

ACTIVITY 2

STUDYING NEW MEDIA TEXTS

IDENTIFIED BY STUDENTS

TEACHER'S NOTES

This activity depends on teachers being willing to become students.

ACTIVITY

Ask students, for homework, to identify one or two different kinds of “new media texts” they have seen on the World Wide Web. Encourage students to select texts that seem different from conventional print-based documents—some combination of still photography, video, sound, animation, and/or alphabetic text—but that are effective and appealing as texts designed for digital environments and for specific audiences.

Ask students to consider the following questions in relation to the texts they choose:

- What makes this a new media text? How does it differ from a conventional print text?
- What particular elements make this text most effective for me as an audience? Why?
- What particular elements make this text least effective for me as an audience? Why?
- Who composed, designed the texts and why? What is the author's/designer's/ composer's purpose?
- Who is the audience for these texts? Who is not? How can you tell? (Be specific.)
- Can you tell what kinds of software and hardware were used to create this new media text?

In class, have students show the texts they have chosen. As a class, identify the collective characteristics of these new media texts, paying careful attention to how they are composed, organized, presented, viewed/read/interacted with in digital formats.

As a class, compile a class list of the characteristics that effective new media texts have and compare these characteristics to those of effective print texts. Also discuss ineffective new media texts and speculate on why they fail as communications.