Discussion about Environment

The Environment and Media Arts:

Put forth your thoughts and ideas on how the growing issue of the environment can be addressed in Media Arts. Respond to the following issue:

Technology leaves a massive footprint on our society, and Media Arts is inherently reliant on that same technology. How can we create students who are stewards for the environment while they are simultaneously reliant on the technology that contributes to its degradation?

It is in my opinion that as Media Arts Educators, it is our responsibility to inform our students of the real effect of our actions on others and on the environment. If our students are informed, they can decide for themselves how they want to participate in the media arts moving forward. They may also decide to arm themselves as gamechangers in the field of Media Arts by working to reduce our impact on the environment. As they say, knowledge is power and as educators, we can help maneuver our impact on the environment in the future.

Unfortunately, we have a limited ability to choose the materials, tools, and technologies that have the least impact on our classrooms and on our environment. Considering this problem, I found a starting point at the website: ecomedialiteracy.org

Curriculum Materials – ecomedialiteracy.org

This website starts with 2 articles that present themselves as a 'starting point' for bringing this topic to the table in the classroom.

1. Themes and Activities for Enhancing Ecomedia Literacy
2. Ecomedia Literacy: Principles and Practices

What I appreciate about this website is that they offer a pathway to conversation about various perspectives on the topic. The learning should not be presented as a dry lecture from the teacher or just a video played with worksheets but rather interactive, discussion based, and student driven to problem solve with the knowledge and tools we have/find. Working in groups on various important topics to inform others in the classroom about.

The ecomedialiteracy.org website offers core values that we could all agree upon at the beginning of the unit before moving forward to explore together. Learning objectives, skill development, and practical applications are offered.

- Teachers are encouraged to provide 'Hands-on research and production tasks, multimedia projects, simulations of environmental media campaigns, problem-solving activities, scenario-building for different futures, experiential learning in local ecosystems.'

- Students are encouraged to have 'Mindful and Personal Experiences' such as;
  - Track their media usage and its impact on their perception of the world,
  - Compare experiences with and without media (e.g., walking in nature),
  - Explore how media affects emotions and physical responses.
  - Practice media mindfulness techniques

As a class we can work towards discovering our impact by following these practices. After collecting the data, we can try to problem solve and provide ways that we can alter our behaviour and activities to decrease our impact on the environment. If possible, it would be wonderful to be able to create a school wide interface that all classes/students/teachers in the school community can participate in to collectively reduce our impact on the environment. By becoming knowledgable leaders, the students can be the ones to promote change as stewards for the environment.

Technology Research - Read *Common Sense Technology* Addiction document. Respond to 321 points. [3 key findings that will/may impact your teaching using technology; 2 surprising facts/statistics that you read; 1 question you have about the research]

Discussion about Technology Document

Read the *Common Sense Technology Addiction* document. Based on the reading, respond to the 321 points

3. Key findings that will/may impact your teaching using technology

2. Surprising facts/statistics that you read

1. Question you have about the research

Post Your Response to the Discussion Board.

In the article, 'Common Sense Technology Addiction;'

3 key findings that will/may impact my teaching using technology are:
- Multitasking may decrease productivity because users take time to reorient after a transition to a different activity and become cognitively fatigued from the effort, which slows down their rate of work. Additionally, multitasking makes it more difficult to create memories that can be accurately retrieved later (Fernandes & Moscovitch, 2000). In terms of real-world performance, a study of laptop users in university classrooms found that students who multitasked on a laptop during a lecture performed worse on a test than students who were not multitasking (Sana, Weston, & Cepeda, 2013).
- Many researchers have noted that narcissism seems to be increasing, while empathic traits have been on the decline, and have pointed to social media as a driver for that change (Konrath, 2012). Arguments for why this would be the case are compelling: Time spent with media could subtract from face-to-face time, so heavy media users would forfeit opportunities to deepen empathy by conversing and learning from human facial and vocal cues.
- A balanced approach includes fostering awareness of media and self, embracing quality media usage, selective single tasking, carving out times and places to disconnect, nurturing relationships and face-to-face conversation. Gardner and Davis (2013) point out that media and technology can be especially beneficial when used to form deeper relationships, to allow for creativity and exploration, and to explore identity. There is a difference between spending hours using technology to create digital worlds, hone photography or music skills, or engage in

meaningful discussions of important issues and being a passive consumer of content or using tech to distance oneself from social relationships. A healthy digital lifestyle could and should include thoughtful and intentional uses of media and technology

- Additionally, parents and other caring adults can help youth to manage the media. By modeling balanced media habits themselves as well as co-engaging with media, discussing media-related best practices, strategies, and ethical dilemmas, and setting limits around how, when, and where to use media, parents can act as "media mentors" (Samuel, 2015).

