"We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us." John Culkin.

Towards background for Educators:

What is digital literacy according to the Ministry of Education?

- Literacy is the ability to understand, critically analyze, and create a variety of forms of communication, including oral, written, visual, digital, and multimedia, in order to accomplish one's goals.
- Digital Literacy is the interest, attitude and ability of individuals to appropriately use digital technology and communication tools to access, manage, integrate, analyze and evaluate information, construct new knowledge, create and communicate with others.

Other common definitions of media literacy? W. James Potter reports:

- The purpose of media literacy is to help people to protect themselves from the potentially negative effects of media.
- Media literacy is a skill that must be developed.
- Media literacy is multi-dimensional. The media constantly influence people in many ways—cognitively, attitudinally, emotionally, physiologically, behaviorally.

From the BC First Nations Education Steering Committee:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of [not just] the self [but also] the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors. In *Indigenous Storywork*, Dr. Jo-ann Archibald (Q'um Q'um Xiiem) offers a useful framework on how stories support the self, family, and community. [Added to emphasize distinction from previous definitions.]

Experts, scholars, and writers whose work may be of use:

- Standage's *The Writing on the Wall* offers a useful history of media and information sharing. One takeaway is that the era of curated content, fact checking, and distinctions between reporting and editorial that older teachers (sorry) grew up within feels more atypical than typical.
- Burke, Lippman, Dewey, and Habermas all contributed ideas about the role that journalism can and should play in a democratic society. If we think "democracy dies in darkness" or the media is a "watch dog" or that ideas should be freely debated in public—or if we just want to watch *All the President's Men* again—we likely view journalism within a frame that these writers outlined long ago.

- There are many critics of journalism. Chomsky argues that journalists focus on stabilizing a society rather than shining a light on corruption. Most of the postmodern theorists can be used to criticize journalism. Anderson and Robertson's *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canada* might offer some useful cases.
- Media is more than journalism. Many critics responded negatively to the rise of television, for example. Marshall McLuhan ("the medium is the message") and Neil Postman (whose most famous work is *Amusing Ourselves to Death*) are two prominent critics of that era. I most recommend McLuhan's *Understanding Me* as an accessible and readable work.
- Social media is subject to less editorial oversight than a newspaper and, with its algorithmic sorting, it is arguably more compelling than television. There are many critics of this shift, and some useful voices might include Kahan's work on confirmation bias and motivated reasoning; Pariser's anxieties about the *Filter Bubble*; Fisher's work on extremism, *The Chaos Machine*; Haidt's work on anxiety and social media, *Age of Anxiety*; and Baumeister's work on negativity bias, *The Power of Bad*. This is not a comprehensive list.
- Artificial intelligence tools are relatively new, but they can be used to counter filter bubbles if used for that end. Having said that, they are often criticized for being too sycophantic. Their editorial oversight is largely a mystery outside of the companies that create them. Two voices that might be of use are Ethan Mollick's *Co-Intelligence* and Tristan Harris.

Teachers might also find much in a typical AP Seminar curriculum of use in designing a media literacy unit. Specifically...

- Citations and oral citations
- Credibility tiers and credibility phrases
- Search, lateral search, and advanced search tools
- Putting perspectives into conversation with each other
- Testimonial and purposeful use
- I also recommend looking at their rubrics for the individual written argument and the multimedia presentation.

Inquiry Structure:

- Immerse / activate prior knowledge
- Investigate / research
- Coalesce / synthesize ideas
- Go public / Present or write

These four steps are from Daniels and Harvey's Small-Group Inquiry Model, which you can find on page 199 of their book *Comprehension and Collaboration*.

Towards Outcomes:

In *Verified*, Mike Caulfield and Sam Wineburg argue that an awareness of three contexts of media consumption lead to more critical awareness in engaging any media. On page 10, they explain three contexts, which are:

- The context of the source: What's the reputation of the source of the information you arrive at?
- The context of the claim: What have other said about the claim? If it's a story, what's the larger story? If a statistic, what's the larger context?
- The context of you: What is your level of expertise in the area? What is your interest in the claim? What makes such a claim compelling to you, and what could change that?

If we take Caulfield and Wineburg seriously, we should ask how might we get our students to develop media literacy skills that:

- engage with the changing media landscape of algorithmically generated social media content, vertical video scrolling, and AI generated content and answers to their questions.
- seek out diverse voices in search of a more widely informed perspective
- foster an awareness in students that they are largely the drivers of the content they consume but perhaps unaware of the effects their media consumption generates in themselves and in the community.

