse of school,” which emphasizes binaries—popular culture versus canonical art and literature, acceptable versus unacceptable behavior, school versus home, mind versus body, and reason versus emotion—must be overcome in order to successfully incorporate media literacy into the curriculum. They strongly advocate the use of popular culture to develop critical media literacy skills in adolescents because using popular culture helps students transfer their skills to their everyday lives. However, the article cautions educators to use popular culture in a way that allows students to continue to feel pleasure from it, even while analyzing it critically. Rather than just giving a standard definition of media literacy, Alverman and Hagood discuss the different ways media literacy can be defined from the different theoretical perspectives: cultural studies, postmodernism, feminism, etc. The article emphasizes the concept of audience and the ways in which

audience members bring their own identities, including but not limited to gender, race, and social class, into their construction of meaning.

Covington, W. G., Jr. Media literacy—an integral part of a liberal education. *International Journal of Instructional Media*, 24(1): 37–42, 1997. Retrieved October 4, 2002 from the World Wide Web:

<http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/>

Covington begins with the “mere pervasiveness of the media” as a justification for teaching media literacy. The media are a “public resource” from which we get our information about the world around us, but the “technological success” of the modern media, as opposed to, for example, the printing press, “makes them appear all-powerful.” Covington seems to imply that because many consumers of media do not understand the technology behind them they invest the media with too much authority. The article goes on to discuss specific aspects of the media that should be considered as part of a process of demystification. These include the ways that a medium’s attributes influence its message, the systematic constraints under which media offerings are produced (i.e. financial, social, political pressures), and the fact that media use symbols to represent actual experience—and that these symbols can be perceived differently by different people. Covington concludes that there are two ways to integrate media literacy into the curriculum: through specific courses on media literacy or through incorporation of media literacy across the curriculum.

Hoffmann, G. Media literacy study. *Etc.*, 56(2): 165–171, summer 1999. Retrieved October 3, 2002 from the World Wide Web:

<http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/>

Through use of pre- and posttests, Hoffmann tested the effectiveness of the exercises in his book *Mapping the Media* (see the next bibliography entry below) with middle school and high school students. Hoffmann found that, from the pretest to the posttest, there was an increase in the students’ ability to identify values commonly used by media people to decide what to report in the news (“timeliness, prominence or celebrity, conflict, proximity, unusual, etc.”). Students also became increasingly aware of the process of creating media and told researchers they would look at media sources with more scrutiny in the future. Hoffmann also collected general information about the media use of students in this age group and found that they watch an average of 4-6 hours of television per day, do not read many newspapers, and, when reading magazines, read primarily “target-marketed periodicals directed at youth audiences.”

Hoffmann, G., with P. D. Johnston. Selections from *Mapping the Media*. *Etc.*, 54: 394–405, winter 1997–1998. Retrieved October 4, 2002 from the World Wide Web:

<http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/>

Hoffmann’s book, *Mapping the Media*, provides suggestions and lesson plans meant to help integrate media literacy and critical thinking into existing curricula. It is, in part, the result of the author’s work developing media literacy courses for education students and teachers of middle school and high school. Hoffmann believes adolescence is the most important time “for the introduction of media literacy and a general semantics approach to critical thinking.” Hoffmann claims to share several “basic premises” with others working in this area: “Media messages are constructions”; “Meanings of media messages are negotiated between the producer and consumer of these messages”; “Media present values and ideologies in their messages”; and “Media are businesses with commercial concerns.” Hoffmann also points out that “Internet communication, the growth of cable TV and other technological advances” have given students access to

more information than ever. With this comes an increased number of choices for them to make about media and therefore increased need for media literacy skills.

Kubey, R. Media literacy: Required reading for the 21st century. *High School Magazine*, 7(8): 29–33, April 2000. Retrieved October 3, 2002 from the World Wide Web:
<http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/>

This article focuses on the need for media literacy education in the United States as preparation for participation in the political process (i.e. voting). Almost all of the information citizens receive regarding candidates and political issues comes through the media. Therefore, it is crucial that students be taught to evaluate critically information in the media. Although media education is in the curricula in “at least 48” states, Kubey points out that this does not mean these curricular standards are being met. The article recommends having students create their own media stories for an audience of their peers or their communities.

