



Celebrity Status

Teacher Summary

In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to explore what it means to be a celebrity and how celebrities are represented—both by themselves and by the media. These representations can have an impact on readers' and viewers' body-image and self-esteem.

Teacher Message

The focus of this lesson is to help students critically examine the images of celebrities, as portrayed by the media. Many images of celebrities set unrealistic expectations of society's perceived appearance ideals, promote unrealistic expectations of wealth and consumerism, and normalize inappropriate behaviours. Students will select a celebrity or famous person (e.g., an actor or a sports figure) and review online biographical information. Students will be encouraged to examine the images and behaviours that are celebrated by those in the spotlight and express their own opinions about how these images affect themselves and others as viewers.

Materials

Chart paper
Markers
Internet access for students

Media

Entertainment sections from newspapers (previewed and approved by teacher)
Entertainment magazines (previewed and approved by teacher) (e.g., *Tribute*, *People*)
Entertainment websites (previewed and approved by teacher) (e.g., www.etalck.ca, www.eonline.com/ca)

Learning Organizers

Learning Organizer 3-1 Celebrities in the Media Spotlight
Learning Organizer 3-2 Gathering Evidence
Learning Organizer 3-3 Are Celebrities a True Representation of Society's Values?

Assessment Tool

Assessment Tool Lesson 3 Celebrity Assessment Rubric

Supporting Curriculum Outcomes

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Lesson Outline

Inspiration: How will I engage the students?

1. **Arrange students in groups of four or five for a placemat activity.** Provide each group with a marker for each group member and one large sheet of paper, divided into sections, with an area in the centre and as many separate areas around the outside as there are members in the group.
2. **Ask students in each group to individually record ideas, images, and words that come to mind when they hear the word *celebrity*.** Each student should write in one of the spaces around the outside of their group's placemat. Provide time for each student to share his or her recorded responses with the group without comment from the other group members.
3. **Ask each group to decide collectively on the five most important, significant, or common ideas** and record them in the centre of the placemat. It is important that group members all agree on the most significant five items.
4. **Post the placemats on a wall for all students to view**, and ask them to take a few minutes to view and read the placemats.
5. **As a class, create a list on the board of some of the words, names, and images that were included most frequently on the placemats.** The resulting list may include ideas such as: popular, famous, beautiful, rich, sports figures, singers, actors, and so on. Students may have also included specific celebrities who are popular among their peer group.
6. **Discuss the ideas that appear on the class list.** For example, you might ask students to consider questions such as:
 - *What does the word celebrity mean? Are celebrity and famous synonyms—can someone be a celebrity without being famous, or vice versa?*
 - *Can you think of someone who is famous for being famous?*
 - *Does someone have to fit society's appearance ideals or be rich or popular to be a celebrity? Who decides who is beautiful or popular?*
 - *Who decides who is a celebrity?*
 - *Can you think of someone who is a celebrity or famous who doesn't meet current appearance ideals?*
 - *Can you think of someone who is famous but would not be considered a celebrity (e.g., Chris Hadfield)?*

Facilitation: How will students learn the concepts?

7. **Have students rejoin their groups. Give each group a number of newspaper entertainment sections, entertainment magazines, and a list of entertainment websites that you have previewed and approved.** Ask each group to peruse the resources, exploring the photos and headlines used in the various articles and identifying and discussing some of the common words and images used. Groups can record their ideas on **Learning Organizer 3-1 Celebrities in the Media Spotlight** and respond to the questions posed on that Learning Organizer.
8. **Invite students to share some of their findings with the class.** Encourage discussion. For example, you might ask:
 - *Were certain words or types of photos used frequently in the articles?*
 - *What do the headlines and photos tell us about appearance ideals?*
 - *Are the celebrities included in the entertainment sections representative of different genders, ethnicities, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds?*
 - *How are male celebrities portrayed in the headlines?*
 - *How are female celebrities portrayed in the headlines?*
 - *How might male and female readers respond to the various headlines and photos? How might their responses be different?*
 - *In what ways are our lives better than celebrities'?*

9. **Ask students to talk about their own reactions, feelings, and ideas about the headlines and images they have just viewed in their small groups.** Encourage students to express their opinions and views and to listen to other opinions respectfully. You might encourage discussion by asking questions such as:
- *Do you enjoy reading the entertainment sections of newspapers and magazines? If so, what types of information do you look for?*
 - *What messages did you understand from the images and words?*
 - *What overt messages were you aware of in some of the headlines and articles you reviewed? What implied messages were you able to identify?*
 - *Who created the messages that you received from these media texts?*
 - *Are you the intended audience for the articles? How do you know?*
 - *How do you, as a reader or viewer of these media texts, feel after viewing these images?*
 - *How might someone from a different background (for example, a different cultural group, socioeconomic group, gender, or age) respond to the images and words you viewed?*
10. **Debrief this activity as a whole class:** Ask students what, if any, changes they would make to the words and images that are used in entertainment sections, and why.

