Media STEPs for Learning

Now more than ever teachers, parents and students are looking for high-quality educational media to support learning.

Follow MPT's Media STEPs to guide you in using trusted media that inspires learning at home, in the classroom and beyond.

Media STEPs in the Early Years

S - Select educationally sound content you can trust. The media you choose exposes kids to new language, behavior and information. Be sure that content supports your values.

- Choose programs with characters that resolve conflict in a positive way.
- Play games that encourage critical thinking and problem-solving.
- Use media that teaches lessons to help kids be successful in school and at home.

T - Talk with kids about what they are seeing and hearing. Talking with kids out loud helps them process what they are learning and helps to build language skills.

- Ask kids questions about why something happened or what they think will happen next.
- Remind children about a time they had a similar experience. Did they get the same result?
- Ask a child about their favorite character and why they like them.

E - Explore new ideas together. Media is a great springboard to spark curiosity. Take time to research, investigate and try something new.

- Try new foods...look up a recipe and make it together.
- Read books about an animal or place to learn more about it online, or at your local library.
- Do an experiment. Try it a few times to see if you get the same results.

P - Play is the best way for young children to learn! Use media to inspire playful learning on screen and off so that kids have enough time away from screens to be hands-on, active and creative.

- Dedicate time each day for kids to play away from screens, indoors and outside.
- Provide recyclable materials that kids can use to design and build their own creations.
- Encourage kids to retell a story from their favorite book or show by acting it out with costumes and props.

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Media STEPs in the PreK-3 Classroom

Select content that directly connects to your lesson. Media is an effective way to demonstrate new concepts and to reinforce learning.

- Choose short specific clips that relate to your topic rather than full-length programs.
- Use media that represents diversity and inclusion.
- Introduce digital games that require students to practice and master skills to advance.

Talk with students about what they see and hear. Students will pick up on different things so be sure to discuss each piece of media as a group to clarify and share information.

- Ask open-ended questions, before, during and after media use.
- Provide discussion prompts, verbal or written, to focus on key information.
- Share resources and tips with parents to keep the discussion going at home.

Examine concepts in multiple ways. Media is more than videos and digital games. Be sure to provide multi-modal learning opportunities.

- Use books, maps, art and everyday items to explore the concepts and information in games and videos.
- Follow the inquiry process. Have students question, plan, create, test and improve their ideas or projects.
- Integrate media in different ways - in pairs, with small groups, or with the whole class as appropriate.

Practice the skills demonstrated in each media selection. Hands-on activities and real-world application help students connect new learning to their own lives and communities.

- Inspire students to create...art, text, video, etc. to demonstrate their understanding.
- Provide take-home activities for students to showcase their new skills with their families.
- Take a field trip or a nature walk to practice skills in new settings.

Media STEPs in Action!

Visit Thinkport.org/mediaste to find resources, activities, and online courses to support learning at home or in the classroom.

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