

Media Literacy Activities for Learning Civics Concepts

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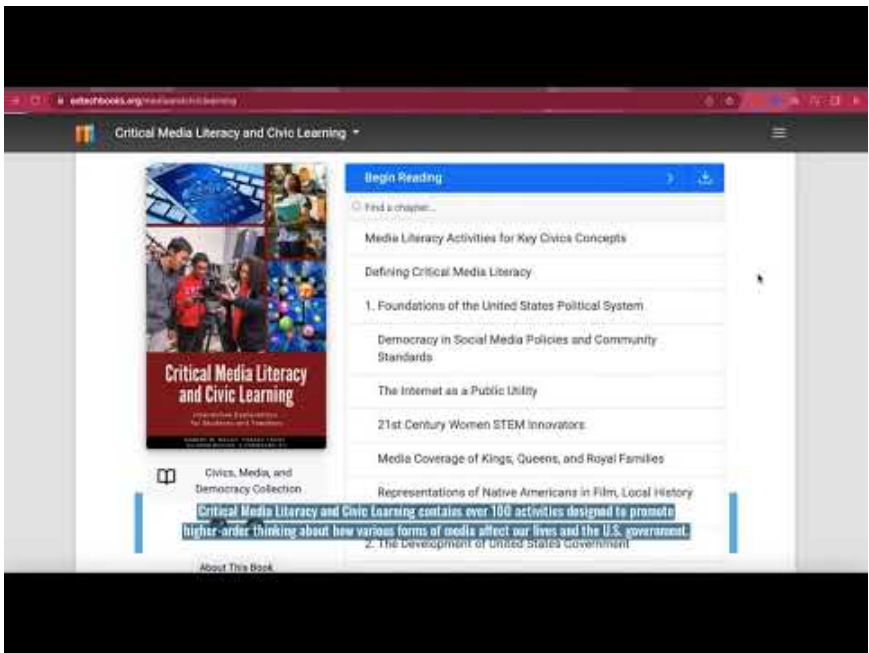
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Introduction

Welcome to ***Critical Media Literacy and Civic Learning*** - an interactive, multimodal, multicultural, open access eBook for teaching and learning key topics in United States Government and Civic Life. **Open access** means these materials are online, digital, and free of charge (Billings, 2019). This book is available online to anyone with an internet connection. The eBook can also be viewed and printed as a PDF file for offline viewing.



Watch on YouTube <https://edtechbooks.org/-VIjY>

Developed as a companion edition to our [Building Democracy for All eBook](#) (2020), ***Critical Media Literacy and Civic Learning*** (2021) features more than 100 interactive media literacy learning activities for students organized around key topics in civics, government, and history education derived from the Massachusetts 8th Grade Civics and Government curriculum framework (see tables below). Civics concepts for which we have developed critical media literacy activities include democracy as a political system, a republic as a form of government, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the branches of U.S. government, elections and voting, political parties, citizenship, political leadership and courage, political protest, civil rights and social justice, political action committees, amendments to the Constitution, landmark Supreme Court decisions, functions of state and local government, freedom of the press, digital news and social media, and many more.

Each critical media literacy learning activity includes short written introductions followed by step-by-step directions for students to complete the activities, individually or in small groups. Every activity is designed to promote creative self-expression and higher-order critical thinking among students about the ways that online and print media impact our lives as well as our nation's politics.

Media Literacy Activities for Civics, Government, and History Concepts

[1. Foundations of the U.S. Political System](#)

Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts	Critical Media Literacy Activities
Democracy as a Political System	Democracy in Social Media Policies and Community Standards
A Republic as a Form of Government	The Internet as a Public Utility
Impacts of Enlightenment Philosophies	21st Century Women STEM Innovators
British Influences on American Government	Media Coverage of Kings, Queens, and Royal Families
Native American Influences on American Government	Representations of Native Americans in Films, Local History Publications, and School Mascots

[2. The Development of United States Government](#)

Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts	Critical Media Literacy Activities
Declaration of Independence	Declarations of Independence on Social Media
Articles of Confederation	Media Marketing and Government Regulating of Self-Driving Cars and Electric Vehicles
The Constitutional Convention	Representations of and Racism Toward toward Black Americans in the Media
Federalists and Anti-Federalists	Political Debates Through Songs from Hamilton: An American Musical
The Constitution and the Bill of Rights	Bill of Rights on Twitter