Although many of the media literacy definitions speak to individual benefits, the First Nations Education Steering Committee's First Peoples Principles of Learning reminds us that this content should lead to the well being of our students and others.

Towards Assessment:

What activities can students engage in to explore these contexts and, by extension, develop media literacy skills and behaviors? In designing this unit, you may find it useful to read Harvey and Daniels' work on inquiry units. (Or you can try to structure the unit more like an open model DND campaign.)

Activity One: The Media Audit.

- This activity asks students to analyze a primary medium they consume and its cognitive, attitudinal, emotional, physiological, or behavioral[1] impact on them. They are further asked to interview another person about how this impacts them.
- This activity is assessment for and as learning. Within an inquiry model, it generates initial responses that invite students to narrow their interests.

Activity Two: Assigned Reading

- This activity asks students to tackle one medium for information gathering over the course of the unit's presentation cycle. Some common choices might include:
    - Using news.google.ca to follow a news item
    - Asking AI to create a curated list of media centered on a specific topic.
    - Reading the newspaper every day.

Activity Three: Multimedia Presentation

- This activity will be assessed and peer assessed. It asks students to form a question within the unit, to research it, to communicate their findings to the class, and to invite the class's thoughts on the inquiry.

Towards Instruction:

The general structure of this unit should follow this path:

- Immerse. Positional value voting in response to generative statements could work. It can be very useful to explain a why that you feel personally compelling. A topic flood (Gallagher) of high interest texts can help to generate ideas.
- Investigate. Research skills and AI prompting can be very useful here. Evaluating texts to share with the class should also happen here.
- Coalesce. Synthesize work into a structure and message. Even the most talented person will require meetings with a teacher to organize their content and refine their ideas.
- Go public. Demonstrate learning and understanding.
    - More on this on page 199 in Daniels and Harvey's *Comprehension and Collaboration*.

[1] This list is taken from W. James Potter's work.

Skills & Resources:

- Access to multimedia presentation tools can be useful. My school uses Google Docs and Gemini.
- Access to AI tools for search can be useful. My school uses Gemini.
- "Traditional" search skills and lateral searching skills can be useful.
- Public speaking skills, including verbal and non-verbal skills, but also the ability to invite discussion and respond to it.
- Citation and oral citation skills.
- Critical thinking skills would help out, too. Here, I suggest asking questions, understanding and analyzing what they research, evaluating multiple perspectives, and synthesizing their research into a clear conclusion. Please note that these are skills associated with AP Seminar.

Media Audit:

Please complete for yourself and please complete for one other person.

Suggested media choices. Books. Newspapers. Magazines. Social Media (might be more than one here). Paintings. Movies. Television. Short form video. Music. Podcasts. Video games. Newsletter. Involuntary media (e.g. advertising).

What is the purpose of the media? What is its impact on you?
(For example, is it meant to inform, entertain, shape behavior, shape mood?)

How do you consume the media? On your phone, in a book, on a laptop...

Mr. S response:

I mostly read books and, as a general rule, I dislike and distrust algorithmic media. I would rather be in charge of what I see than relying on a program to supply it to me. I suppose I am skeptical of algorithms because I don't know if they're trying to influence me in a certain direction politically, if they're sponsored content, if they're intensifying my biases, or if they're just addictively entertaining in a manner that is too subtle for me to notice. Maybe a mix of all of the above? I instead try to be more purposeful. For informational texts, I prefer to engage with journalists and podcasts that I've heard about for a long time, I suppose because it helps me to take in their information while being mindful of their typical bias. I typically try to cultivate a variety of sources on my primary interests. In these ways, I suppose what I'm looking for is trust and that I distrust less familiar sources of information.

When I think about the "how" of my content, the thing I notice most is that I am very reluctant to use my phone for anything other than texting, grocery lists, maps, and audio (podcasts and music). I used to use my phone for social media and news apps, but I realized that I would unconsciously turn it on. I'd find myself using it and getting worked up, either anxious or angry. So I deleted almost every app from my phone to put a break between me and what I consume. Maybe also, I realized that it's OK to be bored sometimes. Not every moment has to be "optimized" by distractions that I'll forget in five seconds anyway.

Presentation Planning - Please copy and paste into a doc you share with your partner.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Topic and Date</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Members:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Who Is Responsible for What?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"><table><tr><td>PERSON 1</td><td>PERSON 2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Central Question or Questions:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What concepts or history does your class need to be introduced to in order to engage with your question?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What theory or theories does your presentation engage with to provide a deeper perspective?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What text (or texts) will you present?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What activities will you invite the audience to do in order to consider the topic more deeply?</td></tr>
</table>

Conclusions (may not be generated until later in the process)
Are your resources done? ❏ Presentation slides — Google Slides is recommended. ❏ Media (Texts) ❏ Fair and responsibly planned division of labour.

