



## COMMUNITY CLASSROOM: VOTE DEMOCRACY! EDUCATOR GUIDE

Educators can use the VOTE DEMOCRACY! Educator Guide to support viewing of PLEASE VOTE FOR ME, IRON LADIES OF LIBERIA, CHICAGO 10 and AN UNREASONABLE MAN while engaging students in discussions about democracy abroad, elections, third-party politics, gender, the role of dissent in democracy and media literacy. These lessons and activities also provide a context for understanding and further investigating the changing nature of democracy around the world.



KQED  
education network



# Activity 7

Media Literacy  
(90-120 minutes + assignments)



“He said that politics had become theater and magic, basically, that it was the manipulation of imagery through the mass media that was confusing and hypnotizing the people in the United States, making them accept a war which they really didn’t believe in.”

-Allen Ginsberg on Abbie Hoffman



# Media Literacy

## (90-120 minutes + assignments)

**Grade Level:** 9–12, College

**Subject Areas:** Government, Political Science, Social Studies, Current Events, Language Arts, Debate, Sociology

**Objectives:** Students will

- analyze and critically view film as text
- discuss in groups and as a class
- exercise collaborative group skills
- practice media literacy analysis
- develop own media products

**Skills:** Stating and supporting opinions in class discussion and in writing with evidence, critical reading and viewing, note taking, speaking and oral presentation skills

**Materials:** Discussion Guide for **Chicago 10**, board/overhead, chart paper, **CHICAGO 10 Video Modules, 2 & 3** or full film

This lesson provides students with an opportunity to critically view and analyze media and the ways images are constructed. Students will hear from the filmmaker himself about his intention behind the film and be able to look at whether or not he was able to achieve his goals. Students will also practice their speaking and presentation skills.

### Procedures

1. Have students make their own list of five types of media they regularly interact with. Call on students to share from their list and create a class mind map on the board or overhead. Then, discuss and co-construct a list of the techniques that each type of media uses (for example, magazines use color, images, text and placement on the page).
2. Have students read and discuss seven “Key Concepts of Media Literacy” from the KQED Education Network Web site (<http://www.kqed.org/education/digitalmedia/key-concepts.jsp>) and the Temple University Media Education Lab's KNOW TV approach to looking critically at documentary production (<http://mediaeducationlab.com/index.php?page=85>).
3. View **CHICAGO 10 Video Modules, 2 & 3**: Have students respond using the following prompts:

Message:

- Describe the modules in as much detail as possible. What did you see? What/who is represented? How?
- What is this media text communicating in terms of message, key ideas and associations?
- Do the images offer a visual argument? If so, explain.
- Think about the filmmakers intention: Why do you think he made this documentary? Is his viewpoint represented? How?
- How does the film represent different voices and viewpoints? Are you invited to identify with one viewpoint or are different perspectives represented equally?

Production:

- How did the producer's purpose shape the content of this program?
- How is sound and language used in the film?
- What effect does the music used in various scenes have on the viewer?
- Why did the filmmaker choose to animate the courtroom scenes? What impact does this have?
- What other devices are used to capture the attention of the viewer?
- What techniques are used to enhance the authenticity or authority of the film?



Audience:

- Who is the intended audience? Is there one?
- Why might different audiences respond differently to this film?
- What factors shape the response of the audience?
- Is the film controversial in any way? Why?

4. Filmmaker Brett Morgen came up with the vision and intention that drives this film. Have students view the Citizens Summits interview with Morgen at (<http://www.takepart.com/citizensummits>)

In the **CHICAGO 10 Discussion Guide**, Morgen explains his motivation: “My goal from the beginning has been to reintroduce this chapter of recent history to a new generation, for they are the ones who will hopefully benefit the most from this story.”

Have students also read Morgen’s “From the Filmmaker” introduction from the **CHICAGO 10 Discussion Guide**. Discuss using the following prompts:

- Was Morgen successful in achieving his vision?
- How appealing is the film to his target audience—young people? What works and what doesn’t?
- How would you make a historical/political film appeal to a young audience? What techniques, images, music, etc. would you use?