2. Surprising facts/statistics that I read are:
- In a survey of 8- to 13-year-olds and their parents, 54 percent of children felt that their parents checked their devices too often, and 32 percent of children felt unimportant when their parents were distracted by their phones (AVG Technologies, 2015). Another study with 803 American parents of 8- to 17-year-olds found that about one-third of all participating parents struggled with limiting their children's use of media and technology (Rich, Bickham, & Shrier, 2015). And an observational study of 55 caregivers eating with young children in fast food restaurants found that parents who were highly absorbed in their devices tended to be harsher when dealing with children's misbehavior (Radesky, et al., 2014)
- Common Sense Media (2012) found that children between the ages of 13 and 17 preferred face-to-face communication over all technological means of communication, because it was perceived to be more fun and because they could understand people better in person. In addition, 52 percent of teen social media users felt that social networking had mainly helped their relationships with friends, as compared to 4 percent who felt it hurt their relationships. Because it is correlational, current research makes it difficult to know whether people who engage in problematic media use become less empathetic, whether people with less empathy or low levels of social well-being choose to engage more online, or both.

1. Question that I have about the research is:
This research is said to look at technology use across multiple age groups but on page 12 of the document it states:
'It is important to note that much of the research reviewed here was conducted with college students and adult populations, not specifically with children. There is some limited work on adolescents but very little on young children or preteens (or "tweens").' (Technology Addiction: Concern, Controversy and Finding Balance, pg. 12/48)

If this article is meant to communicate data collected regarding technology use for a wide range of age groups and to present whether Technology use can be considered an addiction, why was most of the research conducted on adults and college students and not with children or teens?
It would be beneficial to conduct studies that include a larger group of individuals under 18 years of age. I also think that showing a wider range of data might be able to give us a bigger picture of how and when the addiction develops and how it progresses as an individual ages.

Explain your understanding of the Critical or Creative Analysis Process and one's application in the media arts classroom. Create and share a tool or resource that allows Assessment as Learning for student understanding critical analysis.

What Is Critical Analysis in the Media Arts Classroom?

In Media Arts, critical analysis is the thoughtful and systematic consideration of media texts—films, photographs, digital art, games, graphic design, advertisements, etc.—to understand how meaning is constructed and interpreted. In a media arts setting, this means that students will need to use the 4 steps of critical analysis (Describe, Analyse, Interpet & Judge) to consider media work created by media artists, peers and reflectively, by themselves. The purpose is to develop a greater understanding of the artists' intentions and message that is communicated through this work. This requires that students need to progressively push beyond surface-level impressions to unpack:

- **Technical choices**: How camera angles, editing, lighting, or sound shape expression.
- **Symbolism and themes**: What messages or ideologies are expressed?
- **Audience interpretation**: How different viewers may respond, based on context and identity.
- **Cultural impact**: How work reflects or influences society.

By encouraging the use of critical analysis in the classroom, you are supporting students by helping them develop:

- **Deeper thinking** and reflection on their own artistic choices
- **Stronger creation** of student media projects with purposeful decisions
- ⬜ **Improved communication** through the ability to articulate interpretations, use media specific vocabulary correctly, and provide feedback.
- **Confident Problem Solving** of issues that develop as students use the Creative Process to develop projects based on meaningful concepts/ideas.

Critical Analysis Techniques – Student Toolkit (Assessment AS Learning)

Students can use this to analyze a media work of their own choice (film, photo, video game, ad, website, etc.) and uncover how meaning is created. They can also use this as a reflective analysis to critique work that they have created themselves.