Application: How will students demonstrate their learning?

11. **Ask students to choose a celebrity to research and create a short biographical summary about that celebrity on their own.** They might choose an actor, singer, sports figure, or a celebrity from another field. Provide **Learning Organizer 3-2 Gathering Evidence** to help them gather and organize their key findings.
12. **Allow time for students to research their celebrity** and locate information to complete the chart on Learning Organizer 3-2, highlighting how the celebrity represents themselves in the public eye.
13. **Have students use the information they gathered to write a short opinion piece answering the following question:**
- *Does your chosen celebrity put **their** best face forward in the media?*

Remind students that an opinion piece allows the writer to express their opinions on a certain issue. The writer may also try to persuade readers to adopt their point of view. In order to persuade, the writer needs to develop an argument that can be supported by facts. Writers of opinion pieces should consider the 5 Ws: Who, What, When, Where, Why (and sometimes How) to help them focus on the facts. Students could use **Learning Organizer 3-3 Are Celebrities a True Representation of Society's Values** to help them organize their writing.

Reflection: How will students reflect on their learning?

14. Create a bulletin board in the class where students will post their opinion pieces. Students may conduct a gallery walk and using post-it notes, respond to the opinion pieces of at least 2 classmates, by considering either or both of the following sentence starters: "This celebrity "speaks to me" because...." And/or "I do not identify with this celebrity because..."

Assessment

You may choose to have students publish their opinion piece using classroom publishing routines and procedures, and assess accordingly.

Assessment Tool Lesson 3 Celebrity Assessment Rubric can be used for self-assessment and for teacher-assessment. By having students assess their own work using a yellow highlighter, then having you assess their work using a blue highlighter, areas of agreement should end up green, giving students clear feedback on their processes of metacognition.

Related Resources to Extend Learning

Best Bets for Teachers:

Truechild (<http://www.truechild.org/>)

This website is run by an advocacy group whose goal is improving children's culture by holding media accountable, providing parents with information, and working with content providers.

Dove® Self Esteem Project (<https://www.dove.com/ca/en/dove-self-esteem-project.html>)

This website was designed to provide education programs and fun interactive activities to help girls overcome beauty-related anxieties that can prevent them from developing confidence and positive self-esteem.

Media Smarts (www.mediasmarts.ca).

MediaSmarts is a Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization for digital and media literacy. Their vision is that children and youth develop the critical thinking skills to engage with media as active and informed digital citizens.

Best Bets for Students:

Canfield, J., & Hansen, M. *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*

This series of five books includes collections of short stories, poems, and quotes written by and for teenagers. It also includes stories from celebrities, addressing teen issues.

Biography.com (<http://www.biography.com/people>)

Students can use this website to access over 7000 biographies.

Celebrities in the Media Spotlight

Name: _____ Date: _____

Examine headlines and photos in the entertainment sections of the newspapers, magazines, and web pages provided. Then answer the following questions:

1. What are some common words (descriptive language) used in headlines to describe celebrities?

2. What types of photos are most commonly used in the entertainment section (for example, close-ups, full body, posed)?

3. What do the headlines and photos tell the reader about what a celebrity looks like and acts like?

4. What do the headlines and photos tell the reader about celebrities and appearance ideals? How do they reinforce some of the stereotypes you have discussed in class?

Gathering Evidence

Name: _____ Date: _____

Biography of _____

Early life

Career highlights

Most famous for, or biggest success

Quotable quotes

Biggest challenges, or media missteps

References

Are Celebrities a True Representation of Society's Values?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Paragraph 1:

(Introduce and state my opinion.)

Paragraph 2:

(Support my opinion with relevant details and facts—I may need to do some research.)

Paragraph 3:

(Support my opinion with relevant details and facts—I may need to do some research.)

Paragraph 4:

(Acknowledge why there may be opposing opinions to my own, and explain why I stand by my position.)

Celebrity Assessment Rubric

Name: _____ Date: _____

Read the following statements and highlight in **YELLOW** each statement that best describe your opinion paper. Your teacher will highlight in **BLUE**. Statements you agree on will end up **GREEN**.