McBrien, J. L. New texts, new tools: An argument for media literacy. *Educational Leadership*, 57(2): 76–79, October 1999. Retrieved October 3, 2002 from the World Wide Web:
<http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/>

McBrien discusses why and how media literacy should be taught in schools, focusing on high school– and early-college-age students. The article’s argument for teaching media literacy is, essentially, that “the student who is safest from unsavory messages is the student who is educated about them and can assess and evaluate the messages him- or herself.” McBrien advocates media education that includes four major concepts: 1) “All media are constructed”; 2) “Media... have a purpose..., they also have a point of view”; 3) “Different people will interpret media messages differently”; and 4) “The forms of media contribute to their meaning.” For teaching these concepts, McBrien recommends a five step process: 1) Examine the “historical and contemporary backgrounds of a particular medium...” to “clarify the reasons for the medium’s existence”; 2) Recognize the tools used to create the media product (which helps students “distance themselves from the “suspension of disbelief”); 3) Recognize the techniques used to make the media product (i.e. how the tools are used); 4) Evaluate the media messages vis à vis students’ own values, emotions, and beliefs; and 5) Produce original media products.

Minkel, W. Media literacy—part of the curriculum? *School Library Journal*, 48(4): 31, April 2002. Retrieved October 3, 2002 from the World Wide Web:
<http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/>

Perhaps because of its more centralized education system, Canada has been able to integrate media literacy into curricula far more quickly than the United States. Minkel discusses what has been done in Canada to promote media literacy education. In addition, the article emphasizes the importance of understanding the creative process of creating media products. Anne Taylor, co-director of the Canadian nonprofit organization Media Awareness Network, is quoted as follows: “When students learn about the creative process...they’ll be more likely to respect the work of others, and plagiarize less.... It’s not about answers, it’s about asking the right questions.”

Schwarz, G. Renewing teaching through media literacy. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 37(1): 8–12, fall 2000. Retrieved October 4, 2002 from the World Wide Web:
<http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/>

The primary purpose of this article seems to be to persuade teachers to add media literacy activities to their curricula. This, the article claims, will both benefit students

and “revitalize” teachers. Most relevant to my purposes are the article’s discussions of “student needs” and “curriculum applications.” Schwarz claims that media literacy benefits students because it includes “hands-on experiential learning,” “is consistent with learning-styles research,” “fosters collaborative learning,” “has been successful in appealing to at-risk students,” “fosters employment opportunities,” and “connects the curriculum of the classroom to the curriculum of the living room.” I agree with Schwarz that media literacy curricula have the potential to do these things; however, a particular media literacy activity will necessarily accomplish all of them. Schwarz outlines the types of activities that may be used to teach media literacy: “deconstruct or analyze news stories on TV, compare stories from multiple sources, locate political advertisements, question the quality of information in the Internet...create their own media and share their viewpoints.”

C. Teaching with Hypertext Media (including Internet and Multimedia Software)

Balcytiene, A. (1999). Exploring individual processes of knowledge construction with hypertext. *Instructional Science*, 27, 303–328. Retrieved December 5, 2001 from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.wkap.nl/journal>

This article reports on a study of Finnish university students’ use of an educational hypertext. Information was gathered through pre- and post-tests on the content, videotapes of students using the hypertext, recordings of their on-screen activities, and interviews with the students. Balcytiene points out that the benefits of hypertext learning—that it individualizes the learning process and allows students to direct their own learning, thereby fostering critical thinking—depend on learners’ abilities to set their own learning goals and monitor their own progress. The study found that some students (termed “self-regulated” learners) were able to do this whereas others (termed “cue-dependent” learners) looked for guidance from the hypertext, often pursuing answers to specific “guiding questions” posed by the hypertext and missing larger points about the content as a whole and its structure. For these cue-dependent learners, Balcytiene points out, it is necessary to include introductory information “clarifying the purposes of reading, activating background knowledge, and, especially, inducing students to use the structure of the hypertext to guide the respective reading.” When using guiding questions, however, Balcytiene points out that the hypertext should not allow students to simply seek out the answers to the questions without having to employ metacognitive skills. In other words, guiding questions should be part of a larger problem-solving task that requires students to assess what additional knowledge they need to acquire.