Technique	What to Look For	Guiding Questions
Deconstruction	Key components like visuals, sound, editing, etc.	What stands out in this piece and why? How do individual parts contribute to the whole process?
Semiotics (Symbols & Signs)	Visual cues, color, gestures, camera angles	What might these symbols represent? What emotions or ideas are triggered?
Contextual Analysis	Time period, cultural moment, creator's background	When was it made, and how does that influence its message? What societal issues does it reflect?
Genre & Convention	Characteristics of the genre (e.g. sci-fi, documentary)	How does this follow or challenge the norms of its genre? Why might the creator choose that approach?
Audience Positioning	Emotional or ideological framing	Who is this aimed at? How does it make the audience feel or think? Who is included or excluded?
Technical/Formal Elements	Composition, sound, lighting, pacing	What do visual/auditory techniques add to the meaning or tone?
Intertextuality	References to other media, remixing, parody	What other works does it remind you of? How does that change your interpretation?
Representation	Identities, values, inclusion/exclusion	Who or what is being represented here—and how? What stories are being told (or not told)?

Discussion about Challenges

Bring together your own research, experience, and observations.

What do you think your classroom should look like?

How will it meet differently your students' needs?

What are some challenges that educators face when teaching creativity in the media arts?

Be sure to consider how creativity may be understood differently for the ELL learners; IEP learners; Culturally and/or Religious diverse learners; and First Nations/Metis/Inuit (FNMI) learners.

Post Your Response to the Discussion Board.

Indigenous Materials - There are online resources that include Aboriginal Artists and Expression in the Arts and Media website

The most important part of teaching an art/media class is being able to 'read the room' and get to know your students. Of course, IEPs are read and 'Get to Know You' activities are presented at the beginning of the class, but I think it is also important for students to understand how wide a range of creativity can have. It does not come in only one colour and in saying this, I encourage students to develop skills alongside 'finding their own style' which often integrates creative problem solving, getting to know themselves and building confidence and understanding of where they are at creatively. When conferring with students about their work, I might give suggestions but always remind them that these are options for them to make sure that 'you do you' and stay true to your vision while meeting the criteria of a project.

Creativity is built through the process of problem-solving. As we have all heard before 'necessity is the mother of invention.' I like to relate this to childhood in the 70's when our parents pushed us to the curb at 7 am (or when they went to work), with all but our clothes, maybe a bathing suit hanging on the line and our bikes, a stick or an action figure (if we were lucky). It didn't take long before we found friends, explored the neighbourhood and were making up games or building something out of nothing.

I like to take this 'outrageous' sense of understanding of what could be in the classroom occasionally (in a safe way). Often these tasks aren't formally marked but rather informally assessed so that the students can feel free to let. Introducing props such as a flashlight or lego blocks might be a good prompt for them to 'roll some dice' and create a project without judgement, using what they have with the technology they choose within a certain amount of time. Sometimes this can be done in pairs depending on the students' needs. By building fun activities as a part of the research and experimentation as part of the creative process, students often shift their boundaries and move past fears.

In my classroom, respect and community are important but the idea of community can look different for students who participate in their own way. Considerations must be made for students with IEP's who have behavioural triggers or need more structure, for which step-by-step guidelines/checklists/reflections can be provided to add structure and understanding. A variety of exemplars created by a diverse range of students/artists using a variety of tools and technology can be provided for students to review before making their final creative decisions. Students should always be reminded that working with new tools, technologies and techniques will come with a learning curve and can be frustrating but with perseverence (and help) they will improve their abilities and skills with the process that they are using. I find that it is helpful to provide time for reflection during and upon completion of projects to remind students to stop and think about where they started and where they finished in terms of how much they have grown. By modelling my own learning curve, students can see that they are not alone in the struggle. It is important to check-in and have conversations about the struggles, one on one and as a class. A sense of humour comes in very handy during many of these frustrating points of the creative process.

As mentioned, the creative range looks different for each student. Students should be encouraged to push these boundaries but for some students (ie ELL learners who are adjusting to a new culture, school procedures and language) or students with IEP's, this can be intimidating. It is important to meet the students where they are and get to know each of them well enough to be able to predict areas that could be problematic for students and set up alternative options or suggestions for students if this is needed. For this, trust and respect in the classroom are essential. I want my students to feel comfortable telling me about their challenges, so I often share my own learning and creative struggles (it is often hard to disguise it happens in real time when working with the students daily). When they see they can help me persevere or I can work out my problems using specific techniques, they often begin to feel more open embracing their own work for them.

Discussion - Analyzing Film/Documentary &/or Music Video

Go to the NFB or RC websites. Choose a short or long film or a documentary to share with the class. Provide key details about the film (with possible links to additional information) and include a rationale for how this film/documentary may be utilized in a specific media arts classroom. There are films, animation and documentaries available online through NFB and selections (can be streamed) can be requested from RC.