Possible Presentation Topics:

Date	Presenters	A Few Possible Topics and Possible Launching Points/ Figures Please do not take this as a comprehensive list. These are just some entry points that you can choose or leapfrog into other topics. As a general rule, I recommend picking older and more settled topics than current events.
		Music ● To what extent does the format of music influence our experience? Is there a difference between live music, digital music, music videos, and analog music (e.g. vinyl)? If you choose this topic, I'd like you to commit to performing. ● Possible theorist: McLuhan. ● Suggested Hook: People who collect analog media.
		Going Viral ● Influencer culture. ● *So You've Been Publicly Shamed*, by Ronson, shows the downsides of this trend. But many commentators have ideas about virality.
		Bias in News Coverage ● "If it bleeds it leads." Does the news have a negativity bias that compromises its ability to inform its audience? ● Suggested theorist: Baumeister. Negativity bias. ● Suggested concept: Clickbait. Headline journalism.
		Sports Reporting ● Spy Gate/ The New England Patriots.

		• Online gambling and sports. • Suggested theorist: Postman and "amusing ourselves to death."
		Journalism as a Watchdog • This choice is for famous news stories. Ideally, avoid recency bias as much as possible. • Watergate might be the textbook example. Many of these stories are now referred to as [fill in the blank]-gate. • Theory: The Fourth Estate. This concept was first popularized by Burke and Carlyle. Media as a watch dog. Lippman and Dewey might also be of use.
		Video games • To what extent can video games aspire to aesthetic aims? Under what conditions would we consider them art? Are there conditions under which we would not consider video games to be art? • Theorist: Neil Postman and "amusing ourselves to death." • One strong defense of video games as "more" than entertainment might be an Indigenous video game, *Never Alone*.
		Photojournalism. • *It's What I Do* by Addario might be a useful memoir/ author for what this is. And I can imagine this presentation focusing on one or some key photos that from different eras that almost take over a story. • Theorist: McLuhan's the Medium is the message theory might apply. • A guiding question here might be to what extent photos are additive or reductive relative to an article, an essay, or a book.
		Cable News and the News Cycle • Concept: 24 hour news cycle. • Concept: Spectacle. • Theorist: Neil Postman. Kahan's confirmation bias. Baudrillard's simulacra.

		Algorithmic Content ● Core Concept: Clickbait. ● Theorist: Neil Postman. Pariser's "filter bubble" effect. Baumeister's negativity bias.
		Career Study This can be an opportunity to study the career of a pioneering journalist. To qualify, this person needs to be associated with founding or trailblazing a specific subcategory of journalism. Suggested authors might include (choose one): ● Bly, Nellie. "Stunt reporting." ● Klein, Ezra. "Explanatory journalism." ● Pulitzer, Joseph. "Tabloid Journalism." ● Thompson, Hunter S. "Gonzo Journalism." ● Ritchie, Hannah. "Data journalism." ● Wolfe, Tom. "New Journalism." ● Woodward and Bernstein. "Investigative reporting" or muckraking. Theorist: For each of these cases it will be worth exploring how their reporting differs from other forms of journalism. Are there others who followed in their lead? Are there antecedents? And to what extent does their reporting contribute to the ideals of the fourth estate?
		More on Data Journalism. ● Hannah Ritchie and Nate Silver are possibly the two most famous journalists from this field. Our World in Data might be a very useful source. Another might be Polymarket. I suspect you will focus on the way that statistics can be misleading or can gloss over specifics, but also that they can provide context for smaller stories. This might connect to Baumeister's "negativity bias." In theory, data journalism is meant to counter it.
		Censorship.

