



## FORMS OF MEDIA – TEACHER’S GUIDE

### Learning Objectives

- Students will understand the term *media* and be able to identify the various media they are exposed to in their daily lives.
- Students, as *media consumers*, will become aware of the goals of the media they are viewing using the five core concepts: authorship, format, audience, content, and purpose.
- Students will learn how, as *media producers*, to construct a media message using the five core concepts: authorship, format, audience, content, and purpose.

**Estimated Viewing Time:** Completing the entire episode will take approximately 15 minutes. A breakdown of time by segment follows:

- WATCH: 7 minutes
- TRY: 4 minutes
- APPLY: 4 minutes

### Synopsis of the Watch Segment

Nermal is excited about a new TV program *The Kool Kat Karl Show*, but Garfield and Arlene aren’t so sure about the show’s messages. Karl endorses Sugar-Coated Sugar Blasts and tells his viewers that if they eat the super-sweet cereal, they will get big and strong. Dr. Nova helps Nermal deconstruct and analyze the messages he’s watching and also helps him learn about different forms of media. Nermal creates his own video about the importance of a healthy breakfast and broadcasts it on *The Kool Kat Karl Show*.

### Build Background

Begin by asking questions to gauge familiarity with the topic:

- What is your favorite media (such as television, radio, magazines, Internet, video games) for getting information or being entertained?
- What are some of the good things you learn from the media you watch, read, or hear?
- Have you ever seen or heard something that you really didn’t believe was right?
- Who creates, or constructs, the stuff you get through the media? If they have a job doing this, how do they get paid?

### SAY:

*We have many choices in how we get information or entertainment these days. That means that we receive many messages! But did you know that we can also create our own media messages? These days, you don’t have to have fancy equipment or be part of a large company to do that. As a person who receives messages, it’s an important skill to know how to deconstruct those messages. This means that you should examine and think about them so you can understand the messages very clearly and not misunderstand them. As a person who creates messages, you need to learn how to construct them so people can easily understand the messages you wish to send or can more fully enjoy the entertainment you provide. Five concepts will help you learn how to deconstruct and construct media messages. Let’s look at these now plus a few other words you might need to know.*



## Introduce Vocabulary

Write and discuss the definition of each of these keywords. Pause after each definition to answer questions and provide examples. Use each keyword in a sample sentence to show students how each word is used in context.

<b>media</b>	Different ways people communicate with others, such as newspapers, television, radio, and the Internet
<b>authorship</b>	The origin of a piece of work; usually the person or people who constructed it
<b>format</b>	The way a communication is presented; each type has a unique set of creative tools and techniques to help form the message
<b>audience</b>	The people who receive a communication; different people understand the message in different ways
<b>content</b>	A message or messages in a particular communication; some of these are embedded values and ideas
<b>purpose</b>	The reason a communication is made; might be informing, persuading, selling, entertaining, or a combination
<b>influence</b>	To cause someone to believe or feel something
<b>construct</b>	Deliberately create a message
<b>deconstruct</b>	Deliberately examine a message to understand the whole meaning
<b>embedded</b>	Assumptions made about values, attitudes, and points of view that are important but not always obvious parts of a media message

## Guide the Viewing of Lesson on Forms of Media

- Have students complete the lesson on Forms of Media. As they do, circulate the classroom observing students and supporting any who need help with navigation or comprehension.
- After students complete the interactive lesson, have them gather in a circle or another seating arrangement conducive to informal class discussions.

## TRY Answer Key

- Q: Click on all the examples of media in this room.  
A: TV, radio, computer, newspaper, video game console, MP3 player
- Q: Click on all the examples of media in this room.  
A: Poster, CD, video game, magazine
- Q: What is this media clip trying to get kids to think?  
A: Sugar-Coated Sugar Blasts will help you be stronger.
- Q: What is this article trying to get you to do?  
A: Buy the cereal and get muscles.



5. Q: What is this ad trying to get you to do?  
A: Click the ad to get the secret.
6. Q: What is the message of the song?  
A: Eat the cereal every day to get big and strong.

