Capturing the True Ideals In, and Around, Us

Teacher Summary

In this lesson, students analyze how we create, use, and share images, as they create a photo essay about appearance ideals. The use of photography has increased dramatically as our personal electronic devices allow us to capture a moment quickly and easily by taking a photo or snapping a selfie. Through social media sites such as Instagram and Snapchat, photos can be shared as easily as they're captured. This lesson provides opportunities for students to learn about the importance of responsible media use and digital citizenship.

Teacher Message

This lesson continues to challenge and counter the messages about appearance ideals that we are often bombarded with. The focus will be on images and photos, stressing the importance of capturing "real" beauty that is authentic and diverse. Students will create a photo essay of images that capture the beauty in and around them. NOTE: some of the materials suggested might be very challenging for some students to view; please preview them and decide what is appropriate for your students.

Delving deeper into the work of responsible media use and digital citizenship is critical and allows students to explore work through the lens of being a responsible media consumer and creator. This perspective can extend beyond this unit, transferring to studies of media in other areas and throughout the year.

Materials

Chart paper
Markers
Digital cameras or personal electronic devices that can take photographs
Notebooks or paper for photo essay notes

Book

Ewald, W., *Best Part of Me*. ISBN: 978-0-316-70306-2

Couch, R., "Acid Attack Survivors Pose As 'Calendar Girls' To Redefine Beauty" (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/13/india-acid-attack-survivors_n_6855476.html)

Joshi, S., "Courageous acid attack survivor becomes the face of a fashion campaign in India" (https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/sep/12/acid-attack-survivors-laxmi-and-adele-bellis-take-the-catwalk-in-london-fashion-show)

Komar, M., "Acid Attack Survivor Becomes Face Of New Fashion Campaign & Stuns — PHOTOS" (http://www.bustle.com/articles/136041-acid-attack-survivor-becomes-face-of-new-fashion-campaign-stuns-photos)

Media Clips

Dove, *Selfie: Redefining Beauty One Photo At A Time* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFkm1Hg4dTI)

Digital Writing 101, "Camera Angles and Shooting Tips for Digital Storytelling" (http://digitalwriting101.net/content/excerpt-camera-angles-and-shooting-tips-for-digital-storytelling/)

Dove, *Real Beauty Sketches: You're more beautiful than you think* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=litXW91UauE)

Givhan, R., and Reyes Morales, H. "The idea of beauty is always shifting. Today, it's more inclusive than ever." (https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/article/beauty-today-celebrates-all-social-media-plays-a-role-feature)

Perricone, A., Fabiyi, K., and Jadhav, L. "A Photo Essay on Makeup: Women in Colour." (https://isismagazine.org.uk/2019/02/women-in-colour/)

Boehme, E. Ancient Marks. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=litXW91UauE)
(This documentary highlights the body art and tattooing throughout history in different cultures. It includes graphic photos and nakedness. If you would like to incorporate some of the images, without showing the entire video, search online for "ancient marks" images.)

Learning Organizer

Learning Organizer 3-1 Quick Writes
Learning Organizer 3-2 Three Rs of Responsible Media
Learning Organizer 3-3 Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy
Learning Organizer 3-4 Co-Constructing Photo Essay Criteria
Learning Organizer 3-5 Reflective Journal: My Artist Statement

Assessment Tool

Assessment Tool Lesson 3 Photo Essay Assessment Criteria

Supporting Curriculum Outcomes

Alberta

Atlantic Provinces

British Columbia

Manitoba

Ontario

Québec

Saskatchewan

Lesson Outline

Inspiration: How will I engage the students?

1. **Have students complete a quick writing activity in groups of four.** Give each student in each group a different Quick Writes activity sheet from **Learning Organizer 3-1 Quick Writes**. This activity is a powerful way to get students to reflect and share their thoughts and ideas through writing, before talking.

2. **Have each student view the photo on their Quick Writes sheet and reflect on the photo and the question.** Ask them to write their thoughts in the "Reflection 1" box.

3. **After a few minutes, ask students to pass their paper to the member of their group on their right.**

4. **Allow time for students to view a new image, read their group member's thoughts, and record their own thoughts on the activity sheet.** Encourage them to connect their reflection to the image as well as to the reflection already recorded on the sheet.