Bos, N. (2000). High school students’ critical evaluation of scientific resources on the World Wide Web. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 9(2), 161–173. Retrieved October 16, 2002 from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.wkap.nl/journal>

Bos studied an activity in which eleventh-grade science students evaluated websites on a particular topic and then wrote reviews of the websites. The student reviews were, in turn, “published” on the Internet. Like *Media Literacy Workshop*, this activity included both critical evaluation of sources and student production. Further, like *Media Literacy Workshop*, this activity required students to form their own perspectives on the topic based on their analyses of the sources. The model of critical evaluation used in this

activity consists of four parts: “summarization of content, evaluation of credibility, evaluation of organization, and evaluation of use of media.” This paper focuses mainly on the first two parts. Through analysis of student reviews, Bos determined that students were, in most cases, capable of summarizing the sources. However, they were rarely able to identify bias in a source. Bos postulates that this “points to the need to clarify what is meant by bias... Instead of being asked to look for ‘bias’, a term with negative connotations, students should be asked to consider the ‘point of view’.”

Bos, N. (2001). Giving back to the web: Social filtering of world wide web resources in high school science. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 10(1), 3–15. Retrieved December 5, 2001 from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.wkap.nl/journal>

This article deals with the same study as the Bos 2000 article (see above), this time examining student reviews to determine students’ ability to evaluate websites’ organization and use of media. Bos reports that in writing reviews of websites, students became aware of their organizational structures and how these structures contributes to the students’ “sense-making” process. Bos also found that, by thinking about how different types of media were used to represent meaning, students became more aware of how they perceived information in the media. Bos notes the developmental importance of “the ability to recognize and coordinate self and other perspectives.” His term “social filtering” refers to the process of selecting resources from the vast selection available on the Internet and, in the case of this student project, creating original reviews to frame the sources in a critical context.

Lenhart, A., et al. The Internet and education: Findings of the Pew Internet & American Life Project. Embargoed for release September 1, 2001. Retrieved October 11, 2002 from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.pewinternet.org/>

This study examined educational use of the Internet among American teenagers (ages 12-17). At the time of the study, 98% of American public schools had some kind of Internet access, and 70% of classrooms had Internet connections. This is significant in the decision about whether or not to include actual links to websites in *Media Literacy Workshop* (the first version did not). Of most concern to me was how teenagers get information from online sources. According to the study, 94% of teenagers who have Internet access use the Internet for school research, and 71% of online teens reported relying primarily on Internet sources for their last big report. Also of interest is the fact that 17% of “online teens” have created a Web page for a school project. This means that while some teens have experience with multimedia creation, many others might not.

Lenhart, A. et al. Teenage life online: The rise of the instant-message generation and the Internet’s impact on friendships and family relations. Pew Internet & American Life Project. Embargoed for release June 20, 2001. Retrieved October 11, 2002 from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.pewinternet.org/>

In addition to collecting statistical information about how teenagers (ages 12-17) use the Internet, this study used a threaded bulletin board to gather further insights from 21 teenagers on their Internet use. The study shows that teenagers rely on the Internet for information: 68% of “online teens” have searched for news online. On the bulletin board, teenagers were asked how they know which information on the Internet to trust, and many reported using a “gut sense” or “I know it when I see it” rule. Some check

with other websites or books to confirm information. The study reports that “Many teens are fairly skeptical of the information they see on Web sites because they are aware of how easy it is to publish online.” This suggests that student production is key to teaching media literacy.

INTERACTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND MEDIUM

Media Literacy Workshop will be a multimedia environment that will incorporate video, text, and image. Although the program will be built in Macromedia Director and delivered via CD-ROM, extensive use will also be made of the Internet. This multimedia approach is key to achieving the goal and objectives of *Media Literacy Workshop*, since students should be able to practice their media literacy skills on a reasonably diverse sample of media sources that is representative of the sources they use to get information inside and outside of the classroom. Because the Pew studies (see annotated bibliography, above) show that the Internet is a very significant source of information for teenagers, it is important that websites are included among the media sources to be analyzed.