	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four
My opinion	I don't say what my argument or opinion is.	My opinion is confused and/or unclear	My opinion is stated at the beginning of my paper.	My opinion is stated clearly at the beginning of my paper.
Reasons to support my opinion	I do not give convincing reasons in support of my opinion.	I give 1 or 2 weak reasons that don't support my opinion and/or irrelevant or confusing reasons.	I give reasons in support of my opinion but I may overlook important reasons.	I give clear and accurate reasons in support of my opinion.
Reasons against my opinion	I do not acknowledge or discuss the reasons against my opinion	I say that there are reasons against the opinion but I don't discuss them.	I discuss the reasons against my opinion but leave some reasons out and/or don't explain why my opinion still stands.	I discuss the reasons against my opinion and explain why it is valid anyway.
Voice and tone	My writing sounds like I don't like or care about the topic of the paper.	My writing lacks a good tone, and sounds like it could have been written by anyone. I need to write more about how I think and feel.	My tone is good, and the paper indicates some of my feelings about the topic.	It sounds like I care about my argument. I show how I think and feel about it.

Supporting Curriculum Outcomes

Alberta

Language Arts

Review, reread, discuss and reflect on oral, print and other media texts to explore, confirm or revise understanding.

Acknowledge the value of the ideas and opinions of others in exploring and extending personal interpretations and perspectives.

Exchange ideas and opinions to clarify understanding and to broaden personal perspectives.

Explain connections between own interpretation and information in texts and infer how texts will influence others.

Summarize the content of media texts, and discuss the choices made in planning and producing them.

Create oral, print and other media texts related to issues encountered in texts and in own life.

Atlantic Provinces

Language Arts

State a point of view in a convincing manner, offering relevant information to support that viewpoint.

Contribute to small-group conversation and whole-group discussion, choosing appropriate strategies that contribute to effective talk.

Elaborate personal reactions to what is read and viewed by providing some extended explanations, examples, and supporting arguments.

State personal points of view about what is read and viewed and justify views with increasing regularity.

With increasing confidence and flexibility, find evidence in texts to support personal claims and viewpoints about issues, themes, and situations.

Recognize that texts need to be assessed for bias, and broaden their understanding and awareness of the ways in which print and media texts can be biased; begin to question and think critically about the relevance and reliability of information when answering questions and inquiries.

Describe how cultures and reality are portrayed in media texts.

British Columbia

Language Arts

Interact and collaborate in pairs and groups to support the learning of self and others; explore experiences, ideas, and information; and understand the perspectives of others.

Speak and listen to interpret and analyse ideas and information from texts, by examining and comparing ideas and elements within and among texts and identifying bias and contradictions.

Read, both collaboratively and independently, to comprehend a variety of information and persuasive texts with some complexity of ideas and form, such as magazines and newspapers.

View, both collaboratively and independently, to comprehend a variety of visual texts, such as web sites and visual components of print media.

Explain and support personal responses to texts, by developing opinions using evidence.

Synthesize and extend thinking about texts, by explaining relationships among ideas and information and applying new ideas and information.

Write purposeful informational texts that express ideas and information to explore and respond and analyse and explain.

Write and represent to explain and support personal responses to texts, by making connections with prior knowledge and experiences and developing opinions using evidence.

Manitoba

Language Arts

Articulate, represent, and explain personal viewpoints clearly.

Experience texts from a variety of forms and genres and cultural traditions; compare own interpretations to those of others.

Structure and restructure ideas and information in personally meaningful ways to clarify and extend understanding.

Reconsider initial understanding in light of new information, and ask clarifying questions; listen to diverse opinions and recognize ambiguity.

Compose using specific forms that ensure a match between content, audience, and purpose.

Express personal reactions to a variety of experiences and texts and compare them with the reactions of others.

Ontario

Language Arts

Develop and explain interpretations of increasingly complex or difficult texts using stated and implied ideas from the texts to support their interpretations.

Identify the topic, purpose, and audience for more complex writing forms.

Identify and order main ideas and supporting details and group them into units that could be used to develop a summary, debate, or a report of several paragraphs, using a variety of strategies.

Establish a distinctive voice in their writing appropriate to the subject and audience.

Identify their point of view and other possible points of view, evaluate other points of view, and find ways to respond to other points of view, if appropriate.

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

Québec

Language Arts

Use collaborative talk purposively in order to seek multiple perspectives on the issue and extend understanding of the issue or topic by building on the ideas of others.

Focus on a topic and/or issue that is of interest to her/him to construct an efferent reading.

Activate relevant prior personal knowledge and experience to make sense of a text which is frequently expressed in text-to-self connections, text-to-world connections, text-to-text connections.

Produce a text within a specific context.

Saskatchewan

Language Arts

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

View critically and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of visual and multimedia texts including videos, television broadcasts, informational presentations, dramatic presentations, websites, and news programs to locate and interpret key messages and details, to develop conclusions, opinions, and understanding, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the text.

Use oral language to interact purposefully, confidently, and respectfully in a variety of situations including one-to-one, small group, and large group discussions.