5. **Repeat steps 3 and 4** until all four students in a group have had a chance to reflect on all four images and questions.

6. **Ask students to discuss what they wrote in their small groups.** After a bit of time, invite students to share in the large group.

7. **As students share, guide them into a discussion about the importance of being critical when looking at media**, in order to become aware, not manipulated. Read **Learning Organizer 3-2 Three Rs of Responsible Media** together and ask *How has Dove ensured that they have been responsible when creating the campaign for real beauty (in which the images and questions on Learning Organizer 2-1 are featured)?* and *How have they embedded the three Rs when creating this campaign?*

8. **Discuss what it means to be media analyzers, media creators, and media consumers.** Because we are so immersed in media, our role has become multi-faceted. The media bombards us with messages about what we should look like and who we should be and informs us of all of the things that we could buy, or consume, to help us achieve that ideal. Ask students questions such as:

   • *What are some examples of things we can buy to create a new image?*

   (Possible response: We buy makeup products, clothing, shoes, and cars.)

   • *How can we analyze the messages we receive from the media?*

   (Possible response: We can identify the purpose of a messages (is it to sell something?) and compare media messages to messages we receive from trusted sources, such as parents and true friends.)

   • *How do we create our own media messages?*

   (Possible response: We wear certain clothes and labels, use certain products, and "like" or "follow" certain brands online.)

9. **Introduce the Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy**, from the Center for Media Literacy (Available on **Learning Organizer 3-3 Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy** and at http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/canadas-key-concepts-media-literacy). Share the questions that accompany each concept to help guide our thinking, and explain that these concepts and questions can help us analyze media.

10. **Show students the Dove video, *Selfie.*** Have students work in pairs to explore their reactions to the video and answer the questions on **Learning Organizer 3-3 Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy**. You may decide to discuss students' responses as a class afterwards. These core concepts can be used with any media piece and can be included in media work outside of this unit.

Facilitation: How will students learn the concepts?

11. **Tell students that this lesson will focus on how photos are used to communicate and share messages.**

12. **Have students sit in groups of three or four.** Give each group a piece of chart paper and a marker for each student.

13. **Ask groups to write the saying "A picture is worth 1000 words." in the middle of their chart paper**, creating a placemat for students to record their thinking.

14. **Discuss the saying "A picture is worth 1000 words."** What does this saying mean? What does it imply? Do students agree or disagree with the statement?

15. **As you discuss the role images play in communicating a message, stop periodically and have students share the ideas they're thinking or hearing right on the placemat.** Students who do not feel comfortable sharing aloud may find it easier to share on paper. Invite students to write while the discussion is taking place, as well as when you stop.

16. **Share a variety of photos** from the "Ancient Marks" or "Face of Courage" (in the materials list in this lesson), or from magazines or the Internet with the class. Choose photos that include people who are diverse in size, shape, race, ability, culture, and so on.

17. **Have students share their thoughts and feelings about each picture.** You could ask questions such as "Do the pictures reinforce stereotypical appearance ideals (perhaps the photos from magazines) or do they present a counter-narrative to the notion of what is ideal (like "Ancient Marks", the Indian women who survived the acid attacks in the "Face of Courage" movement)?

18. **Ask students how images affect our ideas about beauty.**
   - *How do the images and photos we are bombarded with on a daily basis reinforce what is beautiful?*
   - *How do we further reinforce these ideas about appearance ideals when we take our own photos?*
   - *How do social media and special effects, such as filters on Instagram and photo editing tools, affect our ideas about the "perfect" photo, with the "perfect" face and the "perfect" body?*

19. **Refer back to the Dove video, *Selfie*. Ask how the girls and their mothers felt about their picture being taken. Ask "How can we reject appearance ideals when we take our own photos?"** It is essential that students engage in critical thinking during this discussion, to help them understand the connection between the media images and our perpetuation of stereotypes.

