

# KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN ANALYZING MEDIA MESSAGES

## Adaptations for Early Childhood Education

**USING THIS GRID** – Media literate people routinely ASK QUESTIONS IN EVERY CATEGORY – the middle column – on this grid as they navigate the media world. Occasionally a category will not apply to a particular message, but in general, sophisticated “close reading” requires exploring the full range of issues covered by the ten categories.

- The specific questions listed here are suggestions; you should adapt them or add your own to meet your students’ developmental level and learning goals.
- Encourage students to recognize that many questions will have more than one answer (which is why the categories are in plural form).
- To help students develop the habit of giving evidence-based answers, nearly every question should be followed with a probe for evidence: HOW DO YOU KNOW? WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
- Help students expand their thinking by asking questions like WHAT ELSE DO YOU NOTICE?
- And remember that the ultimate goal is for children to learn to ask these questions for themselves.

		SAMPLE QUESTIONS
<b>AUTHORS &amp; AUDIENCES</b>	<b>AUTHORSHIP</b>	Who created this? or Who made up this story?
	<b>PURPOSES</b>	What does this want me to do? Who are they talking to? or Who is this for?
	<b>ECONOMICS</b>	Who paid for this? Who makes money from it?
	<b>EFFECTS</b>	What does the storyteller want me to remember? Is this good for me or people like me?
	<b>RESPONSES</b>	How does this make me feel? What could I do about [insert topic or message]? What else do I want to know and how could I find out?
<b>MESSAGES &amp; MEANINGS</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>	What does this want me to think (or think about)? What is this? What does this tell me about [insert topic]?
	<b>TECHNIQUES</b>	What do they want me to notice? What clues do they include? How do they get me to notice what they want?
	<b>INTERPRETATIONS</b>	What might someone think about this who is [insert a type of person, e.g., older, from a farm, a girl, a teacher, a pet owner, etc.]?
<b>REPRESENTATIONS &amp; REALITY</b>	<b>CONTEXT</b>	When was this made? Is it from a long time ago or now?
	<b>CREDIBILITY</b>	How do they know what they are saying is true? What is the evidence? Can I trust this source to tell me the truth about this topic? Is this fact, opinion, a little of both, or neither?