### APPLY Answer Key

1. Q: Nermal wants to create a video about healthy food for cats. What's a good title for a video like this?  
A: *Cool Cats Eat Right*
2. Q: What kind of video will help Nermal best express his message?  
A: Video of cats eating a healthy breakfast
3. Q: Who is the target audience for Nermal's message?  
A: Young cats
4. Q: What message should Nermal include?  
A: Eating a healthy breakfast is cool.
5. Q: What is the purpose of Nermal's message?  
A: To tell everyone eating healthy is cool

### Monitor Comprehension

#### SAY:

- *Why did Nermal grab his bowl and spoon while watching The Kool Kat Karl Show?* (The announcer urged kids to get them ready so they could all eat Sugar-Coated Sugar Blasts together while they watched the show.)
- *Why does Nermal want to eat Sugar-Coated Sugar Blasts?* (Kool Kat Karl says that they are great and that they will help you “jump higher, scream louder, and give you massive muscles too!” Nermal wants to be strong like Hans, so he wants to eat lots of Sugar-Coated Sugar Blasts.)
- *Why was Arlene worried about Nermal watching The Kool Kat Karl Show?* (She felt that the show was sending a bad message and that it was encouraging Nermal to eat too much sugar.)
- *Dr. Nova helps Nermal understand the messages he is getting from The Kool Kat Karl Show by doing what?* (Asking five key questions: (1) Who created the message? [authorship]; (2) What are the format and all the creative elements that capture your attention? [format]; (3) Who is supposed to get the message and how might different people get different meanings? [audience]; (4) What does the message say? [content]; and (5) Why was the message created? [purpose])
- *After Nermal deconstructs the message with the help of Arlene and Dr. Nova, what does he think about the message from Kool Kat Karl?* (He thinks it may not be so good since it implies that people who don't eat Sugar-Coated Sugar Blasts are losers. It is a negative message—or one that makes the audience feel bad if they don't do or like something.)



- *Why does Nermal decide to create his own media message? (He wants to create a positive message about eating healthy foods for breakfast. A positive message encourages people to make a good choice without being disrespectful to those who don't make that choice.)*
- *Was Kool Kat Karl really cool about allowing Nermal's message on his show? (No he didn't want it—he wanted to sell more junk food instead. He also turned out not to be a cat at all—he was mean dog Willard.)*

**SAY:**

*Not all media messages try to influence us, and not all media messages try to get us to do things we shouldn't do. But some do, and we need to be active when paying attention to media so we don't end up doing things that aren't good or healthy. And we also need to know how to make our own media messages be clear and positive.*

**Consolidate Learning**

**SAY:**

*You have now learned a great deal about how media messages are created (constructed) and understood (deconstructed). Just like any skill, the more you practice using it, the easier it becomes. So, let's find some ways to practice our skills.*

1. As a whole class, use a piece of a short media message and figure out the answer to the five media message questions (authorship, format, audience, content, and purpose).
2. Provide 6-8 short media excerpts from various media. Have the students work in small groups to identify the answers to the five media message questions in one of the excerpts. Have each group present its findings to the others. Allow the other groups to provide alternative answers to the questions to encourage discussion and deeper thinking.
3. Each week, ask students to include in their journals a deconstruction of one media message they have received and decide whether they think it is a positive message or a negative message.
4. Working in small groups or individually, have students create a media message and construct a message using two or more formats. Compare the different creative methods used for the various formats.
5. As a class, have the students choose a positive media message for a "media blitz" in their school. Have small groups or individuals create their own interpretation of the message using a media format with which they feel comfortable. Focus on the creative aspects of each media that can help them capture the attention of their audiences. Have other classes deconstruct the messages that your students construct.

**Evaluate**

Administer the Forms of Media Quiz to assess whether students met the learning objectives for the lesson. After evaluating the results of the assessment, you may wish to go over any learning objectives that students did not grasp.



### Quiz Answer Key

1. Possible answers: Internet/computer, video games, advertisements, posters, radio, newspapers, magazines, music, CD, music players, websites, blogs
2. Open; not being passive, thinking about what the media say and why they say it; deconstructing messages
3. The person or people who create or construct a media message; they have a particular point of view
4. The format includes the way a message is presented (using video, music, text, pictures, etc.) as well as some creative choices like colors, particular words, movement, emotional appeal—the things that really capture the audience's attention.
5. People have different values and lifestyles, so the content of different media messages might appeal or not appeal to one type of person or another; messages may try to make one type of person feel they are better than other people who are different or who like different things.
6. A negative message will make the audience feel bad if they don't do or like something; a positive message will encourage people to do or like something because it's a good choice and because it doesn't make people who don't choose it feel bad.
7. Possible answers: entertainment, encouragement, inspiration, or influence you to do or believe something.



## Forms of Media Quiz

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Write three examples of media that you use or find around you on a typical day.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

2. What does it mean to be ACTIVE when you watch or listen to media?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Who is the AUTHOR of a media message?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are some things you might notice about a message's FORMAT?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Why do different AUDIENCES experience media messages differently?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Give an example of how a media message's CONTENT can be positive or negative.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is the only PURPOSE of a media message to get you to buy something? What else might the PURPOSE be?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_