Critical Social Media Literacy Lessons

These three lessons are each designed for an hour-long period. They are also designed for a teacher to implement to a class of students having no prior knowledge of media literacy or counter-narratives. These classes can stand entirely alone, and you can place them in between two units or within a connected literature unit. If you are short on time, you may also have the students complete some of this work for homework.

Lesson One: Analyze

SWBAT:	● Critically analyze an image on social media
Materials:	● Projector ● Slide Presentation: Defining Media (Slides 8-13) ● Pens, pencils ● Key Questions for Social Media Analysis Worksheet ● Cell phones/computers/tablets (BYOD)

Agenda:	● **Opener:** Your Social Media Use (10 mins)
	   ○ Written on board: What's the last social media you checked today? What do you use frequently? How often and for how long? Do you think this influences you? Why or why not?
	   ○ Students may write a response to this in their notebooks, or simply share out.
	   ○ As students respond, have a recorder tally their classmates responses.
	● **Slide Presentation:** Defining Media (10 mins)
	   ○ Definitions: media, social media, media literacy
	   ○ Statistics about teen media use
	● **Class Model:** Key Questions (25 mins)
	   ○ Teacher selects one problematic Instagram post and models how to fill out the "Key Questions for Social Media Literacy" chart, with whole-class student input.
	   ○ This post is a good one to start with: @danbilzerian https://www.instagram.com/p/BPcWUFID3Vd/
	● **Student Work Time:** Key Questions (15 mins)
	   ○ In partners, students go to @LoganPaul's or @Rice's Instagram accounts and find a post that they have an issue with (there are a lot of options here!).
	   ○ If you think your students are up to having more freedom, you may ask them to search around other celebrity and influencer accounts for problematic posts.
	● **Share Out Observations** (If time)

HW:	● Finish "Key Questions" for homework

Lesson Two: Prepare for Production

SWBAT:	● Create a counter-narrative in response to a problematic social media post
Materials:	● Projector ● [Slide Presentation: Counter-Narratives](#) (Slides 23-32) ● Pens, pencils ● Counter-Narrative Storyboard Worksheet
Agenda:	● **Slide Presentation:** Counter-Narratives (10 mins) 　○ Define dominant narrative vs. counter narrative 　○ Show several examples ● **Model:** Storyboard Counter-Narrative (15 mins) 　○ Using the whole-class example from yesterday, the teacher models filling out the storyboard sheet. 　○ With the class, s/he brainstorms different ways to counter the narrative. Strategies: 　　■ *Flip the Script* 　　■ *Exaggerate* 　　■ *Add an AND* ● **Student Work Time:** Storyboard Counter-Narrative (30 mins) 　○ In their same partnerships from yesterday, students plan their response post using counter-narrative storyboard template. 　○ Before students leave today, they must get approval for their idea from the teacher 　○ Explain that students will need to bring in props, costumes, backdrops, etc so they can actually produce their counter-narratives in class tomorrow. ● **Share Out Ideas** (If time)
HW:	● Finish "Counter-Narrative Storyboard." Bring in any supplies (props & costumes) you need to film/produce your counter-narrative next class. ● Short on time? **Alt HW:** Have students produce their counter-narratives at home and bring them in ready to share the next class.

Lesson Three: Produce

SWBAT:	● Create a counter-narrative in response to a problematic social media post
Materials:	● Props/Costumes - students bring in from home ● Cell phones/computers/tablets (BYOD) ● Counter-Narrative Storyboard Worksheet ● Projector
Agenda:	● **Project Work Time**: Produce counter-narrative (25-45 mins) 　○ Using your storyboard that you created in class yesterday, and the props and costumes you may have brought from home, produce your counter-narrative. 　○ If students are creating and taking one single image, they will likely not need more than 25 minutes to get in costumes, arrange props, and take a few versions of the image. If they are creating videos, it will likely take the whole class period. 　○ Some students may need to borrow other partnerships as extra models/actors. ● **Student Presentations** (15-35 mins) 　○ Students should have the opportunity to share their counter-narratives on the projector for the whole class to see. If you have a very large class, you could have them first share in groups of 4-6, and then have each group select one to share to the whole class. 　○ First, students display the original social media post they found and explain the stereotypes or isms they've identified. 　○ Then, students display their counter-narrative image and explain the strategy they used to counter the narrative. 　○ If you run out of time today, you could also share during the next class period.
HW:	● Share your counter-narrative on social media!

