Planning the inquiry

1. What is our purpose/ overall goal? (UbD Stage 1)

To inquire into the following:

- **transdisciplinary theme: How we express ourselves**: an inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.

- **central idea**: Media is a powerful tool, that influences the decisions that people make.

**Summative assessment task(s): (UbD Stage 2)**

What should the students eventually be able to do as a result of this unit? What are the possible ways of assessing students’ understanding of the central idea? What evidence, including student-initiated actions, will we look for? How will students REFLECT and SELF-ASSESS their learning? Consider performance tasks and other evidence.

Work with one of the 5th grade exhibition groups. Develop a report on the same topic as one of the exhibition groups - not to solve the problem, but to find out as much about it as they can. Then they should write a persuasive piece in which they convince people to take an interest in the exhibition as a model of the IB program. These persuasive pieces will be videoed and sent to local media, the school website, and school community to advertise the exhibition and encourage attendance and community involvement.

The students would evaluate each other’s writing using a class created rubric in which they evaluate each other’s writing based on the type, effectiveness, ability to influence and responsible, unbiased use of information.

2. What do we want to learn? What are our established goals? (UbD Stage 1)

Consider what you want your desired results to be. What KNOWLEDGE/UNDERSTANDINGS do you want students to walk away with? Content standards to be addressed? (See complete list in box 9)

- Research and report writing; three dimensional shapes; “the west”, “changing earth”- how media reports on natural disasters, how does weather change the physical earth; how do people use media to encourage population of new land/areas; safety on the web, persuasive writing; distinguishing between fact/opinion; math vocabulary- involving evaluating things,
- What are the key concepts (form, function, causation, change, connection, perspective, responsibility, reflection) to be emphasized within this inquiry?
- Key concepts: function, responsibility, causation
- Related concepts: communication, truth, power of language
- What language functions will support student learning in the scope of the inquiry into the central idea?
- What lines of inquiry will define the scope of the inquiry into the central idea? (Students will understand that…)
  - Different types of media have been created to meet needs in society
  - The influence of media on society and/or individuals
  - Responsible consumption and use of media
- What teacher questions/provocations will drive these inquiries? (What essential questions can we ask to spark meaningful connections, provoke deep thought and inquiry, encourager transfer of knowledge by our students?)
- How can we use media to overcome differences in opinion?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of media?
- Is the evidence reliable?
- How might we prove, confirm or justify information/opinions expressed in media?
- How can we use media to influence others?
- Are there appropriate and inappropriate uses of media?
Planning the inquiry

3. How might we know what we have learned? (UbD Stage 2)

This column should be used in conjunction with “How best might we learn?”

What are the possible ways of assessing students’ prior knowledge and skills? What evidence will we look for?

For our provocation, we will create a scenario in which the 4th grade students are called to the auditorium by the principal, “in trouble” for an event in the cafeteria the day before. Consequences will be given based on “reports” that the principal had, though she cannot reveal her sources. She will talk about how this event has harmed the reputation of the students for the building. Then the students will be sent back to their classrooms to look at articles from news sources that question the character of someone, or present someone in a negative light. They will evaluate the believability and impact of the article upon their impressions of that figure. Connections will be drawn between the two activities, and students will complete a reflection on which they discussed the negative aspects of publicizing information based on questionable sources. This will give us insight into their starting understanding of responsible use of media.

What are the possible ways of assessing student learning in the context of the lines of inquiry? What evidence will we look for? (We will know students understand/know are able to do …. by ….)

Throughout unit, keep a class wiki/blog in which …???

4. How best might we learn? (UbD Stage 3 - Performance Tasks)

What are the learning experiences suggested by the teacher and/or students to encourage the students to engage with the inquiries and address the driving questions? (Consider the WHERE TO prompting listed in box 10.)

• Spend time introducing the central idea/lines of inquiry, etc. so that students have a deeper understanding of the relevance of the provocation.
• Class brainstorm about types of media in use today.
• Discuss purposes of media in all of the places you see it today and from looking at ads and determining
• Discuss history of media - the progression of how different forms have evolved over time. Look at newspapers from history, commercials over time, etc.
• Have students create a timeline of their own lives to develop the concept of timelines. Then research the timelines of the development of different media types and create a media timeline. A simple one is available on youtube that can be a starter. This leads to good discussions around the impact of new media (ex. Why were people afraid when there were moving pictures?)
• Look at tv commercials over the last 3-4 decades to facilitate a class discussion of “tools” advertisers use to develop attention getting commercials.
• Compare different types of print advertisements from the last several years to see how they have changed over time (less print, what’s missing from ads? Why is there less information in them, etc.)
• Conduct writing lessons on persuasive writing and link this directly to how media influences individuals/groups - the positive and negative effects of media.
• Brainstorm where advertisement is. Discuss types of advertisements and look at what techniques are used in advertising.
• Conduct writing lessons on report writing and link these to concepts of responsible consumption and use of media.
• Discuss propaganda around expansion into Colorado and the West as a Social Studies connection
• How can we connect this to “Changing Earth” ideas in science?

