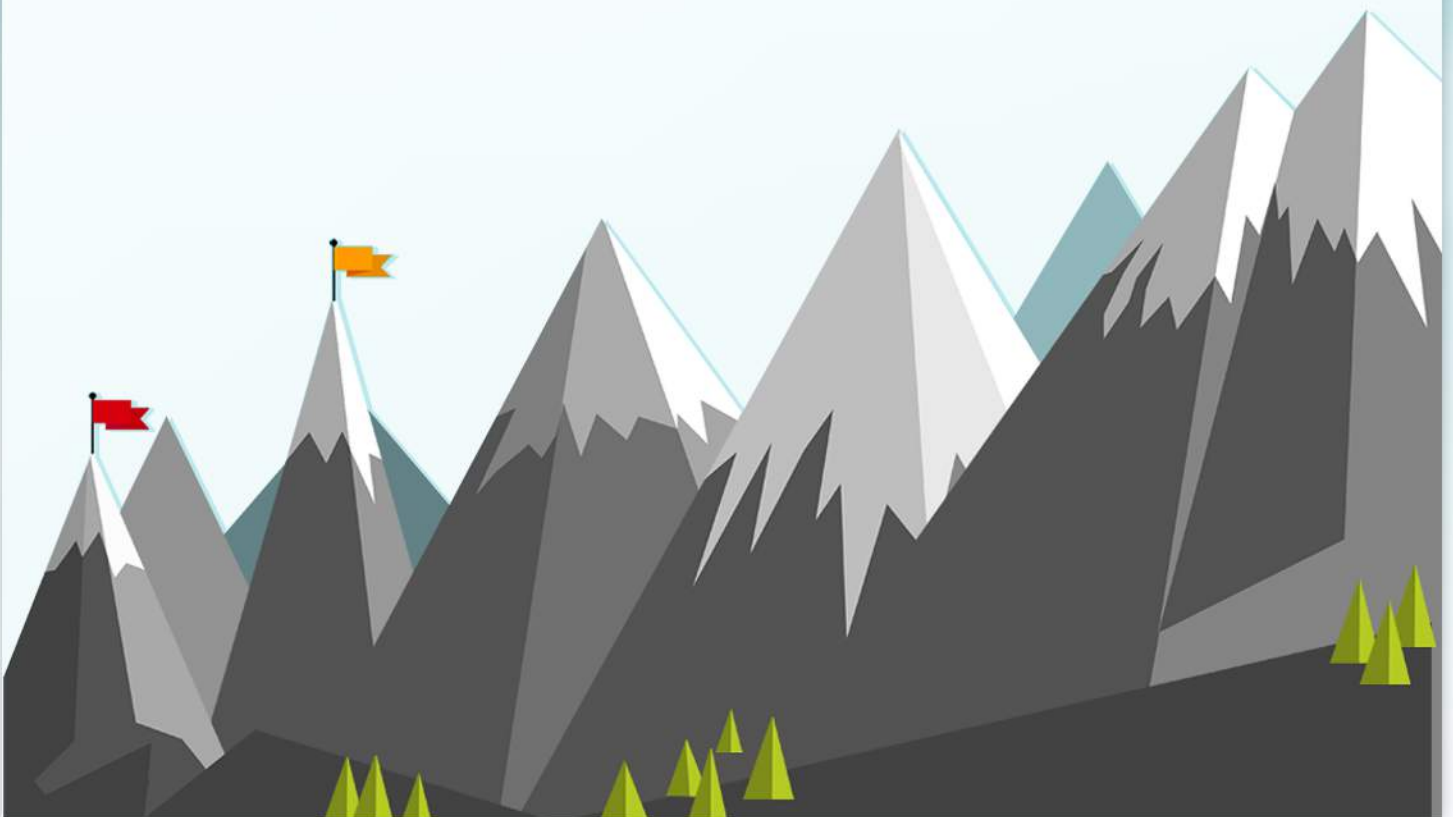


Part 4: Making Connections

In this module, students deepen their critical analysis of media and develop their own perspective on their chosen problem. They evaluate techniques used in the media, potential impact on different audiences, and credibility of the source. In the ECG mission, students draw on the sources from the last mission and develop their own argument about what causes the problem.



Critical Questions 2: Audience and Impact

Overview

This activity shares the same structure as the first Critical Questions activity, but the Introduction section and Reading, Viewing, Listening section are different, as are the critical questions for reflection. The learning goals reflect this subtle change.

Time

One class period.

Resources Needed

- A short media text in any form, on the topic that the class has chosen (e.g., video clip, news article, blog post, twitter feed). This curated selection from NPR's Code Switch blog is a good resource from which to choose a piece of media because it addresses the context surrounding the events from different perspectives: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/codeswitch/2014/08/16/340912893/code-switch-roundup-on-race-policing-and-ferguson>. This video might be a good jumping-off point to foster empathy: www.washingtonpost.com/posttv/national/hope-anger-linger-in-ferguson/2015/01/05/a2913cea-fa69-4526-8b13-eb1ef7440d99_video.html. This American Life also has a superlative pair of episodes titled, "Cops See It Differently."
- Copies of the next set of "Critical Questions"(see below)

Learning Outcomes

Conceptual:

- Analyze media to discover context, author's purpose, intended audience, and message

Skills and Dispositions:

- Appreciate the process of asking questions to actively interpret a text.
- Strengthen listening and small-group discussion skills.
- Use reasoning to defend or justify an interpretation.
- Practice note taking to organize and examine relationships among ideas.
- Build awareness of discussion as a form of prewriting.
- Strengthen public speaking and writing competencies.