20. **Share the #NoMakeupSelfie movement for cancer research**, in which women posted photos of themselves with no makeup online. Ask students how a campaign such as this could change our ideas about taking a photo of ourselves. *Why did some people see it as such a risky idea to take a picture without makeup?*

21. **Remind students of the three Rs of responsible media on Learning Organizer 3-2, and ask how sending provocative pictures to others can be irresponsible.** Discuss the dangers in doing so.

22. **Have students add additional thoughts and feelings to the placemat their group received earlier in the lesson.** The completed placemats can be posted and shared with the class.

Application: How will students demonstrate their learning?

23. **To prepare students to take photos that convey a message, read *The Best Part of Me*, by Wendy Ewald.** This book is a compilation of children talking about their best part of their bodies, through a photo and words.

24. **Have students decide what is the best part of themselves, take a photo, and include a piece of writing to explain their choice.** You can post the photos and student writing to share with other students, staff, and parents.

25. **Tell students that they will be creating an essay made up of photos, to redefine beauty.** As students plan their photo essay, encourage them to explore how they feel about what and who is truly beautiful and to challenge the images of beauty that we are bombarded by.

26. **Have students take at least 5 photos representing their redefinition of appearance ideals.** They should include photos of people, as well as photos of objects in nature or in their lives. The purpose of the photo essays should be to challenge the status quo, and make others think deeply and critically about what is beautiful.

27. **Demonstrate camera angle tips and shooting tips.** A great online resource to help with this can be found on the blog *Digital Writing 101*, "Camera Angles and Shooting Tips for Digital Storytelling". It includes great visuals and images to help students think about how they will take the pictures. *Are they taking a close up? What is in the foreground? In the background? Are they taking a picture looking up, looking straight on, or looking down?* The blog activates thinking about questions such as these.

28. Students can use their own devices for this assignment, if they have them. Have some digital cameras on hand for students who want to use those.

29. **Co-construct the assignment criteria with students.** (Sample criteria are included on **Learning Organizer 3-4 Co-constructing Photo Essay Criteria.**) Ensure that each student has a copy of the final criteria as they complete their photo essay assignment.

Reflection: How will students reflect on their learning?

30. **Have students complete Learning Organizer 3-5 Reflective Journal: My Artist Statement**, using the embedded questions to guide their reflection about their photo essays.

31. **After completing the Learning Organizer, have students compile their ideas and add them to the reflective journal they began in Lesson 1.**

Assessment

If the Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy are new to your students, you can use **Learning Organizer 3-3 Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy** as a diagnostic assessment tool to see how well students understand the concepts. Alternatively, you can use the tool later in the unit to assess students' facility with the concepts and decide what additional teaching needs to occur to strengthen their understanding.

Use **Assessment Tool Lesson 3 Photo Essay Assessment Criteria** to evaluate students' photo essays.

Related Resources to Extend Learning

Best Bets for Teachers:

Ribble, M., "*Raising A Digital Child*" (Available at https://www.digitalcitizenship.net/resources-publications.html)
This article is a great one to embed into lessons and units around the nine elements of digital citizenship. This can be used instead of Learning Organizer 3-2 Three Rs of Responsible Media, or Learning Organizer 3-3 Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy. You can use elements of the article as a starting point to discuss the need for students to use technology and access media responsibly.

Digital Writing 101, "Camera Angles and Shooting Tips"

http://digitalwriting101.net/content/excerpt-camera-angles-and-shooting-tips-for-digital-storytelling/

There are many resources on this website to help with teaching about camera angles when students take their photos. The information sheet about camera angles might help when discussing the significance of the angles while taking photos.

Dove, Appearance Ideals (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWIvxsV4hSQ)

This video is a great companion to the goal of this lesson. It looks at challenging the focus on body talk in our lives and the problems this focus can cause.

MediaSmarts (http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/media-issues/body-image)

This is a great Canadian resource that includes lessons and information about media issues and body-image.

Best Bet for Students:

Digital Writing 101, "Camera Angles and Shooting Tips"

http://digitalwriting101.net/content/excerpt-camera-angles-and-shooting-tips-for-digital-storytelling/

Students can access this website on their own to help them with their photo work.