The program will use a variety of instructional models in a variety of ways. Sources on three constructivist models—anchored instruction, cognitive apprenticeship, and cognitive flexibility—are included in the annotated bibliography above with explanations of how they apply to *Media Literacy Workshop*. Of these, only one, cognitive flexibility, is directly tied to specific attributes of the medium. Cognitive flexibility depends on the use of a medium that can spontaneously restructure and display content in response to the user’s needs. Although *Media Literacy Workshop* is not a true cognitive flexibility hypertext, the fact that it is built with a computer-based medium, as opposed to a more linear medium such as video, allows the user to move from one source to another almost instantly; in doing so the learner also moves from one interpretation of the issue to another.

Although anchored instruction and cognitive apprenticeship do not specify a particular medium or particular media attributes, the features of *Media Literacy Workshop* that implement these models are facilitated by the use of computer-based, interactive multimedia. For example, the “anchor” for the student’s task, an assignment from the editor of an electronic newspaper, can be presented as video so that the scenario seems lifelike. Scaffolding can be made flexible through the use of this interactive medium so that the student can choose when to seek help. An example of this are the “sub-questions” that guide the user in answering questions about the media examples but that the student can choose to view or not to view.

The chart on the following page breaks down the cognitive tasks associated with each of *Media Literacy Workshop*'s objectives and specifies the media attributes necessary for completing these tasks, and the features implemented to facilitate completion of the tasks.

Learning Objective	Cognitive Task	Media Attributes	Feature Implemented
<i>understand information in the media:</i>			
background issues	activate related knowledge, access appropriate schema where new information can be placed	ability to provide information on a particular issue; flexibility so the learner can access more or less background information depending on prior knowledge	links to websites containing pertinent information as well as a general search engine
vocabulary—people, places, terms	identify unfamiliar words; access definitions	some way to remind students to check for unfamiliar words; searchable dictionary	link to online dictionary, question that prompts students to look up unfamiliar terms
<i>identify the points of view and how they affect presentation:</i>			
source	identify characteristics of the source based on verbal and nonverbal clues	ability to search for information on a particular organization, publication, or individual	links to websites containing pertinent information as well as a general search engine
point of view	examine how characteristics of source might lead to certain opinions or concerns evident in the message	display of audio, video, visual, and text examples; feature for questioning student and receiving (non-multiple choice) responses	display of media examples in one window; student questions and responses in another
comparison	compare sources to see how points of view are similar and different	visual and text representations of similarities and differences that the student can control	Venn diagram with a circle for each of two sources; spaces for student to type in either circle or in the intersection
<i>identify and understand techniques for using media to persuade:</i>			

what is there	identify specific examples of words, phrases, images, etc. that have strong emotional impact.	display of audio, video, visual, and text examples; feature for questioning student and receiving (non-multiple choice) responses	display of media examples in one window; student questions and responses in another
what is left out	identify relevant information that is “left out” and speculate as to why it has been left out or what effect its omission has	display of audio, video, visual, and text examples; feature for questioning student and receiving (non-multiple choice) responses	display of media examples in one window; student questions and responses in another
<i>use media sources, picking and choosing among the information presented, to help form a personal schema related to the issues and events discussed:</i>			
summarize facts about issue	recall and synthesize factual information from various sources about the issue	ability to record student writing about sources; ability to display sources and student notes at the student’s request	navigation that allows users to view any part of program at any time; structured writing space for students with final article saved to hard drive
describe points of view	identify and summarize two sources representing different points of view on the issue	same as above	navigation that allows users to view any part of program at any time; structured writing space for students with final article saved to hard drive
personal reaction	develop and express a personal interpretation (schema) related to the issue	same as above	structured writing space for students with final article saved to hard drive

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN SOLUTION

The content of *Media Literacy Workshop* comes from the media sources, from the processes modeled by the CD, and from the student him/herself. The media sources—approximately ten websites, cartoons, posters, and advertisements from a politically and geographically diverse group of speakers, publications, and organizations—do provide information, but their literal content is not the focus of the instruction. Rather, the focus is on the processes of understanding information in media sources, analyzing and comparing different sources, constructing a personal understanding of the information from the sources, and communicating that understanding to others. The following outline illustrates how these processes are modeled by the CD.