		• Suggested news story might be the ban on TikTok in the USA, though it was not enforced. It might be worth contrasting an ineffective censorship vs an effective censorship effort. Scholars will sometimes consider the role of free speech in a free society and its limits here. Another angle might be "age gating" internet or social media. • Jonathan Haidt, a psychologist, has led the charge on banning social media use for young teens; the journalist Kelsey Piper is more skeptical. • There are many historical examples of censorship that you could use instead.
		Advertising. • A suggested focus might be on the 1984 Macintosh ad and/ or the "Think Different" campaign. The 1984 ad was directed by Ridley Scott (also the director of *Alien* and *Gladiator*). Initially, Apple didn't want to show the 1984 ad. It was aired during the Super Bowl anyway, and it became a big hit. It might be worth zooming out to ask whether Apple products, which you will have seen that the teacher in this class uses daily, are "overhyped" due to effective marketing strategies. Or are ads a sort of narrative storytelling? Are they manipulation or are they a manipulative artform? Maybe both.
		Oral tradition. • There are multiple directions for this presentation to go, but one focus might be the use of social media to transmit First Nations stories and languages. • Thinker: Jo-ann Archibald's "holistic" theory of learning and literacy, a contrast, perhaps, to what we so often default to in scrolling. • You might also look into how Indigenous communities share and spread their traditional stories online. • Last but not least, it might be worth bringing in the First Peoples Principles of Learning, especially that "some knowledge is sacred" and is not to be shared generally.

		Long history of media. Here, you might consider looking at the way people shared information in the past — graffiti in ancient Rome, letter writing, scrolls, the advent of newspapers, the telegraph, radio, and more. Some scholars have argued that, without the "mass media" of the 1500s, the Reformation could not have happened. Theorist: Standage's *The Writing on the Wall* might be of use.
		Public discourse. ● Here's one for the political science students. ● Habermas, a philosopher, argued that literacy helped to create a forum for public discourse. Walter Lippman, a journalist, argued that there is a connection between democracy and journalism. Today, newspapers seem to be waning relative to social posting, and perhaps also our discourse has shortened from essays to tv soundbytes to memes. ● McLuhan: The Medium is the Message. ● To what extent do these media changes affect the democratic culture of our society? ● Book: *The Outrage Machine: How Tech Amplifies Discontent, Disrupts Democracy—And What We Can Do About It*, by Rose-Stockwell.

Presentation Feedback

Date	Presenters
Topic & Question	
Your notes:	
My favourite thing about this presentation • • •	My suggestion •
Your Connections, Conclusions, Questions • • •	

Name: _____

Multimedia Presentation				
Criteria	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Extending**
MEANING • Thesis • Understanding • Support	• I can present a topic • I can show common understanding of the topic • I can provide general or broad claims tied to the text	• I can present a clearly defined topic. • I can summarize positions taken related to the topic. • I can present general or broad details, examples, and quotations.	• I can form a clear, focused thesis/ conclusion. • I can incorporate multiple perspectives in demonstrating a sound understanding of topic I can include specific, relevant details and examples that support main points including quoted content and attribution phrases	• I can create a clear and often unique or provocative thesis that engages with scholarly positions and multiple and/ or all relevant perspectives. • I can include specific, well-chosen details, examples, and quotations that express unique insights in response to scholarly work.
Content and Organization • Text choices and representation • Transitions and framings	• I can find texts to present • I can put information into slides	• I can present a variety of texts types and arrange them in a way that guides the audience through an essential question • I can move through the content of the presentation	• I can present a variety of appropriately chosen texts that are interesting and relevant to my question • I can choose text types that guide the audience through contextual information and testimonial or literary information. • I can smoothly move through the content of the presentation. • I can frame information.	• I can present a variety of engaging and interesting texts that guide my audience to a new or deeper understanding of my topic. • I can choose representative, diverse, engaging, and scholarly texts. • I can guide the class through a variety of texts, framing and contextualizing content to generate new or deeper understanding in the audience.

Research and Citation • Oral attributions • Written attributions • Citations	• I can conduct a search and present information can use inconsistent voice and tone	• I can conduct a search and present information. • I can show where my information comes from.	• I can conduct a search and present information. • I can show where my information comes from with oral and written attribution phrases that announce credibility and/ or engage with scholars by name •I can use citation conventions, such as MLA or APA, to show where my information comes from.	• I can conduct a search and present information. • I can show where my information comes from with oral and written attribution phrases that announce credibility and/ or engage with scholars by name •I can use citation conventions, such as MLA or APA, to show where my information comes from. • I can put scholars into conversation with each other.
Preparation and Delivery • Slide design • Tech usage • Public speaking	• I can play through a slide deck that I created. • I can speak before an audience.	• I can create a clear slide deck and shows understanding of design principles • I can use verbal and non-verbal strategies to communicate my ideas before an audience..	• I can play through a slide deck and shows understanding of design principles • I can use verbal and non-verbal strategies to engagingly communicate my ideas before an audience. • I can present a professional presentation that shows evidence of rehearsal and practice.	• I can play through a slide deck and shows understanding of design principles • I can use verbal and non-verbal strategies to communicate expertise and dynamism.. • I can present a professional presentation that shows evidence of rehearsal, practice, and consideration of an audience.