5. Assignment: Media Analysis & Creation

Have students look at a variety of campaign media from a recent election: posters, cartoons, speeches, commercials/ads, slogans and song lyrics. They will use the media literacy questions from steps 2 & 3 to write an analysis paper on the target audience, techniques and the effectiveness of the media.

Have each student select one media example of a message they oppose from the campaign. They should then select a form of media that they would like to use to create their own response. It can be an article, poster, short film, blog/vlog, song, cartoon or other media. Each student will then publish their creation online to Youth Media Exchange (<http://ymex.org>), SchoolTube.com or a teacher-created classroom blog.

### Extension Activities:

1. Invite a panel of guest speakers to come into the classroom to address student questions and comments about documentary filmmaking and media making. Include artists, journalists, filmmakers, writers, bloggers, etc. Have students prepare questions for the panel in advance. Follow up in class by discussing what insights students gained from each of the panelists. See **Teacher Handout A: Guidelines for Convening a Community Forum**.
2. Select one of the other video modules (PLEASE VOTE FOR ME, IRON LADIES OF LIBERIA, AN UNREASONABLE MAN) from the Vote Democracy! edition of COMMUNITY CLASSROOM for the students to view and ask them to analyze it using the media literacy framework. Research interviews with the filmmakers to find out more about their intentions behind making the film.
3. Ask students to research news coverage of recent protests and rallies, especially around the 2008 political conventions. Ask students the question: How are they portrayed in the media?
4. Request that students generate a list of characters from the film. Ask them to include minor characters (police men, national guardsmen, U.S. Marshals) as well as the principal ones. Assign each student a character and ask them to research how the character would have reacted to the situation and then show the research they found that supports that notion. Hold an open forum where students assume the role of the characters using props, name plates, costumes and similar items. Have students answer these prompts in character:
  - Did the groups have the right to protest?
  - Were their rights violated?
  - Were they right in their decision to continue to march, even though a permit had not been granted?
  - Take a position and discuss the situation that unfolded in the courtroom with Bobby Seale.
  - Defend/don’t defend the final decision of the court. Have the students generate a paper wherein they describe what they learned from the role playing scenario.



### Teacher Handout A: Guidelines for Convening a Community Forum

Inviting community members into the classroom to share their insights and expertise can enhance student's learning by showing how the issues they are studying affect people around them. Consider inviting community members who represent multiple perspectives so the discussion can reflect the complexity of a particular issue as well as the diversity of your state and community. Introducing students to the contributing roles of scholars, advocates and policy-makers, along with those most affected by a policy or program, emulates a process of good information gathering. An appropriately facilitated discussion with opposing viewpoints also helps build understanding of democratic debate. If possible, involve students in researching and inviting the local panel members and developing the discussion questions. An outcome of this activity might be to connect students to service learning or other mentoring opportunities with community organizations.

#### Planning a Panel

STEP 1: Using the Educator Guide, determine which Activity area you would like to focus on and incorporate a Community Forum.

STEP 2: Using the table below as a guide, develop a plan for your preferred panel participants.

STEP 3: Using the Educator Guide and the Discussion Guide, compile a list of potential discussion questions to share with potential panelists.

STEP 4: Using your knowledge of community organizations, your student's contacts and research with some of the search tools provided, recruit your panelists.

STEP 5: Plan the format of your forum, finalize the discussion questions, select or designate a facilitator.

Here is a list of organizations that might assist you with identifying representatives for a community panel.

Suggested Panel Members	Organization examples	Search Tools
Campaign staff of a local, state or federal office-holder	Congress.org  National Conference of State Legislators  National Association of Counties	www.congress.org (search by ZIP code for local, state and congressional representatives)  http://www.ncsl.org/public/leglinks.cfm  http://www.naco.org/Template.cfm?Section=Find_a_County&Template=/cfiles/counties/usamap.cfm
Government watch-dog organizations	Common Cause  League of Women Voters	www.commoncause.org (search State Organizations)  www.lwv.org (search "find a local league")
Women political leaders	Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers	http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts4.html (search by state)
Local journalists or filmmakers	Local newspaper, journalism school, film school	



## RECOMMENDED NATIONAL STANDARDS

### Curriculum Standards for English Language Arts National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies and their understanding of textual features.
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communication with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion and the exchange of information).