I. Introduction

User sign-in.

- Repeat users go directly to any part of the CD.
- First-time users
 - receive an overview of their task (“You have been asked to contribute an editorial to your school’s new electronic newspaper.... Using the resources provided on this CD, you will research, plan, illustrate, and ‘publish’ your editorial.”) and an introduction on how to use the CD.
 - receive a video introduction to the issue they have been assigned (in this case: Should the government pass tougher gun control laws to make it more difficult for people to own guns?)
 - receive instructions on how to use the features of the CD.

II. Consult Sources

Students will view many sources reporting on a single social issue. Each source will include text, image, and in some cases audio or video. Available at all times will be internet sources on the issue and an online dictionary that students can use to look up unfamiliar terms.

For each source, students will be asked to answer three main questions (the same three for every source).

- What message is being communicated by this source?
 - Are there any words used in source that are new to you? Any people, places, or events that you haven’t heard of? Images you don’t understand? (If so, use the research guide to find information on these.)
 - What factual information is provided?
 - What analysis or interpretation of the issue does this source provide?
 - Which of this information is most useful for you in writing your own article?
- Who created this message and for what purpose?
 - What person, organization, or publication is responsible for creating this message? What do you know about this

- person/organization/publication? (If necessary look up information on the creator of the message.)
 - For whom is the message intended?
 - Why did the creator of this message choose to communicate about this particular issue?
 - What is the purpose of the message? What values or lifestyle are being promoted?
 - Which of this information is most useful for you in writing your own article?
- How do the choices of words and/or images help convey the message?
 - To which words, or phrases, or images in this message do you react most strongly?
 - What is left out of this message that might be important to know?
 - If photos or graphics are used, why do you think these particular images were chosen?
 - Which of this information is most useful for you in writing your own article?

The first source will be a “worked example” with the questions answered for the student.

III. Compare Sources

In this section, the student will choose two of the sources to compare. The main part of the screen will consist of a Venn diagram with two intersecting circles representing the two sources. The questions from the previous section will be re-displayed and the student will summarize the answer to each question for each source (in the appropriate circle) and will also identify what the sources have in common regarding each question (in the intersection of the circles). The student will be able to see his or her answers to the questions from the previous section and will also be able to review the sources themselves.

IV. Write Editorial

Using his or her work from the previous section, the student will write the editorial. This process will be modeled by the CD in the following steps.

- State your position.
 - In 1 sentence, answer the question "Should the government pass tougher gun control laws to make it more difficult for people to own guns?"
 - In a few sentences, give the reason or reasons why you feel this way.
- Discuss First Source.
 - Start by citing the source you are talking about. For example, "According to the American Association of Associations website (<http://www.aaassoc.org>),...."
 - Explain what is the message being communicated by this source. Your work on this question in the "Compare Sources" section is included for your use.
 - Explain who created this source and for what purpose. Your work on this question in the "Compare Sources" section is included for your use.
- Discuss Second Source.

- Same as for first source.
- Compare and Evaluate.
 - Explain what these sources have in common. Your work on this question in the "Compare Sources" section is included for you to work with.
 - In a few sentences, summarize the major differences in these sources. Think about the "Compare Sources" section. What could only be placed in the red circle or the blue circle, but not in both?
 - Evaluate the sources. Which one seems more credible and why? What biases do these sources have?
- Conclude your argument.
 - What reasons have you given so far (in discussing the sources) for your opinion on the issue? Restate the most important reasons.
 - Why might someone disagree? Give at least one reason and explain why this reason does not persuade you.
 - Write a strong, 1-sentence conclusion. What do you want your readers to remember about the issue?
- Choose a photo. Students will select a photo from a gallery of photos previously seen in the sources.
- Check your work. The entire text of the article will be presented again in editable format.
 - Read through your whole article. Does it make sense? Did you write in complete, grammatically correct sentences? Is there anything else you want to add. This is your last chance to make final changes.
- Publish. This is the reward for all of the learner's hard work. The article will be presented in a newspaper-like layout similar to that of many newspaper websites. This will be printable and may even be converted to HTML for display on a school website.