OR

Find a music video online. Apply the creative and critical analysis processes when viewing a music video to assess its effect on behaviour, identify key message(s) and analyze ways that it expresses the identity of the artist.

How to Analyze a Music Video: A Step-by-Step Guide | Simeon Brekke

The film that I have chosen is a 5-minute animation named 'LOKA,' created by Veronique Paquette in 2024. On the artist's own website ([veronique.paquette)](veronique.paquette) she h that as a synopsis of the animation that states, *'Through the energy of tango, a woman finds a path to freedom. A mesmerizing visual performance created with waves of ink and black-and-white geometric shapes.'*

 The film is featured on several film festival websites as well as NFB (The National Film Board of Canada), which provided funding for the project. The film is available at these links as well as others: [LOCA - NFB,](LOCA - NFB) [LOCA - Rendez-vous Québec Cinéma,](LOCA - Rendez-vous Québec Cinéma) [Loca » Whistler Film Festival.](Loca » Whistler Film Festival)

On Veronique Paquette's website ([veronique.paquette)](veronique.paquette) there is a statement provided that provides a peak into her career as an artist and animator:

Véronique Paquette has acquired her experience in traditional animation in the film, documentary and advertising industries, while making her passion for dance a powerful creative engine. Loving to combine different artistic universes, she has multiplied multidisciplinary collaborations and mixed dance and drawing in various projects. Tango, which she has been practicing for more than 20 years, is at the heart of the short film LOCA, her first professional animated film as a director.

On NFB website, there is a list of artists/partners involved other than Veronique Paquette. I think it is important for learners to see that it takes a team of specialists as well as valuable partners such as NFB to provide the funding and support required to complete a project and bring it to the public forum for viewing. I appreciate all the work that goes into such a project and how graceful and strong this work came to be.

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA, Production
NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA, Distribution
MÉLANIE BERGERON, Original music
PHILIPPE LEFEBVRE, Mounting
VÉRONIQUE PAQUETTE, Script
MIRANDA NISENSON, Narration

This project is a perfect example of how artists can **utilize the resources in our communities** to be able to bring a project to fruition. Particularly, this artist had to apply for a grant from the NFB as well as work with a composer to create the original music (which can introduce the idea of copyrights) as well as a narrator to make the script and characters come to life.

The 'simplicity' of the project aesthetics lends well to providing an excellent source for students to analyze moving artistic media work for **elements and principles of art** and how they are utilized.

This project is a great example of 3 of 4 major **principles of art: Duration, and Point-of-View/Perspective.**

The Principles of Media Arts by Rachel Vant Erve on Prezi

Duration can be studied in terms of the full length of the animation as well as broken down into shorter 'scenes' or 'clips' that involve extended or truncated motions to create intended emotion and effect. Since this work was created using stop-motion techniques, the entirety of this project is created through sequencing of thousands of still images.

Hybridization-This animation was created using traditional stop motion animation techniques alongside Photoshop manipulation, so it is a great example of how we can blend traditional and contemporary tools and techniques to create a strong product. Also, the drawings are created as traditional but dynamic gestural figure drawings which speak to the history of both the art of dance and drawing, our fascination with movement and the figure itself.

Point-of-View-This project presents both conceptual perspectives, such as the woman finding her freedom through the act of dance, as well as multiple physical POV/perspectives to present the simple act of dancing in quite a quite dynamic way.

In saying this, students can pick out the various **angles, shots, transitions,** and perspectives being used to create each scene.

Students can be taught how to break the animation up into what they believe to be different '**scenes**' to provide them with an opportunity to determine when one scene ends and another begins.

The idea of **'symbolism'** can be presented with this animation and considered to show how it is presented in both realistic and abstract forms.

Consideration of culture and presentation: This animation can be considered 'international' because you do not have to speak a particular language to understand the work. Also, there are 3 languages presented in the work (English, French and Spanish) which provides more depth and abstraction to the work as well as making the work more approachable for a greater audience.

Storyboarding-Students could work backwards to create their version of a storyboard for this project, or the artist's website could be used to follow her personal process of creating the project step-by-step through her blog and visual postings.

Character Development-Students could follow the artist 'ink drawing' process to determine how they came around to use the characters that they did. What factors need to be considered when creating a complex project such as this one.

Storytelling-What is the artist's story and how did they determine the best fit for communicating this story. Communication can be visual, oral through voice and sounds, music, tactile, etc. Which forms of communication are being used in this work and why did the artist choose these forms?