
UNIT: Decisions That Affect Children

LESSON: Setting the Stage for
Learning--Media Influence

TIME: 1 day

COMPETENCIES:

1. Discuss the impact of television, videos, and video games. (Options 2, 3, 4, and 5)
 2. Identify ways media can be used as a positive medium. (Option 6)
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OVERVIEW/SUMMARY: The impact of television, videos, and video games is profound in American homes today. No one is untouched by this powerful force.

MOTIVATOR:

Make a list of popular movies or television shows. As each show is named, have the students respond with the first idea that comes to their mind. Are the comments positive, negative, humorous, dangerous, etc.? Why do they enjoy these shows? What do they learn from these shows?

LESSON OPTIONS/SUPPLIES:

OPTION 1

BOOKS: When the TV Broke, by Harriet Ziefert, Illustrated by Mavis Smith, ISBN 0-14-050984-4 Berenstain Bears--Too Much TV, 0-394-86570-7, The Wretched Stone.

OPTION 2--Competency 1

READING: Read and respond to the articles by Dr. Victor B. Cline. These could then be discussed or debated as a class. "How to Make Your Child a Winner," pages 216-225, and "Warning: TV Sex & Violence May Be Hazardous To Your Child's Health" (included in this lesson plan).

OPTION 3--Competency 1

MEDIA IN THE HOME: Assign students to observe and interview a child and his/her parents concerning television, videos, and video games. **TEACHER NOTE:** You may wish to divide the class into thirds and assign each group a different form of media to investigate. Have students complete the activity sheet, then discuss the findings as a class.

OPTION 4--Competency 1

TELEVISION COMPARISON: Record a cartoon and a five-minute segment of "Sesame Street." Have the students watch the cartoon first. They should mark on their paper every time they see or hear something violent (whether it is funny or not). They should also mark their paper when they see or hear something positive. Then repeat the activity watching the "Sesame Street" segment. Compare the two programs. Which was more positive? Which show is better for young children to watch? Discuss the pros and cons of television viewing with the class.

OPTION 5--Competency 1

DEBATE: A few days prior to this lesson, assign each class member to find and read an article that deals with the effects of media on children. They should bring their article and a summary of it to class on the day of the debate. Divide the class in half. One half will be in favor of free media usage by young children (this includes videos, video games, magazines, books, television, movies, music, etc.). The other half will be in favor of limited usage with strict rules. The groups may work together to prepare their ideas but will make individual presentations during the debate. After preparation has been completed, call one student from each side of the class to debate this issue for 30 seconds. Let each class member participate. Summarize the issues discussed during the debate. (Another twist would be to let students present their personal view point, then tally the scores to see the feelings of the class.)

OPTION 6--Competency 2

THE BOSS OF MEDIA: Students should work in groups of 5-6 students. They should make a list of rules they would expect their children to follow if they were the parents (be sure to include videos, video games, magazines, books, television, movies, music, etc.). Share the rules with the class and make one master list. You may wish to have the students discuss this list with their parents.