

## MEDIA LITERACY AND YOUTH

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Countless studies and surveys have shown that Filipinos spend a lot of time on social media. One's phone is filled with seemingly endless social media applications and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok, Tumblr, WordPress, and others. In the implementation of online learning, the Department of Education has also catapulted various media platforms to both teachers and students. However, one's safety and skills are not ensured in the digital space. Trolls, targeted harassment, misinformation, and disinformation are some of the social media problems that plague the digital world. Hence, the need for media literacy among the youth.

Out of the Box: A Media Literacy Initiative offers a framework that defines media literacy as a set of three distinct yet overlapping practices. These are the ability to interrogate media texts, create with media tools, and participate meaningfully in the digital media space.

In critically interrogating media texts, Filipino students unlearn to relearn and recognize the dire need to widen their perspectives. It cultivates the skill of open-mindedness. It could also be cultivated by bringing online conversations to offline ones. Students should be able to discuss topics outside the Internet. In responsibly and ingeniously creative with media tools, Filipino learners can understand the nature, techniques, and power of media. It does not only mean knowing the media tools but also realizing when to use them. It means learners can create relevant messages aimed at a targeted, specific audience. And in meaningfully participating in the digital media space, Filipino students embrace shared values over specific group interests. Those shared

values – among others – should be the high regard for respect, camaraderie, acceptance, and love.

Moreover, the initiative provides long-term societal outcomes which educators can also use as a guide or framework in the implementation of media literacy teaching. One, better films and television lead to better journalism practices. Second, there should be a stronger integration of critical thinking and civic education practices in schools. Third, there should be a government that seeks and strives to uphold the ideals of democracy.

It is important to note that inculcating media literacy skills in students also means strengthening the power and authority of democracy. In a democratic space, everyone has a right to express and state their opinions, yet there should be a fine limitation between expressing and disrespecting. When one's opinion is targeted towards a particular group's harassment, the power of democracy is challenged. This is why teachers should emphasize the importance of responsible and ethical digital citizenship.

Media literacy skills can be integrated into the teaching-learning process through creating lessons aimed at digital literacy, deconstruction of media, creation of 8-shot film exercises, deconstruction of advertisements, news curation, and fact-checking. Through these specific topics, learners will be able to understand key concepts in contemporary news media, hone their creativity through following technical specifications, and encourage Filipino youth to develop critical thinking skills. In the age of digital citizenship, Filipino learners should be equipped with tools and skills that will help them traverse the path of the cyberworld.

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<https://www.ootbmedialiteracy.org/what-is-media-literacy/>