Introduction for Teachers & Media Literacy Educators

As middle and high school teachers, we felt committed to bringing into our classroom the content that our students were engaging with all the time outside of the classroom: social media. The current media literacy world offers so many resources for deconstructing "older" media--like television, film, radio, print advertisements and commercials--but we had trouble finding lessons and activities focusing specifically on the unique world of producer-consumer new media. This series of questions emerged because we wanted to teach students how to analyze and deconstruct visual social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat, and we felt that the Center for Media Literacy's [Five Key Questions](#) was a great starting point, but needed adapting for this new landscape. We reformatted the content of the questions to focus specifically on social media, and we also scaffolded them with our diverse students (digital natives & media literacy beginners) in mind.

Key Questions for Social Media Analysis

We are analyzing @_____'s Instagram post from _____ [date].

W H A T	1. What's in the foreground of the image? The background? How is it framed? Is it a selfie?	Photo ☐ Video ☐
	2. Describe the colors, lighting, & clothing (if relevant).	
	3. What does the caption say and what hashtags are used?	
	4. How is the caption written (consider style, tone, & grammar)?	
W H O	5. What is the account holder's personal background? (age, gender, race, history)	
	6. Who else could have created this post?	
A U D I E N C E	7. [Look at the comments.] Who is the target audience for this post? (age, gender, race)	
	8. What is the "non-target" audience; in other words, what people wouldn't want to see this post? Why?	
W H Y	9. Why do you think this was posted?	
G O D E E P	10. What messages does this communicate about this person's lifestyle & beliefs?	
	11. What social/cultural values are embedded in those messages? (Consider stereotypes, political messages, isms, or phobias.)	

Directions: Find any post on instagram (video or photo) that is problematic to you in some way.
I am analyzing @_____'s Instagram post from _____ [date].
URL: https://www.instagram.com/p/_____ [set of 10 letters & numbers].

W H A T	1. What's in the foreground of the image? The background? How is it framed? Is it a selfie?	Photo ☐ Video ☐
	2. Describe the colors, lighting, & clothing (if relevant).	
	3. What does the caption say and what hashtags are used?	
	4. How is the caption written (consider style, tone, & grammar)?	
W H O	5. What is the account holder's personal background? (age, gender, race, history)	
	6. Who else could have created this post?	
A U D I E N C E	7. [Look at the comments.] Who is the target audience for this post? (age, gender, race)	
	8. What is the "non-target" audience; in other words, what people wouldn't want to see this post? Why?	
W H Y	9. Why do you think this was posted?	
G O O D E E P	10. What messages does this communicate about this person's lifestyle & beliefs?	
	11. What social/cultural values are embedded in those messages? (Consider stereotypes, political messages, isms, or phobias.)	

Name: Date:

Counter-Narrative Image Planning Template

<u>Dominant narratives</u> are the stories told by the dominant culture; they define our reality and guide our lives like an invisible hand. And when the dominant culture is oppressive, so, too, are its narratives. Instagram posts by celebrities and influencers often serve as dominant narratives.

A <u>counter-narrative</u> is a response to a dominant narrative. It disputes a commonly held belief or truth, sometimes seriously, sometimes as a parody.

In your chosen Instagram post, what is the "narrative" that is presented?
- *What values are embedded in the Instagram post? [See your answer to question #11 on your Key Questions chart]*
- *Why do you find this post problematic?*
- *Is there a stereotype or an ISM/phobia on display? [racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, etc.]*

How will you respond to that narrative?
- *Exaggerate → Makes something unrealistic so much more ridiculous*
- *Reverse the narrative → Flip the roles in some way*
- *Add an AND → Make it more realistic // OR, share *your* lived experience*
- *DIY → Do it yourself*

Brainstorm ideas here. Get feedback. Edit.

Idea 1

Draw the image below.	Caption & hashtags:
	#counternarrative
	What is happening in this image?

Idea 2

Draw the image below.	Caption & hashtags:
	#counternarrative
	What is happening in this image?

Your homework:: Finish this page, and *if possible,* **actually take a photo or create one on Photoshop based on your plans above.** Optional: Upload it to your Instagram!

VERSION 2: SHORT VIDEO STORYBOARD (Instagram video or Snapchat story)

Scene 1

Draw the scene below.	Setting: where is this taking place?
	Action: what is happening?

Scene 2

Draw the scene below.	Setting: where is this taking place?
	Action: what is happening?

Scene 3

Draw the scene below.	Setting: where is this taking place?
	Action: what is happening?

Scene 4

Draw the scene below.	Setting: where is this taking place?
	Action: what is happening?

Scene 5

Draw the scene below.	Setting: where is this taking place?
	Action: what is happening?

Scene 6

Draw the scene below.	Setting: where is this taking place?
	Action: what is happening?