

GRADE 7

My Media Use: A Personal Challenge

What is your strategy for finding media balance?



OVERVIEW

Most of us use a lot of digital media in our daily lives -- even when we don't realize it! Having a balance between online and offline time is important, but healthy media balance might look different for everyone. Help students create a personalized plan for healthy media use.

Students will be able to:

- Make an inventory of their media choices and how those choices make them feel.
- Brainstorm personal strategies for balancing media use.
- Create personal guidelines for promoting healthy media balance.

Lesson Snapshot

Estimated time: 55 mins.

Warm Up:	Taking Stock	5 mins.
Analyze:	My Media Use	20 mins.
Evaluate:	Creating Healthy Media Balance	15 mins.
Wrap Up:	My Media Strategy	15 mins.

Key Standards Supported

Common Core ELA

L.7.1, L.7.3, L.7.6, SL.7.1, SL.7.1a, SL.7.1b, SL.7.1c, SL.7.1d, SL.7.2, SL.7.6, W.7.2, W.7.2f, W.7.4, W.7.5, W.7.9, W.7.10

CASEL

1a, 1c, 1e, 2b, 2c, 2e, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e

AASL

IA.1, IA.2, IB.1, IB.3, IC.1, IC.4, ID.1, ID.2, ID.3, ID.4, IIA.2, IIB.1, IIB.2, IIB.3, IIC.1, IIC.2, IID.1, IID.3, IIIA.1, IIIA.2, IIIA.3, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIIC.1, IIIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2, IVA.1, IVA.2, IV.

ISTE

1a, 1c, 1d, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3b, 4d, 5b, 5c, 6a, 6d, 7b, 7d

What You'll Need

Spanish-language student and family resources available soon!

- Backpack or bag
- **Lesson Slides**
- Student Handout: My Media Choices Inventory **Student Version Teacher Version**
- Student Handout: My Media-Balance Strategy **Student Version Teacher Version**
- Lesson Quiz **Editable Google form Answer Key**

Take-home resources

- **Family Tips**
- **Family Activity**
- **Family Engagement Resources**

LESSON PLAN

Key Vocabulary:

guideline

a set of criteria or piece of advice for how to do something

inventory

a complete list of items or actions

media balance

using media in a way that feels healthy and in balance with other life activities (family, friends, school, hobbies, etc.)

Warm Up: Taking Stock

5 mins.

Before the lesson: Ask students to bring their backpacks to class for this lesson.

1. **Pass** out a blank sheet of paper to each student and project **Slide 4**. Say: Without looking inside your bag or backpack, make a list of what's in it. Take 60 seconds to make the most complete list you can.
2. **Prompt** students to compare the list to the reality of what's inside the backpack. How complete were the lists? Invite students to share out.

Explain that making a list of items is a kind of **inventory**, which is *a complete list of items or actions, such as property or goods*, and that today's activity will include an inventory of individual media choices. (**Slide 5**)

3. **Project Slide 6** and ask: *How might an inventory of activities be different from an inventory of objects?* Give partners an opportunity to respond. Invite students to share out.

Possible responses:

- *You can't look at the way you spend your time in the same way you look inside your backpack.*
- *It can be difficult to remember exactly how much time you spend doing things.*
- *The way people use their time may change, so an inventory of activities is an ongoing process.*

Analyze: My Media Use

20 mins.

1. **Project Slide 7** and prompt students to complete the first three columns of the **My Media Choices Inventory Student Handout**. Invite volunteers to read the heading and example for each column. Explain that media choices may involve television, videos, gaming, music, texting, social media, homework, and utilities such as camera and map apps. Explain that it can be hard to recall the exact time and duration of use and suggest that students provide their best estimate. See the **Teacher Version** for sample answers.
2. **Project Slide 8** and pass out a blank sheet of paper to each student. Say: *Media choices have many positive aspects for people, but sometimes they have negative effects. What are some of the positive and negative effects? Write your response on your paper and then take turns sharing with a partner.*

Invite students to share out. Commonly cited effects of media use include feeling:

- Connected: I feel connected to my friends and community.
- Smart: I learn things that are important to my life.
- In the know: I get information about events and new ideas or trends.
- Unique: I can express myself through my participation online.
- Stressed: I feel worried or hassled. I feel pressure to constantly check my phone.
- Insecure: I feel less confident or less important than other people.
- Bummed: I feel bad because I spend too much time using media and I don't get to do other things (non-media activities like playing sports, hobbies, etc.).
- Tired: I watched too much TV, gamed too much, or was on my phone late and didn't get enough sleep.