3. Institutions of United States Government

Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts	Critical Media Literacy Activities
Branches of the Government and the Separation of Powers	Hollywood Movies about the Branches of Government
Checks and Balances between the Branches	Writing an Impeachment Press Release
The President, the Congress, and the Courts	Members of Congress' Use Social Media
Elections	Political Impacts of Public Opinion Polls
Political Parties	Website Design for New Political Parties

4. The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens

Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts	Critical Media Literacy Activities
Citizenship and Becoming a U.S. Citizen	Immigration in the News
Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens and Non-Citizens	Portrayals of Immigrants in Television and Film
Civic, Political, and Private Life	COVID-19 Information Evaluation Women Political Leaders in the Media
Fundamental Principles and Values of American Democracy	Online Messaging by Special Interest Groups
Voting and Citizen Participation	Digital Games for Civic Engagement
Accurate Information for Voters	Social Media and the Elections Media Spin in the Coverage of Political Debates
Political Leadership	Celebrities' Influence on Politics
Connections between People and Their Elected Representatives	Political Activism Through Social Media
Careers in Public Service	Media Recruitment of Public Sector Workers Images of Teachers and Teaching
Individual Liberty and Social Equality	Representing Trans Identities
Political Courage and Anti-Democratic Actions	Media Framing of the Events of January 6, 2021
Political Protest	Music as Protest Art
Interest Groups, Political Action Committees, and Labor Unions	PACs, SuperPACs, and Unions in the Media

5. The Constitution, Amendments, and Supreme Court Decisions

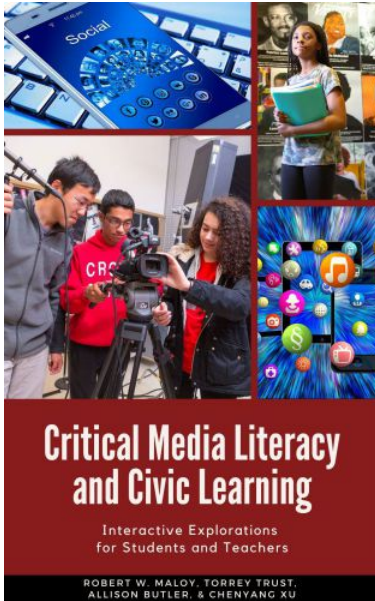
Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts	Critical Media Literacy Activities
The Necessary and Proper Clause	
Amendments to the Constitution	Prohibition in the Media The Equal Rights Amendment on Twitter and other Social Media
The Civil War, Federal Power, and Individual Rights	Civil War News Stories and Recruitment Advertisements Representations of Gender and Race on Currency
Equal Rights and Protections for Race, Gender, and Disability	The Equality Act on Twitter
Marbury v. Madison	Reading Supreme Court Dissents Aloud
Landmark Supreme Court Decisions	Television Cameras in Courtrooms

6. The Structure of State and Local Government

Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts	Critical Media Literacy Activities
Functions of State and National Government	Native American Mascots and Logos
Distribution of Powers	A Constitution for the Internet
Enumerated and Implied Powers	Military Recruitment and the Media
Protection of Individual Rights	Your Privacy on Social Media
The 10th Amendment	Pandemic Policy Information in the Media
The Massachusetts State Constitution	Gendered Language in Media Coverage of Women in Politics
Responsibilities of Federal, State, and Local Government	Environmental Campaigns Using Social Media
Leadership of Massachusetts State Government	Trusted Messengers, the Media, and the Pandemic
Tax Supported Facilities and Services	Online Campaigning for Political Office
The Functions of Local Government	Advertising the Lottery Online and In Print
	Local Governments, Social Media and Digital Democracy

7. Freedom of the Press and News/Media Literacy

Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts	Critical Media Literacy Activities
Freedom of the Press	Press Freedom in the United States and the World
Competing Information	Objectivity and the News from All Sides Investigative Journalism and Social Change
Formats for News Writing	News Photographs and Newspaper Design How Reporters Report Events
Digital News and Social Media	Recommendation Algorithms on Social Media Platforms Fake News Investigation and Evaluation
Evaluating Print and Online Media	Critical Visual Analysis of Online and Print Media
Editorials, Editorial Cartoons, and Op-Ed Commentaries	Memes and TikToks as Political Cartoons



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<https://equitypress.org/mediaandciviclearning>