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**CENTER FOR MEDIA LITERACY UNVEILS THE *CML MediaLit Kit*<sup>™</sup>:  
A FREE EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK THAT HELPS STUDENTS  
CHALLENGE AND UNDERSTAND MEDIA**

SANTA MONICA, CA, October 28, 2003 -- “Five questions that can change the world.” That’s what educators are calling the *Five Key Questions* that form the basis of the new *CML MediaLit Kit*<sup>™</sup>, an educational framework and curriculum guide developed by the Center for Media Literacy. Adaptable to all grades, the *Five Key Questions* are designed to help children and young people critique and challenge the thousands of media messages that bombard them daily.

More than two years in development and available for free downloading at the Center’s website: [www.medialit.org](http://www.medialit.org), the *CML MediaLit Kit* provides an overview of the core elements in the burgeoning field of media literacy education as well as powerful and practical implementation tools for classrooms from kindergarten to college.

“If democracy is to flourish in a global media culture, all citizens must have the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate what they see, hear and read,” said Tessa Jolls, president and CEO of the Center. “Learning, practicing and mastering the *Five Key Questions* throughout a child’s schooling leads to an adult understanding of how media are created, what their purposes are and how to accept or reject their messages.”

Based on the work of media scholars and educators in the US and around the world, each of the *Five Key Questions* flows from a corresponding *Core Concept* and provides an entry point to explore the fundamental aspects of any media message:

1. Who created this message? (authorship)
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention? (format)
3. How might others understand this message differently from me? (audience)
4. What values and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message? (content)
5. Why is this message being sent? (motive)

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Beyond its value in schools, the **CML MediaLit Kit** can also be helpful in the home, the workplace, or religious and community settings. “In an age when ideas, goods and services can be introduced globally, people everywhere can benefit from knowing and using the *Five Key Questions* to make wise choices for themselves and their families,” added Jolls.

The **CML MediaLit Kit** components are available as free downloads from the Center’s website. They include a 28-page *Orientation Guide* for educators, health care providers and community leaders and a practical *Classroom Guide* with sample lessons for each of the *Five Key Questions*. In addition, a set of colorful laminated classroom posters is available for \$29.95.

According to media literacy pioneer and CML founder Elizabeth Thoman, the **MediaLit Kit** project grew out of staff reflection on the Center’s philosophy of ‘Empowerment through Education’ and was undertaken to rethink the conceptual foundations of media education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. “Many elements have been available in one form or another in the past,” she explained “but the **MediaLit Kit** pulls them all together in one place and expresses them in fresh new ways.”

British media literacy expert Len Masterman, author of *Teaching the Media*, calls the **CML MediaLit Kit** “a marvelous piece of work – clear, concise, the distillation of the most available research and practice. As a framework for taking teachers through all of the necessary stages, components, ideas and assumptions about media literacy, it could scarcely be bettered.”

With parents, politicians and employers calling for the teaching of critical thinking throughout the curriculum, the **CML MediaLit Kit** provides a powerful – yet easily accessible – set of tools to help teachers introduce life-long learning skills.

Incorporated in 1989, the Center for Media Literacy is an independent, nonpartisan 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The Center works to help citizens, especially the young, develop the critical thinking and media production skills needed to live fully in the 21st century media culture.

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For example, media literacy education is traditionally influenced by an educational approach which links the questioning /critical thinking process to a wide range of creative media activities through which students learn how influential media makers are by creating ads, videos, multimedia presentations, webpages and other media projects themselves. Traditionally expressed as “analysis/production” or “deconstruction/construction,” the *MediaLit Kit*<sup>™</sup>, proclaims in a colorful classroom poster: “*Free Your Mind!*” and “*Express Your View!*”