Introduction

Explain that after considering the purpose and background of the message, students are ready to analyze the techniques used, as well as the message's potential impact and limitations.

Reading, Viewing, or Listening

Provide time to take in the media, and ask general questions such as these: "How do you think people responded to this message?" and "Do you agree with the way the communities in Ferguson are portrayed?" Encourage students to use full sentences instead of one-word answers and ask "why" questions to elicit more elaborated responses. Offer warm feedback to encourage students to contribute. Do not offer commentary or criticism of weak or poorly developed ideas.

Answer the Critical Questions

Pass out copies of a worksheet with the topics and questions below. Students work together to answer the questions.

Repeated Reading, Viewing, or Listening

Break students into groups of two or three. Each team should tackle all seven critical questions.

Small-Groups Report

Encourage groups to offer their responses to one of the seven critical questions. After each group answers the question, invite other groups to add additional points or share related ideas. At this point, you should ask "why" questions to encourage students to use reasoning to explain or justify their interpretations. Through this process, the quality of ideas will deepen, and students will recognize how sharing and questioning interpretations contribute to developing new ideas.

Model the Note-Taking Process

Use the board to model the note-taking process as students share their ideas and interpretations. Show students visually how ideas connect to each other.

Synthesis

Offer some reflections about your opinions regarding the most interesting ideas that develop from the analysis. Using the student comments, create a thesis statement that represents a synthesis of the best ideas that were developed in the process. Write it on the board. Explain that the process of sharing interpretations is what contributes to the development of new ideas.

Worksheet: Technique and Impact

Messages and Meanings

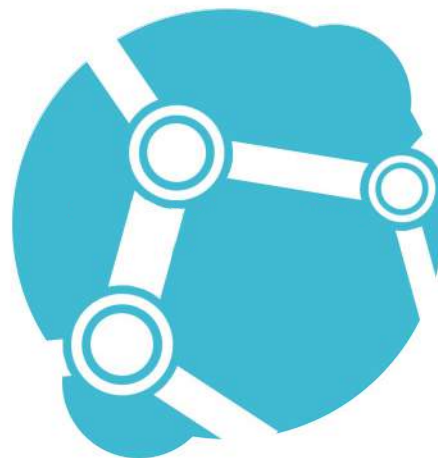
- What techniques are used to attract and hold attention?
- How might different people interpret this message differently?
- Who might benefit from (and who might be harmed by) this message?

Representation and Reality

- What information or perspective is left out of this message?
- Is this an accurate and credible representation?
- How does this message compare to other messages about the issue that you've encountered?
- How does this reflect the perspective or bias of its creator?

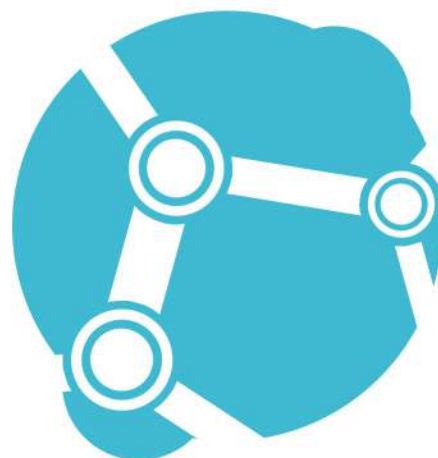
Mission 3: Making Connections

For this challenge, players construct an argument using their outside sources that comes to conclusions about the topic, issue, or problem they are exploring. This results in a final presentable piece that can be brought into the world.



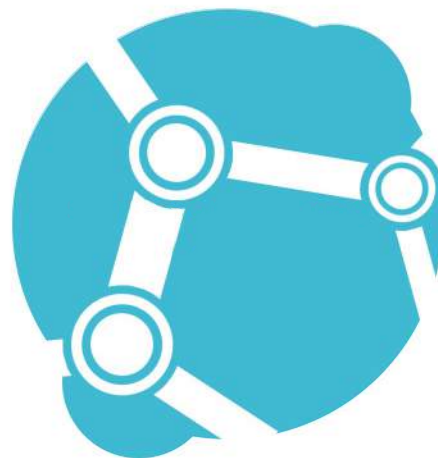
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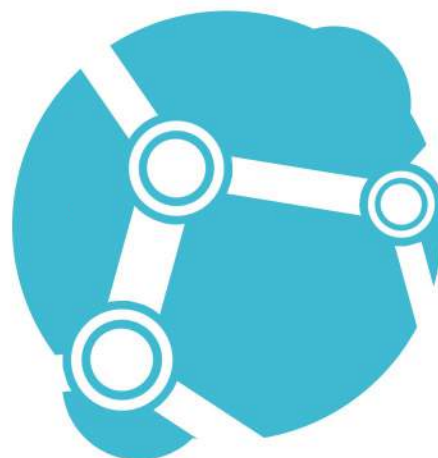
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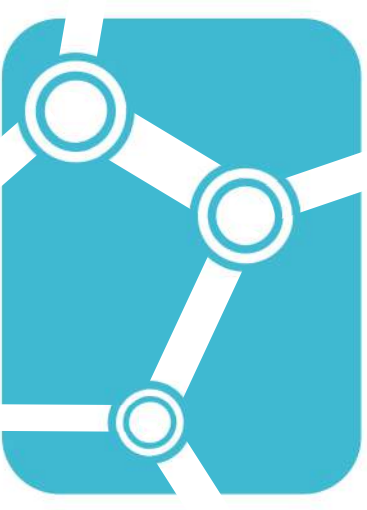
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Making Connections Challenge