### Curriculum Standards for Social Studies Expectations of Excellence, National Council for the Social Studies

#### Performance Expectation 1: Culture

- Predict how data and experiences may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.
- Interpret patterns of behavior reflecting values and attitudes that contribute or pose obstacles to cross-cultural understanding.
- Construct reasoned judgments about specific cultural responses to persistent human issues;

#### Performance Expectation 4: Individual Development and Identity

- Identify, describe, and express appreciation for the influences of various historical and contemporary cultures on an individual's daily life;
- Describe the ways family, religion, gender, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status and other group and cultural influences contribute to the development of a sense of self;
- Examine the interactions of ethnic, national or cultural influences in specific situations or events;
- Analyze the role of perceptions, attitudes, values and beliefs in the development of personal identity;
- Compare and evaluate the impact of stereotyping, conformity, acts of altruism and other behaviors on individuals and groups;
- Work independently and cooperatively within groups and institutions to accomplish goals;

#### Performance Expectation 6: Power, Authority, and Governance

- Examine persistent issues involving the rights, roles and status of the individual in relation to the general welfare;

#### Performance Expectation 9: Global Connections

- Analyze or formulate policy statements demonstrating an understanding of concerns, standards, issues and conflicts related to universal human rights;
- Identify and describe the roles of international and multinational organizations.
- Illustrate how individual behaviors and decisions connect with global systems.

For specific content standards on subjects such as social sciences, ethics and media literacy, please refer to your respective State Standards.



## GUIDE CREDITS

### CURRICULA WRITER

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David Maduli is an independent educational consultant who has contributed many curriculum guides and conducted various workshops for PBS programs. He has a master's in teaching and curriculum from Harvard Graduate School of Education and continues to work as a veteran Bay Area public school language arts and social studies teacher.

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**About COMMUNITY CLASSROOM:**

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM is an exciting resource for educators providing short video modules drawn from the Emmy® Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens*. *Independent Lens*, a 29-week series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS stations across the country, features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Drawn from the U.S. and abroad, these stories reflect the diversity of our world through the lens of contemporary documentary filmmakers. The CLASSROOM video modules are supported with innovative, resource-rich curricula for high school, college and youth educators. Video modules are 5-10 minutes in length and can be viewed online or on DVD-ROM. Content is grouped into subject specific segments that correspond to lesson plans and are standards-based.

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM is a product of the Independent Television Service and KQED Education Network, with support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Educational content was developed with guidance from PBS Teachers, National Association for Multicultural Education, National Council of Churches, American Association of Community Colleges, 4-H, National Council for the Social Studies, and National Council of Teachers of English.

**About ITVS:**

The Independent Television Service (ITVS) funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web and the Emmy Award-winning weekly series *Independent Lens* on Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. ITVS is a miracle of public policy created by media activists, citizens and politicians seeking to foster plurality and diversity in public television. ITVS was established by a historic mandate of Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since its inception in 1991, ITVS programs have revitalized the relationship between the public and public television, bringing TV audiences face-to-face with the lives and concerns of their fellow Americans. More information about ITVS can be obtained by visiting [itvs.org](http://itvs.org). ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people.

**About *Independent Lens*:**

*Independent Lens* is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. Hosted this season by Terrence Howard, the acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at [www.pbs.org/independentlens](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens). *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

**About KQED Education Network:**

KQED Education Network engages with community and educational organizations to broaden and deepen the impact of KQED media to effect positive change. Through parent education and professional development workshops, public screenings, multimedia resources, and special events, Education Network reaches more than 200,000 Bay Area residents a year and serves people of all ages, with a particular emphasis on reaching underserved communities. Learn more about its three unique services, Early Learning, Educational Services, and Community Engagement, at [kqed.org/HistoryEd](http://kqed.org/HistoryEd).

**About PBS:**

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 354 public noncommercial television stations and reaches almost 90 million people each week through on-air and online content. Bringing diverse viewpoints to television and the Internet, PBS provides high-quality documentary and dramatic entertainment, and consistently dominates the most prestigious award competitions. PBS is a leading provider of educational materials for K-12 teachers, and offers a broad array of other educational services. PBS's premier kids' TV programming and Web site, PBS KIDS Online ([pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org)), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for children. More information about PBS is available at [pbs.org](http://pbs.org), one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

