Lesson Plan

Getting Attention: How Media is Created

Students will explore a variety of media to analyze their messages and describe how and why media is created. In this lesson, they will investigate the interrelationship between the creator, the media form, and the target audience.

Grade

3

Curriculum expectations

A2, A2.4, A2.5, C1, C1.4, C2, C2.5, C2.6, C3, C3.3, C3.6 (see Appendix B for full descriptions)
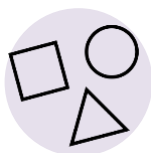
Strands

A. Literacy Connections and Applications
C. Comprehension: Understanding and Responding to Texts

Contents

Learning goals

We are learning …

- How media is created to capture our attention.

Success criteria

I can …

- ☐ Name a variety of media forms
- ☐ Describe the use of words, colour, graphics, images, and/or sounds in a variety of media
- ☐ Summarize the messages in a variety of media
- ☐ Describe the purpose of a variety of media
- ☐ Identify the audience of a variety of media
- ☐ Explain how the use of words, colour, graphics, images, and/or sounds attract an audience's attention
- ☐ Explain why a media creator would use particular words, colour, graphics, images, and/or sounds

Lesson path

Time

120 Minutes

This is a suggested amount of time. This lesson may be implemented over a series of days. Educators will make the best judgement on how to implement.

Materials and resources

- Prepare a few popular movie trailers that may be familiar to students or of student interest. Preferably choose one that they have not seen yet (e.g., Shrek 5 2026 — First Trailer | DreamWorks (YouTube video))
- A variety of media texts for learning stations such as a t-shirt with a logo, a novel, a magazine, a print advertisement, a movie trailer, a video advertisement, a radio ad, fast food coupons, a video game, a poster, a song, a public service announcement, a packaged toy, a sports jersey, etc.
- A graphic organizer to track student responses (Media analysis graphic organizer (Appendix A))

Minds on

1. Share the title of a movie trailer and ask students to rate how interested they are in seeing the movie on a scale from 1 to 10. Review and rate several trailer titles this way.

2. Show the movie trailer of the first title reviewed. After viewing, ask students if they are (a) less interested, (b) more interested, or (c) equally interested in seeing the movie compared to their initial rating. Invite students to share why their interest changed or stayed the same. Record student responses (e.g., on an anchor chart).

3. Introduce the learning goal and success criteria of this lesson and point out important vocabulary, especially if the words might be new to students or used in a new context. Consider creating a word wall with key words related to the learning (e.g., media, audience, message, purpose, etc.).

🎬 Action

Exploring media elements

4. Point out that the movie trailer is a type of media and its purpose is to entice people to buy a ticket to see the movie. Replay a movie trailer. As students watch it, ask them to consider the use of colour, sound, images, and text (i.e., words that appear on the screen). Use the following prompts to describe these elements of the video:
   a. Describe the use of colour
   b. Describe the use of sound
   c. Describe the use of images
   d. Describe the use of text

5. Pair students up and have them discuss their answers to the prompts.

Assessment opportunity

Monitor paired talk, assess the degree to which students are identifying/describing the various elements (i.e., colour, sound, images, and text), and provide feedback as needed.

Describing media

6. Invite students to share ideas in a class discussion. As students share their thinking, co-construct a list of words (e.g., adjectives) that describe colours (e.g., bright, colourful), sounds (e.g., fast-paced music, dramatic), images (e.g., action-filled, dark), and text (e.g., large, minimal) as they are used in the movie trailer.

7. Extend the discussion by posing the following questions:
   a. Why might the use of colour, sound, images, and/or text entice people to see this movie?
   b. Is there anything else that is used in the movie trailer (besides colour, sound, images and/or text) that attracts attention and would motivate people to see the movie?

8. Encourage students to make connections between their personal interest in seeing a movie and their analysis of the trailer (as discussed in the Minds on section). Record student responses.

Assessment opportunity

Ask students to complete the following sentence frame to bring together ideas about the relationship between the creator's choices, the form of the media text, and the audience's interest:

A movie trailer creator might use a _____ colour (or the colour _____) to grab people's attention because _____.

A movie trailer creator might use a _____ sound to grab people's attention because _____.

