

Handout

Title of activity

Am I Assertive?

ANNEX 1

Key Concept #1: All media are carefully wrapped packages.

As carefully wrapped packages, the messages are “wrapped” with enormous effort and expense, even though they appear quite natural to the audience. Media texts are the product of careful manipulation of constructive elements, both on an obvious and a subtle level. On an obvious level, constructions such as drawings, colors, and headlines may be used. But on a subtle level, constructions such as appeals (generalization appeal or appeal to emotion) may be used. Students need to develop skills of looking beneath the surface of media messages to see how they are constructed.

Key Concept #2: Media construct versions of reality.

Audiences tend to accept media texts as natural versions of events and ideas, when, in fact, they are only representations of events and ideas. The reality we see in media text is a constructed reality, built for us by the people who made the media text. Students need to develop skills of interpreting texts so that they can tell the difference between reality and textual versions of reality.

Key Concept #3: Media are interpreted through individual lenses.

Audiences interact with media texts in idiosyncratic ways. Some audiences accept some messages totally at face value. Other audiences may reject the same text, disagree with its message, or find it objectionable. Yet other audiences, not certain if they have embraced or rejected the text, will try to come to terms with it by negotiating. Audiences who negotiate with a text might ask questions, seek out other people’s opinions, or try different interpretations or reactions the way people try on new clothes-- to see how they suit the wearer. Students need to be open to multiple interpretations of texts and aware that a reaction to a text is a product of both the text itself and all that the audience brings to the text in terms of their accumulated life experiences.

Key Concept #4: Media are about money.

1. Modern media are expensive to produce. Producers need to make back their investment by marketing their product to audiences.

2. One of the chief purposes of media is to promote consumerism. While we enjoy many of the products of media, such as magazines, we need to be aware that some media texts are created to deliver an audience to advertisers rather than to deliver texts to audiences. Others may use consumerism as a secondary motive.

3. With increasing regularity, four or five massive communication conglomerates dominate media production facilities like newspaper/book/magazine publishers and TV/film production and distribution companies. Students need to be aware of the implications of the media’s commercial agenda, and how “convergence” affects the media and their contents.



Key Concept #5: Media promote agenda.

The very fact that some people object to some media texts is evidence that those texts contain value messages. Most media texts are targeted for an audience that can be identified by its values or ideology (belief system). Detecting the ideological and values agenda of media texts is an important skill in mass communication analysis.

ANNEX2: STRUCTURE OF CRITICAL THINKING AND READING

**TAKING A SECOND LOOK (USE KNOWLEDGE FROM
KEY CONCEPTS)**



**PRACTICING ANALYZING, INTERPRETING AND
EVALUATING MEDIA TEXT**



- **CROSS-CHECKING**
- **RESOURCE CHECKING,**
- **INVESTIGATION,**
- **ABSTRACTION,**
- **ANALYSIS WITH SYNTHESIS**
- **INFERENCE WITH DEDUCTION**

ANNEX 3: SPOTTING MEDIA TECHNIQUES AND THEIR TARGET AUDIENCES

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| <i>All the smart people would agree</i> | popular appeal | intelligent, educated audience, those who want to be considered smart |
| <i>You don't need an expert to tell you that this is a treath</i> | just plain folk | audiences who may not have expertise in the area, general population |
| <i>Award movie star/raper ... says</i> | celebrity | <i>audiences who want to imitate or admire celebrities</i> |
| <i>You can be their slave or join us</i> | identification | <i>Audiences, who have difficulty accepting authority They believe in conspiracy theories</i> |
| <i>Do something impornat, be part of real family,</i> | False logic | <i>audiences who like to take chances, or feeling to belong/serve someone</i> |
| <i>We are God's soldiers, without any authority and a lot of money</i> | appeal to emotion | <i>audiences who want to live as rebels or be more privilage than others</i> |
| <i>Migrants are carriers of many diseases, they carries also drug and earn from reselling children</i> | appeal to emotion | <i>audiences who are concerned with safety and community</i> |
| <i>Be the first. Buy ____ just for 2 EUR.</i> | popular appeal | <i>Audiences, who work on their image and want to get things as cheaper as they can</i> |