

Inspired by Popular Media

Activity

Resource:

Engaging Students in Healthy Living through Drama

Grade(s): 11 12

What is it all about?

Use popular media to support students in making connections between their personal lives and ideas and messages presented in media about mental illness, relationships, and bias and stereotyping, and have them express their understanding through an original artistic performance.

Curriculum Connections

Grade 11: C3.5

Grade 12: C1.3, C3.4

How is it done?

- Select and show students various print media or video clips from popular media that communicate ideas and messages about mental illness, relationships, and bias and stereotyping. Have students work in small groups. Each group selects one video clip to analyze in order to determine the message, evaluate the effectiveness of the message (for example, “Will it have a positive or negative impact on youth self-esteem /perspective/habits/relationship behaviours?”), and decide how the message could be strengthened or changed to be more realistic and inclusive so the video can have a greater positive impact on a youth audience.

- Have individual students or small groups create a performance piece — such as a monologue, creative dance, song, or spoken word poem — inspired by the video clip that conveys their own message that encourages more realistic and inclusive messaging.
- Have students either perform their performance pieces for the class or record their work to share with their peers or another chosen audience.
- Facilitate a group debriefing session. Have students reflect on what they learned, their and others' reaction to the work of their peers, and what the group as a whole can take away from the activity to support the well-being of both self and others.

What may be needed?

- Video clips from popular media that communicate ideas and messages about mental illness, relationships, bias, and stereotyping
- Time and space for students to create their performance pieces
- A recording device

Opportunities for assessment

- Observe small group conversations to assess students' application of critical thinking and interpersonal skills.
- Use the groups' media analyses to assess students' understanding of popular media as a factor that influences society and how it can be used to encourage more realistic and inclusive messaging.
- Have students complete a self-assessment of their ability to use their problem solving, decision making, and communication skills to complete their analysis and express their perspective through their chosen performance piece.

Ideas for Extension

- Have students use their performance piece as a tool for a social media campaign in their school or local community aimed at promoting more realistic and inclusive messaging directed to a youth audience.

Educator notes

- Encourage students to develop critical thinking skills for complex and multifaceted issues. Such skills include questioning, predicting, analysing, synthesizing, examining opinions, identifying values and issues, detecting bias, and distinguishing between alternatives to make a judgement or guide decision making.
- Encourage reflection on how media has shaped students' own views and values.