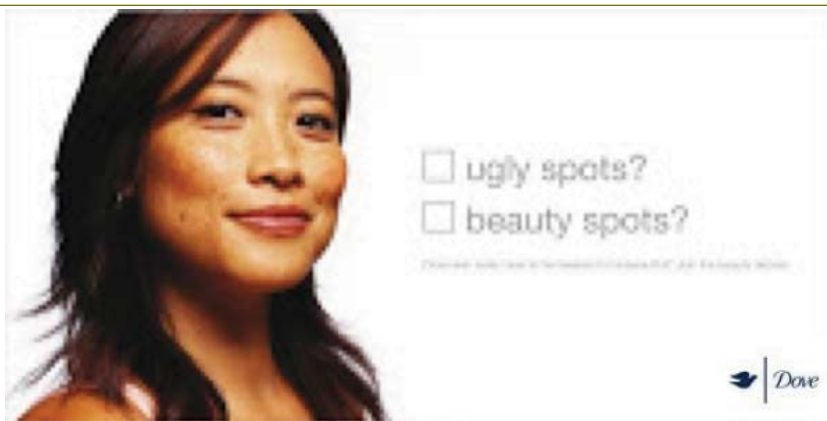## Quick Writes

Quick Write Reflections

Reflection 1

Reflection 2

Reflection 3

Reflection 4

Quick Writes

Quick Write Reflections

Reflection 1

Reflection 2

Reflection 3

Reflection 4

Quick Writes

☐ bald?
☐ beautiful?

Dove

Quick Write Reflections

Reflection 1

Reflection 2

Reflection 3

Reflection 4

Quick Writes

☐ fat?
☐ fit?

Does true beauty only squeeze into size 8? Join the beauty debate.

Dove

Quick Write Reflections

Reflection 1

Reflection 2

Reflection 3

Reflection 4

Three Rs of Responsible Media

1. Reliable

Can the information the media text conveys and the depictions the media text provides be relied upon?

Does the media text state or make obvious its intent, purpose, and bias?

Can the media text be trusted?

2. Respectful

Does the media text treat its subject(s) and its readers/viewers/listeners/handlers with fairness, decency, and respect, even if it is critical or satirical?

3. Representative

Does the media text offer an inclusive portrayal of its subjects?

If not, does it explain why it doesn't?

Adapted with permission: Ian Esquivel, 2009

Five Core Concepts of Media Literacy

(created by the Center for Media Literacy)

Name: _____ Date: _____

	Five Core Concepts	Five Key Questions	Your ideas
1	All media messages are constructed.	Who created this message?	
2	Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.	What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?	
3	Different people experience the same media message differently.	How might different people understand this message differently?	
4	Media have embedded values and points of view.	What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?	
5	Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.	Why is this message being sent?	

Co-Constructing Photo Essay Criteria

What do we need to include when creating our photo essay piece?

Possible student responses:

- at least five photos
- photos must redefine appearance ideals and show true beauty
- photos must include pictures of people
- each photo must be accompanied by a title or caption, the title shouldn't be literal or obvious
- use of different camera angles
- use of different shooting techniques
- the essay must convince the audience of your ideas about how appearance ideals should be redefined

Reflective Journal: My artist statement

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Describe

Describe your photo essay, thinking about how you used camera angles and space.

Analyze

How have you captured your subjects to create mood and meaning in your photo?

Why have you chosen to capture the person/object in this way?

Reflective Journal: My artist statement *(continued)*

Interpret

Discuss the choices you made in selecting what you were going to take a photo of.

What is the intended meaning of this work? What emotions do you want to convey?

Judge

Discuss your choice of photos and title for your photo essay. Why is it appropriate?

How does it provide an alternative view of beauty, one that challenges societal norms?

Describe one aspect of your project that you feel was very successful and explain why.

Reflect on one aspect of your work that you could improve.

Photo Essay Assessment Criteria

Purpose: To take photos and create a photo essay that captures what real beauty is, redefining society's stereotypical view of beauty and making the viewer think deeply about what is beautiful.