Each use of the CD will begin with a user sign-in. Repeat users will be welcomed and will be able to go from here to any part of the CD they wish. Their previous work, saved on the hard drive of the computer, will be retrieved for their use. First-time users will receive an overview of their task: "You have been asked to contribute an editorial to a new electronic newspaper.... Using the resources provided on this CD, you will research, plan, illustrate, and 'publish' your editorial." They will then be "introduced" to Hannah Bluebury, editor of the online newspaper, who will give them a more detailed assignment. Learners will be asked to write about a specific issue—in this case gun control. Some background information on the issue will be provided in the form of a video, and instructions will be given on how to use the CD to complete the assignment, including how to use the CD's navigational features. More help will always be accessible from the left-hand menu's "Help" feature.

Once the student has been given the task, he or she will be directed to the "Consult Sources" section, where the sources will be accessible by clicking on the menu at the left side of the screen. Each source will open in a new window that can be closed by the learner. For

audio sources, optional text transcriptions will be provided. For each source, questions will be asked to guide the learner through the process of understanding and analyzing the information. Since the questions are fairly broad, additional, more specific “sub-questions,” will be made available to the learner who needs ideas about how to break up the main questions into more easily-tackled units. The questions (main and sub-) are meant not just to test the learner’s understanding but to make explicit the normally internal process of extracting meaning from the media. In other words, these are the types of questions one should ask oneself when gathering information from television, radio, newspapers, or websites. Because the same questions are repeated for all ten (or so) sources, students may begin to internalize them to the extent that they no longer need to click on the “ideas” button. The answers to the questions are revisited in the “Compare Sources” section as points for comparing the sources in the Venn diagram. While the learner is in the “Consult Sources” section, three buttons will be available: “online resources,” which displays the results of a Google.com search on the issue; “ideas for this question,” which displays the “sub-questions” discussed above; and “dictionary,” which opens an online dictionary.