3. **Prompt** students to complete the fourth column of the handout (Part 2), writing a word or a phrase -- or drawing a face emoji -- to describe the feeling or the effect of each media choice. Begin with the example row and invite students to share out ideas.
4. **Say:** *An organization called the Center for Humane Technology partnered with creators of an app that tracks screen time to learn more about how people experience the effects of digital media use. They asked 200,000 people about how certain apps made them feel based on the amount of time people used them. Take a look at this graph presenting their results.* (See more information about this app, Moment, [here](#).)
5. **Project Slide 9** and ask: *What do you notice? What stands out to you?*

Call on several students to respond. Confirm that students understand the basic elements of the chart before drawing conclusions. Students may say unhappy users use apps longer than happy ones, or they may call out specific apps as having longer or shorter usage times.

Invite students to look back at the feelings they recorded in their media-inventory charts. Do they notice any patterns? Ask students to pair-share their observations, and invite a few students to share out with the class.

Evaluate: Creating Healthy Media Balance

15 mins.

1. **Project Slide 10**. Invite a student to read the definition of **media balance** aloud and ask: *What are some examples of having media balance?*

Call on students to share their thoughts. Possible responses include:

- Establishing a daily routine for using favorite media (such as checking Snapchat after homework's done).
- Charging the phone at night in a different room so it doesn't interfere with sleep.

2. **Ask:** *Why is media balance important?* Invite students to share out responses. Possible responses include:

- People want to enjoy the benefits of media without the negative effects.
- Media can be entertaining, but too much media can interfere with other activities, such as homework, family time, sports, hobbies, sleep, and other interests.
- Media can connect people, but sometimes media use isolates some people or creates conflict between people.

3. **Project Slide 11.** Explain the concept of a **guideline** as *a set of criteria or piece of advice for how to do something*. Distinguish a *guideline* from a *rule*. For example, a specific rule is "Don't interrupt when someone is talking," while a guideline could be "Show respect when having a discussion." A guideline can also be thought of as advice you might give to someone, which could apply in many situations.

4. **Ask:** *What guidelines can you create to make sure you're balancing the benefits from the negatives of media use? Look at your Media Choices Inventory as a reference.*

Invite students to share out ideas for guidelines that could shape good choices about media use. Capture student responses on **Slide 12**. Possible responses include:

- Only use my device in ways that lead to positive feelings (in the moment or later).
- Pay attention to friends and family by putting my device down when I'm with them.
- Limit the number of things I post online to ____ per day/week.
- Mute or unfollow people whose posts lead to negative feelings.
- Put my phone to "bed" at night by recharging in another room.
- Set timers while using certain apps so I don't lose track of time.

5. **Explain** that there are also apps or settings they can use to help keep media balanced. Some examples include:

- iOS tracking and time-out locking tools
- Enhanced Do Not Disturb options
- Bedtime modes
- Google's Wind Down feature
- Android's Digital Wellbeing feature
- iPhone's Screen Time feature
- Specialized apps like Moment

Extension Activity:

Ask students to brainstorm features they would like to see in a screen-time tracker app, such as tracking and locking features, the ability to count phone pickups, a way to evaluate feelings, etc. You could take it one step further and have students design a media-balance app, drawing a prototype.

Wrap Up: **My Media Strategy**

15 mins.

1. **Prompt** students to reexamine their lists of ideas for guidelines, tools, and strategies to choose the ones they think will be most useful to them.

2. **Say:** *Next we're going to use everything you've noticed about your own media use and map out a media-balance strategy. You will put your own ideas and priorities on paper to create a plan that works for you.* Distribute the **My Media-Balance Strategy Student Handout**. Show **Slide 13** and direct students to complete the handout. See the **Teacher Version** for sample responses.

3. **Invite** students to share their personal challenges and media strategies. Encourage them to be concrete and actionable.

4. **Say:** *It's a good idea to review our media balance from time to time. As technology changes and as our lives change, we may find we want balance in different ways. You have the power to make deliberate choices about how media affects your life.*

Prompt students to create a note in their planners or calendars to review their media balance strategies every three months.

5. **Have** students complete the **Lesson Quiz**. Send home the **Family Activity** and **Family Tips**.



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