Name: _____   Date: _____

Name:

Knowledge and Understanding	I understand the purpose of my photo essay.	
	I can describe how beauty is defined in the media and society and my photos present an alternative to that view.	
	I have taken at least 5 photos, including photos of people.	
Thinking	I have thought about the subjects I am taking a photo of.	
	My photos are thought-provoking photos.	
	My photos extend how beauty needs to be redefined and stimulate discussion.	
	My titles or captions for each photo are thoughtful and effectively share my message.	
Communication	The layout and organization of my photos is clear and logical.	
	I clearly present my opinion.	
	I use appropriate photography conventions, using different camera angles and shooting techniques to capture my subjects.	
	The language of my titles and captions is clear, and expressive.	
Application	My photos show my personal opinions about how beauty needs to be redefined.	
	I make strong connections between what media and society deem beautiful and how I think beauty should be redefined.	
	I demonstrate why this issue is important through the choice of photos I have included.	
	My essay makes others think and encourages them to change how they view themselves and others.	

Supporting Curriculum Outcomes

Alberta

Language Arts

Express personal understandings of ideas and information based on prior knowledge, experiences with others, and a variety of oral, print and other media texts.

Reflect on own observations and experiences to understand and develop oral, print and other media texts.

Discuss and respond to ways that content and forms of oral, print and other media texts interact to influence understanding.

Use talk, writing and representing to examine, clarify and assess understanding of ideas, information and experiences.

Select and focus relevant ideas from personal experiences and prior knowledge to understand new ideas and information.

Justify own point of view about oral, print and other media texts, using evidence from texts.

Organize interpretations of oral, print and other media texts around two or three key ideas.

Discuss how techniques, such as colour, shape, composition, suspense, foreshadowing and flashback, are used to communicate meaning and enhance effects in oral, print and other media texts.

Create a variety of oral, print and other media texts to explore ideas related to particular topics or themes.

Use pre-established criteria to evaluate the usefulness of a variety of information sources in terms of their structure and purpose.

Clarify and support ideas or opinions with details, visuals or media techniques.

Discuss how ideas, people, experiences and cultural traditions are portrayed in various oral, print and other media texts.

Contribute collaboratively in group situations, by asking questions and building on the ideas of others.

Atlantic Provinces

Language Arts

Express clearly and with conviction, a personal point of view, and be able to support that position.

Participate in small-group conversation and whole-class discussion recognizing that there are a range of strategies that contribute to effective talk.

Demonstrate active speaking and listening skills such as making eye contact, rephrasing when appropriate, clarifying comments, extending, refining, and/or summarizing points already made.

Demonstrate respect for others by developing effective ways to express personal opinions such that they reflect sensitivity to others, including differences in culture and language.

Extend personal responses, either orally or in writing, to print and non-print texts by explaining in some detail initial or basic reactions to those texts.

Make evaluations or judgments about texts and learn to express personal points of view.

While learning to express personal points of view, develop the ability to find evidence and examples in texts to support personal views about themes, issues, and situations.

Recognize that print and media texts can be biased and become aware of some of the ways that information is organized and structured to suit a particular point of view.

Recognize that there are values inherent in a text, and begin to identify those values.

Visual Arts

Explore, challenge, develop, and express ideas, using the skills, language, techniques, and processes of the arts.

Create and/or present expressive products in the arts for a range of audiences and purposes.

British Columbia

Language Arts
Use speaking to explore, express, and present a range of ideas, information, and feelings for different purposes and audiences, by staying on topic in focussed discussions, and explaining and effectively supporting viewpoints.

Listen critically to understand and analyse ideas and information, by interpreting the speaker's verbal and nonverbal messages, purposes, and perspectives.

Use speaking and listening to improve and extend thinking, by acquiring new ideas, analysing and evaluating ideas, and considering alternative viewpoints.

Demonstrate comprehension of visual texts with specialized features and complex ideas.

Respond to selections they read or view by expressing opinions and making judgments supported by reasons, explanations, and evidence; explaining connections; and identifying personally meaningful selections, passages, and images.

Read and view to improve and extend thinking by analysing and evaluating ideas and information, comparing various viewpoints, and summarizing and synthesizing to create new ideas.

Write a variety of clear, focussed personal writing for a range of purposes and audiences that demonstrates connections to personal experiences, ideas and opinions, featuring clearly developed ideas by using effective supporting details, explanations, analysis, and insights; an honest and engaging voice; and an organization that is meaningful, logical, and effective, and showcases a central idea or theme.