A movie trailer creator might use images of _____ to grab people's attention because _____.

Analyzing media texts

9. Encourage students to use the co-constructed list of adjectives to describe the elements of the trailer. Consider what other ways they could describe what they see, hear, and experience.

10. Using a variety of media texts, set up learning stations with one media text at each centre (find a list of suggested media texts in the Materials and Resources section.) Ask students to visit each station and review the media text. Then, ask them to discuss whether they consider all the items to be forms of media. (This may reveal student misconceptions about what forms that media texts may take.)

11. As students travel through the stations, have them record their explorations on a graphic organizer (Media analysis graphic organizer (Appendix A))

✳ Consolidation

Reflection

12. Have students reflect on the lesson and answer the following on the exit ticket:
    a. Three big things that I have learned are ...
    b. Two questions that I am still thinking about are ...
    c. The media text that I was most interested in exploring during the learning station rotation was ...

▦ Possible extensions

- **Move from media analysis to media creation** by having students create plans to reformulate existing media for different audiences and/or purposes. If time permits, have

them create these media texts and incorporate expectations from "Strand D. Composition: Expressing Ideas and Creating Texts" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2023).

- **Create an inquiry on how a toy (e.g., Lego) may be promoted** differently for different users. Have students examine examples of packaging and advertising (print or video) and encourage them to analyze how the messaging differs between ads targeting different users or ads for different versions of the toy.
- **Investigate a novel that has been released as a movie** (e.g., Diary of a Wimpy Kid, Dog Man). Explore the advantages of different media forms for the same story.

Appendix A

Media analysis graphic organizer

Use the following questions to help learners organize their analysis of the media:

- What is this media text?
- How does this media use colour?
- How does this media use sound?
- How does this media use images?
- How does this media use written words?
- Who would be most interested in having this product promoted?
- Would this media text attract people's attention? Explain why or why not.

Appendix B

Curriculum expectations

A2. Digital Media Literacy

demonstrate and apply the knowledge and skills needed to interact safely and responsibly in online environments, use digital and media tools to construct knowledge, and demonstrate learning as critical consumers and creators of media

A2.4 Forms, Conventions, and Techniques

demonstrate an understanding of the forms, conventions, and techniques of digital and media texts, and apply this understanding when analyzing texts

A2.5 Media, Audience, and Production

demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships between the form, message, and context of a text, the audience, and the creator

C1. Knowledge about Texts

apply foundational knowledge and skills to understand a variety of texts, including digital and media texts, by creators with diverse identities, perspectives, and experience, and demonstrate an understanding of the patterns, features, and elements of style associated with various text forms and genres

C1.4 Visual Elements of Texts

describe ways in which images, graphics, and visual design are used in a given text, and demonstrate an understanding of their purpose and connection to the content of the text

C2. Comprehension Strategies

apply comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading, listening to, and viewing a variety of texts, including digital and media texts, by creators with diverse identities, perspectives, and experience, in order to understand and clarify the meaning of texts

C2.5 Monitoring of Understanding: Making Connections

identify connections between ideas expressed in texts and their knowledges and lived experiences, the ideas in other texts, and the world around them

C2.6 Summarizing: Identifying Relevant Information and Drawing Conclusions

identify the main idea in a simple text, and relate important details in sequence

C3. Critical Thinking in Literacy

apply critical thinking skills to deepen understanding of texts, and analyze how various perspectives and topics are communicated and addressed in a variety of texts, including digital, media, and cultural texts

C3.3 Analyzing Texts

analyze various texts, including literary and informational texts, by identifying main and supporting ideas, sequencing information, and comparing and contrasting elements

C3.6 Analysis and Response

describe personal thoughts and feelings about ideas presented in texts, such as ideas about diversity, inclusion, and accessibility

References

KH Studio. (2025, March 5). Shrek 5 (2026) – First trailer | DreamWorks [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RB-_GjdW29M

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2023). *The Ontario curriculum, grades 1–8: Language, 2023* [Grade 3]. https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/elementary-language/grades/grade-3

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Updates

When updates are made to this document, they are tracked below with date and description of update.

- February 2025: initial release