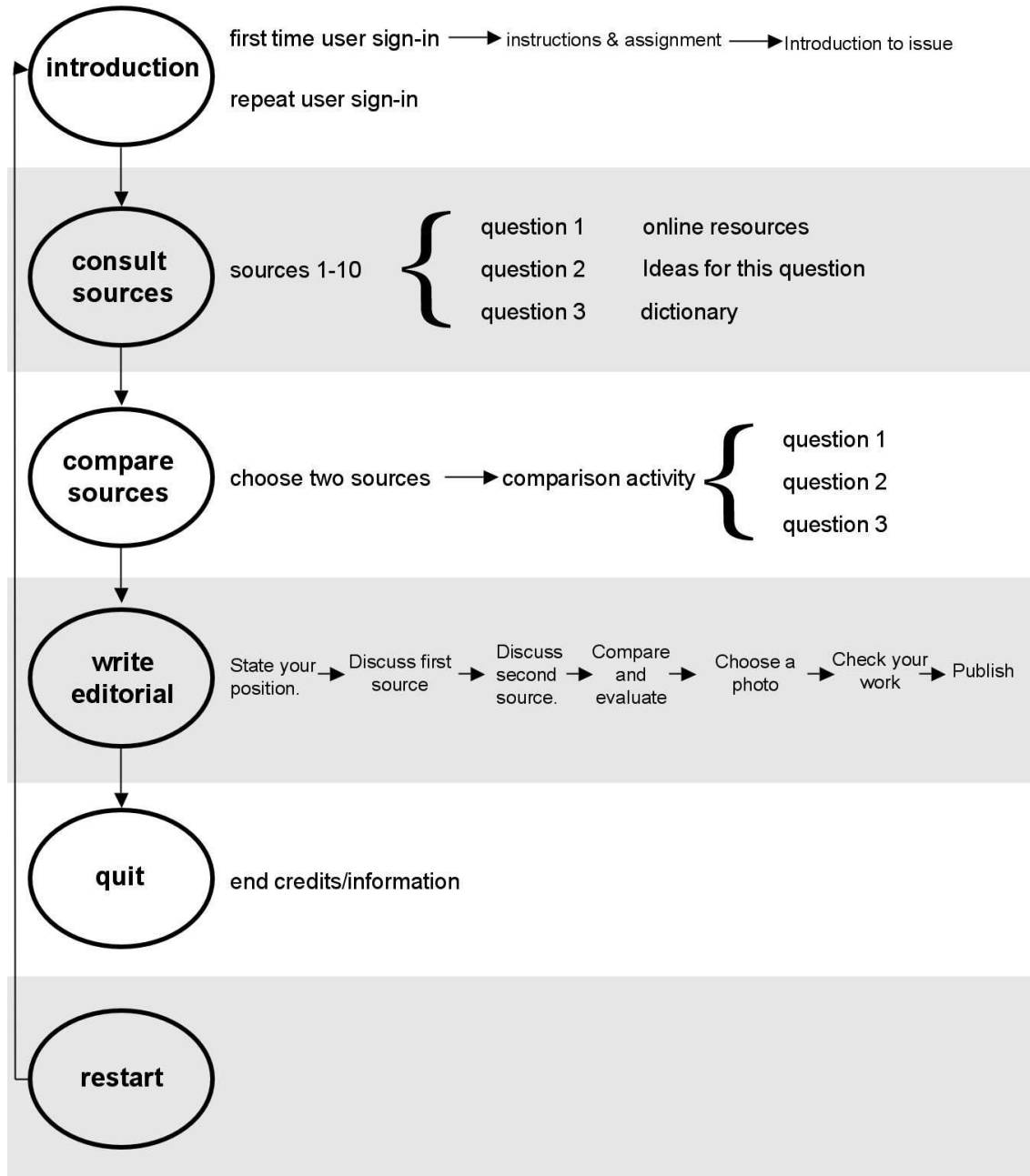
In the “Compare Sources” section, students will choose two of the sources to compare in a Venn diagram, and later in their editorials. Here, students will revisit their answers to the questions in the previous section, summarizing them and placing them in the circle representing the appropriate source. Students will also identify what the sources have in common regarding each question, and summarize that in the intersection of the circles. This exercise helps students begin to think about the sources in relation to each other, rather than in isolation, and forces them to make concrete statements about what the sources have in common.

The actual writing of the editorial is done within a structure provided by the program. Spaces are provided for each step and more detailed instructions, which students can either hide or view, help students who might have “writer’s block.” In the “choose a photo” step, photos from all the sources will be available so the student will be able to select the one that best accompanies his or her editorial. Finally, students will be prompted to proofread their own work. When the student is finished, he or she will be congratulated by Hannah Bluebury and the editorial will be displayed on screen in a format that resembles an online newspaper such as the *New York Times* online. This will be printable, and the text will be saved to the hard drive for later access and grading.

Phase III: Scriptwriting, Flowcharting, and Pre-production Management

FLOW CHART

media literacy workshop | *flow chart*



SCRIPTS

A. Voiceovers for introduction to gun control issue

NARRATOR 1: Should the government pass tougher gun control laws to make it more difficult for people to own guns?

WOMAN 1: It's a complicated issue. Gun violence is a serious problem, but I'm not sure of the best way to solve it. Do gun control laws work?

MAN 1: I know gun control laws can't stop all gun crimes, but any law that takes guns off the streets is a step in the right direction. Even if the laws save just a few people, they are worth it.

WOMAN 2: Guns are out there. There's nothing we can do about that. If the criminals have guns, I want to have one, too.

WOMAN 3: Why would anyone own a gun? Haven't we seen from the school shootings in the past few years that guns often fall into the wrong hands? Parents who own guns are setting a bad example.

MAN 2: I enjoy hunting as a sport and I use guns responsibly. Instead of banning guns, we should teach young people how to use them safely. Banning guns will only make them more appealing.

MAN 3: I realize that some people enjoy hunting and target shooting and use their guns responsibly, but these people should realize that many people *don't* use guns responsibly and that tougher gun control laws could save lives.

WOMAN 4: The United States Constitution gives every American the right to own a gun. Our rights are part of what makes America great and we shouldn't let the government take these rights away.

MAN 4: I'm not sure what is best. I can see good points on both sides.