Create meaningful visual representations for a variety of purposes and audiences that communicate a personal response, information, and ideas relevant to the topic, featuring an expressive and individualistic voice and an organization in which key ideas are evident.

Select and use various strategies before writing and representing, including generating, selecting, developing, and organizing ideas from personal interest, prompts, texts, and/or research.

Select and use various strategies during writing and representing to express thoughts and refine thoughts, including referring to class-generated criteria.

Use writing and representing to extend thinking, by exploring new ideas.

Visual Arts
Use a variety of image sources to create images, including observation, emotions, ideas and concepts, imagination, memories, and sensory experiences.

Analyse and apply unity as created by combining visual elements in a coherent way.

Analyse and apply a variety of materials, technologies, and processes to create artworks.

Manitoba

Language Arts
Use exploratory language to discuss and record a variety of predictions, opinions, and conclusions.

Compare own and others' insights and viewpoints.

Expand self-expression in oral, written, and visual forms.

Summarize and represent personal viewpoints in clear and meaningful ways.

Identify or invent personally meaningful ways of organizing ideas and information to clarify and extend understanding.

Demonstrate growing self-confidence when expressing and sharing thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Determine literal and implied meaning of oral, visual, and written texts using a variety of strategies and cues [including headings, subheadings, topic sentences, summaries, camera angle, staging and pacing, and screening out irrelevant information].

Consider form and audience when generating ideas and focusing a topic.

Identify and use appropriate organizational patterns [such as key idea and supporting details, cause and effect, sequence...] that serve various audiences and purposes.

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a self-esteem and body-image curriculum
Grade 7   Lesson 3

Visual Arts

Integrate knowledge of different art media to create multimedia or mixed-media images and/or objects.

Explore the expression of ideas, using a variety of art media and techniques.

Ontario

Language Arts

Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate listening behaviour by adapting active listening strategies to suit a wide variety of situations, including work in groups.

Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate speaking behaviour in most situations, adapting contributions and responses to suit the purpose and audience.

Generate ideas about more challenging topics and identify those most appropriate for the purpose.

Identify and order main ideas and supporting details and group them into units that could be used to develop a multi-paragraph piece of writing, using a variety of strategies.

Interpret increasingly complex or difficult media texts, using overt and implied messages as evidence for their interpretations.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the presentation and treatment of ideas, information, themes, opinions, issues, and/or experiences in media texts.

Demonstrate understanding that different media texts reflect different points of view and that some texts reflect multiple points of view.

Identify conventions and techniques appropriate to the form chosen for a media text they plan to create, and explain how they will use the conventions and techniques to help communicate their message.

Produce a variety of media texts of some technical complexity for specific purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques.

Visual Arts

Create art works, using a variety of traditional forms and current media technologies, that express feelings, ideas, and issues, opposing points of view

Use elements of design in art works to communicate ideas, messages, and understandings for a specific audience and purpose

Québec

Language Arts

Evaluate the way specific codes and conventions of a spoken/written/media text are employed to have an impact upon the assumptions, actions, values and beliefs of readers.

Create a tone and style suitable to the context.

Use collaborative talk purposefully in order to interpret new information and experiences and fit them into what s/he already knows, seek multiple perspectives on the issue, and extend understanding of the issue or topic by building on the ideas of others.

Explore the representation of gender, race, appearance, culture, social class.

Visual Arts

Explore various ways of conveying ideas through images and adapting them to the target audience.

Saskatchewan

Language Arts

View, listen to, read, comprehend, and respond to a variety of texts that address identity, social responsibility, and efficacy.

View and demonstrate comprehension and interpretation of visual and multimedia texts with specific features and complex ideas including the visual components of media such as magazines, newspapers, websites, reference books, graphic novels, broadcast media, videos and promotional materials.

Create various visual, oral, written, and multimedia texts that explore identity, social responsibility, and efficacy.

Use oral language to interact purposefully and appropriately with others in pairs, small groups, and large group situations.

Use oral language to effectively express information and ideas of some complexity in formal and informal situations.