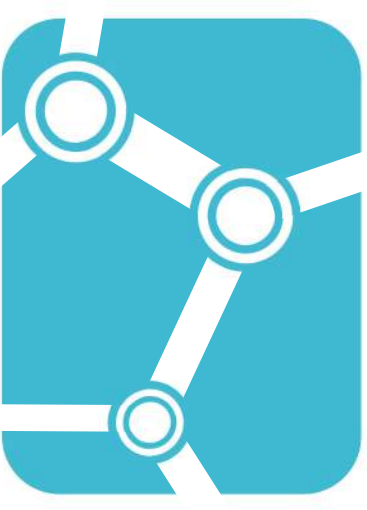
Using the information gathered and presented by teams in the last round, your goal is to create an argument that the other team will be tasked to explore. First, write one paragraph summarizing what your team learned from the diverse perspectives in the resources you found. Then, reflect on this information to reach a conclusion about the causes of the problem in your own community and elsewhere. Express your perspective as a thesis statement designed to persuade your audience. The other team will use the given modality to explore your thesis



Write your Challenge here:

Making Connections Challenge

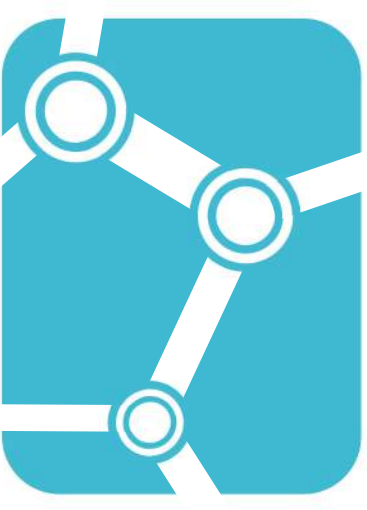
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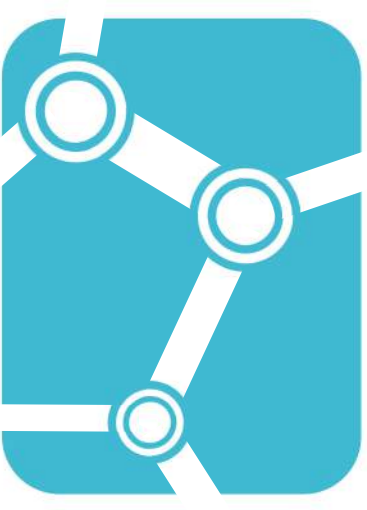
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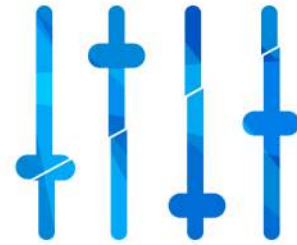
Write your Challenge here:

Persuasive Letter



Imagine a person, concept, organization, or thing and frame your answer / response in the form of a formal written argument. This should look and feel like a creative essay, but with the same structure as a persuasive letter.

Media Remix



Curate, remix, and comment on existing content to create your response. You are free to cut up magazines and newspaper articles to create a physical collage, or if you have access to technology, mash up photos, tweets, videos, etc. to create a digital collage.

Storyboarding



Create a series of images with comments or captions that help the reader understand your story. Your storyboard should look like a simple comic strip, with images (drawn pictures, real photos, etc.) and text captions.

Act it Out



Take on the role of another person or idea and present the material through impersonation or dramatization. This can take the form of a short play, an extended monologue (like a speech or lecture), a dance, a song, or a combination! Be creative!

Making Connections

Did the presenting team show:

What techniques are used to attract and hold attention?

How might different people interpret this message differently?

Who might benefit from (and who might be harmed by) this message?

What information or perspective is left out of this message?

Is this an accurate and credible representation?

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Team Name:

Was your challenge taken?

Did the winning team choose your challenge? If so, award your team 1 point (0-1)!

Did your team's response win?

If your solution won in the evaluation round, award your team 1 points (0-1)!

Did your team get the most Bonus points?

Add up your bonus blocks. If your team had the highest number of bonus blocks versus other teams, award your team 1 point (0-1)!

Total points!

Add up the points you earned in the round and list your point total in this column.

Mission 1

Mission 2

Mission 3

Mission 4

End of Game