What opportunities will occur for transdisciplinary skills development and for the development of the attributes of the learner profile? What key SKILLS will students acquire as a result of this unit?

5. What resources need to be gathered? (UbD Stage 3)

What people, places, audio-visual materials, related literature, music, art, computer software, etc, will be available?

The story of Journalism: Youtube: Evolution of Media; Media Studies: History of Media, Promethean planet is a good source for flip charts that talk about propaganda; PBSkids.org for “Don’t buy it!”;

How will the classroom environment, local environment, and/or the community be used to facilitate the inquiry?
Reflecting on the inquiry

6. To what extent did we achieve our purpose?

Refer back to Box 1 to answer these questions.

Assess the outcome of the inquiry by providing evidence of students’ understanding of the central idea. The reflections of all teachers involved in the planning and teaching of the inquiry should be included.

The central idea is coming through clearly and how it influences people. They were just reflecting again on how media affects how you spend your money and how some people get tricked because of mixed messages, etc. It was easy for them to understand because it affects them directly. Comparing commercials and advertising over time really led them to drive this connection.

How could you improve on the assessment task(s) so that you would have a more accurate picture of each student’s understanding of the central idea.

We had to change the summative this year because of time and access to the computer lab. We had the students create an advertisement of their choice based on an invention that they want to create. They could make a print, commercial or other kind of advertisement. We had to reflect on this planner before these were all completed due to the end of the school year and meeting time, so we will have to discuss the final outcome before teaching this unit next year. We will look at this when we start backwards planning for the unit.

What opportunities were there for student self-assessment/reflection?

We continued to use the reflection journals. We have had them continue to write down the central idea and talk about what they know now in relation to it. There have been a lot of varied responses, but that metacognitive awareness was clear.

What was the evidence that connections were made between the central idea and the transdisciplinary theme?

Discussions about people’s opinions centered on this connection- people expressing their opinions and our ability to evaluate what is in media. This connection was strong.

7. To what extent did we include the elements of the PYP?

What were the learning experiences that enabled students to:

• develop an understanding of the concepts identified in “What do we want to learn?”

Function: Discussing and noticing what ads want us to do or buy, logging where they saw advertisements around their community in 1 day- to understand how media functions to advertise and reach us in so many places

Responsibility: Understanding how much media can influence people’s decisions and how we have the responsibility not to believe everything we hear; realizing that media can be constructive or non-constructive

Causation: studying what an advertisement really wants us to do…

Perspective might fit this better than causation.

• demonstrate the learning and application of particular transdisciplinary skills?

Communication skills: in working on their advertisements- communicating their message, who would want it and why

• develop particular attributes of the learner profile and/or attitudes?

Profiles:

Balanced – to see both sides of a point of view

Communicators- as they create their own advertisements

Open-minded- to be able to evaluate an add

Attitudes:

Creativity: creating their own ads

Integrity: the responsibility to use media correctly

In each case, explain your selection.
Reflecting on the inquiry

8. What student-initiated inquiries arose from the learning?

Record a range of student-initiated inquiries and student questions and highlight any that were incorporated into the teaching and learning.

Can you really go to college in your pajamas? (online?)

Talking about all of the places that we see advertisements—students fixated on how they permeate our community and life.

Students were also fixated on commercials that seemed to target specific audiences (i.e., cigarette commercials) really upset them.

At this point teachers should go back to box 2 “What do we want to learn?” and highlight the teacher questions/provocations that were most effective in driving the inquiries.

What student-initiated actions arose from the learning?

Record student-initiated actions taken by individuals or groups showing their ability to reflect, to choose and to act. How did the students show their transfer of understanding?

This unit was taught at the end of the year and ended up shorter than we wanted, so action opportunities were limited. We really think they will be demonstrated as this group of students enter Exhibition next year, but will have to evaluate this as well before we teach the unit again to make sure we are providing good opportunities for this.

9. Teacher notes (To do list before teaching this unit again):

Possible timeline for unit: 6 weeks

Week 1: provocation, intro of unit, work on timelines, types of media today

Week 2: persuasive writing and advertising

Week 3: finish persuasive writing, connect knowledge of report writing to responsible consumption and use of media

Week 4-6: work on summative project after meeting with 5th grade students

We need to find the media timeline off you tube again. This was really helpful.

Consider adding perspective as a key concept.

Clarify what will work best for our summative assessment for this unit.

Are we providing opportunities to lead to student action? Evaluate before we teach next year.

Content standards addressed through this inquiry:
10. How will the language functions needed to understand this unit be developed?

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