

# Using the Media to Analyze Political News

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Most people receive most of their news from the mainstream media. Can you trust what you see on TV and read in the newspaper? Use the guidelines here to improve your “media literacy.” Watch news coverage on different stations and compare how they report the news. Pick one political news story and compare the report between each network. Use the Five Key Questions and the Five Core Concepts as a guide to help you evaluate what you see.

## Five Key Questions of Media Literacy

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently than me?
4. What values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

Media Literacy means thinking critically about what you see and hear in the media.

## Five Core Concepts

1. All media messages are constructed.
2. All media messages use a creative language with its own rules.
3. Different people experience the same media message differently.
4. Media have embedded values and points of view.
5. Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.



## Five Key Questions for Editorial Cartoon Analysis

1. What is the event or issue that inspired the cartoon?
2. Are there any real people in the cartoon? Who is portrayed in the cartoon?
3. Are there symbols in the cartoon? What are they and what do they represent?
4. What is the cartoonist’s opinion about the topic portrayed in the cartoon?
5. Do you agree or disagree with the cartoonist’s opinion? Why?

Adapted from The Center for Media Literacy website and The Media Literacy Kit. More lessons on Media Literacy at <[www.medialit.org](http://www.medialit.org)>.

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