NARRATOR 2: *Should* the government pass tougher gun control laws to make it more difficult for people to own guns?

NARRATOR 1: What do YOU think?

B: Hannah's "Video"/Voiceovers

I.

[To be spoken by Hannah on video]

Nice to meet you. I'm so pleased you'll be writing for us.

Your assignment will be to write an editorial—an opinion article—on a controversial issue. To do this, you will first have to research the issue by looking at various sources—including websites, cartoons, art, and advertisements—that present different points of view. You will then have to analyze the sources to decide which information is useful for your article. This CD will help you through the process.

Remember, whenever you see my picture on the screen you can use the controls under the picture to play more instructions.

To hear about the issue you have been assigned, click on the "next" arrow to go to the next screen.

II.

[To be spoken by Hannah on video]

Hello, again. This is the main screen of the "Consult Sources" section. From here, you can access the ten sources that are available on your issue. To see the list of sources, go to the menu on the left side of the screen and click on "Consult Sources." You can try this now.

On the right side of the screen are three white buttons. Find the top button—the one with the

“mouse” icon—and point to it with the mouse. The words “online resources” should appear underneath the button. Clicking on this button will allow you to search on the web for online resources related to your issue. You can use this button if you want more information than what is included in the ten sources on the CD.

Now move your mouse down to the middle of the three white buttons, the one with a “thought bubble” icon. As you are viewing and analyzing the sources, you will be asked to answer three questions about each source. You can use this button to get more ideas about how to answer the questions.

Finally, move your mouse down to the bottom of the three white buttons, the one with the question mark. This button will allow you to access an online dictionary where you can look up any words in the sources that you do not understand.

When you are ready to begin viewing the sources, click on the word “next.” The first source that you will see is an example that has the questions answered for you.

III.

[To be spoken by Hannah on video]

This screen looks complicated, but I know you’ll get the hang of it. If you have trouble, you can ask your teacher or your classmates.

I’d like you to think about the sources you viewed in the “Consult Sources” section. Soon, you will have to choose two sources to write about in your editorial. Find the white box on the screen that says “Choose First Source” and click on that box now. See the list of sources? Select one source, just for now. You can always change your selection later on. Once you have chosen a source, you can click on “view source” to remind yourself what the source was.

Now find the white box that says “Choose Second Source.” This box works just like the “Choose First Source Box.” Look through the sources and think about which ones you want to focus on in your editorial. You can choose two sources that take a similar position on the

issue or two sources that strongly disagree. You don't have to agree with the sources you choose. When you have chosen your two sources you should see the names of your choices in the white boxes.

Remember, you can change your mind after these instructions are over, but for now, let's move on. See the question in silver near the top of the screen? It should look familiar! If you click on "view notes" you can see your answer to this question for the sources you selected. Try this now.

The purpose of the "Compare Sources" section of the CD is for you to use your notes from the "Consult Sources" section to compare and contrast the sources you have selected.

Click on the words in the red circle. Here you will summarize your answer to question one for the first source you selected—refer to your notes; you've already done most of the work. You should do the same for the second source, typing that source's answer in the blue circle. After you are finished with this look for what the red and blue circles have in common. If you see anything, type that in the place where the two circles intersect.

When you are finished with question 1, move on to questions 2 and 3, keeping your source selections the same.

IV.

[To be spoken by Hannah on video]

Good work! Now comes the fun part; actually writing your editorial. Your work in the "Compare Sources" will really come in handy.

There are eight steps to writing your editorial. They are listed in the menu on the left side of the screen under the words "Write Article." I recommend that you complete these steps in order, although you can always go back and change something if you need to.

Click on the word next at the bottom right of the screen to begin the first step.

V.

[To be spoken by Hannah on video]

Now it's time to publish your editorial! You've worked so hard, I hope you'll be proud of the results. Thank you for your contribution to the electronic newspaper.

When you are ready, click on the words below to publish your article. If you want to print it, just click on the word "print" that will appear on the article itself.

Thanks again and goodbye!

SCREEN SHOTS/STORYBOARDS (BEGIN ON FOLLOWING PAGE)

Phase IV: Production, Programming, Post-Production and Management