

# Media Literacy Activities for Learning Civics Concepts

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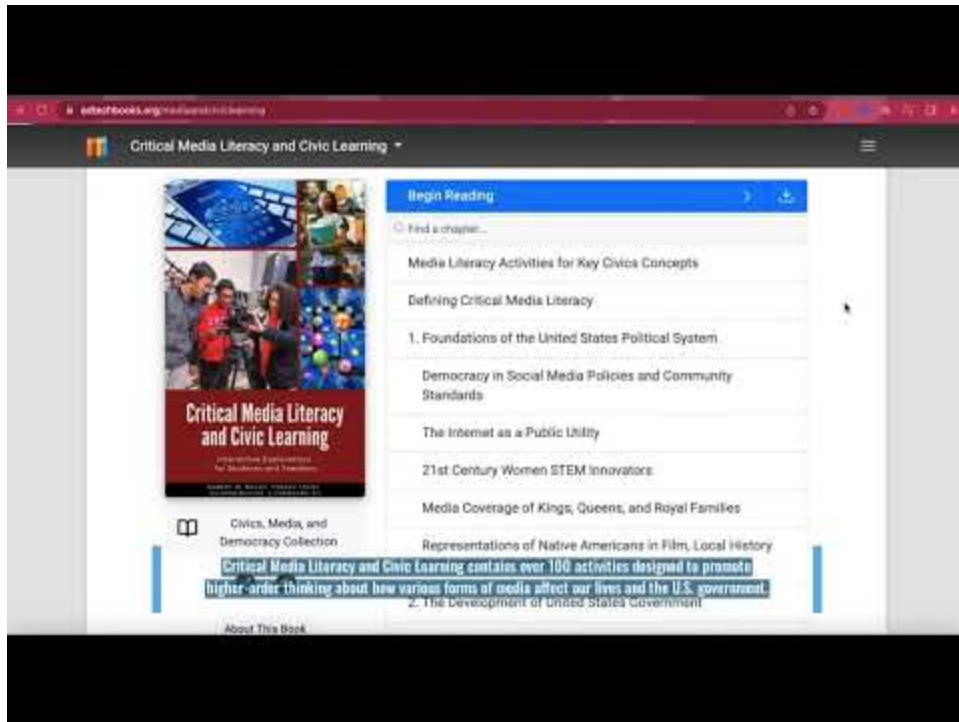
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## Introduction

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/-VljY>

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](#)

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

## **2. The Development of United States Government**

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

## **3. Institutions of United States Government**

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

## **4. The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens**

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

## **5. The Constitution, Amendments, and Supreme Court Decisions**

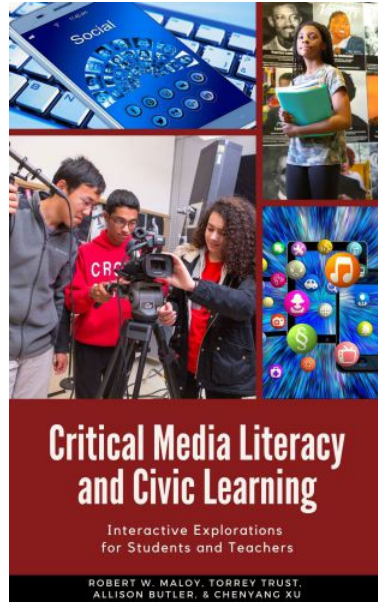
<b>Key Civics, Government, and History Concepts</b>	<b>Critical Media Literacy Activities</b>
The Necessary and Proper Clause	
Amendments to the Constitution	<a href="#">Prohibition in the Media</a> <a href="#">The Equal Rights Amendment on Twitter and other Social Media</a>
The Civil War, Federal Power,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

## 6. The Structure of State and Local Government

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

## 7. Freedom of the Press and News/Media Literacy

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



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