This is an exciting time for media and media literacy. There is no limit to the material available for AHA! moments. Reality TV shows and famous individuals are available to be watched, tweeted, posted, and downloaded every minute of every day. But how do we know what’s really real? Is “reality” editable?

Ask students to decide what they would edit from their own Reality TV show.

**AHA!:** Reality shows are being presented as real, but they are edited and constructed for an audience.

**Key Question #1:** Who created this message?

**Core Concept #1:** All media messages are constructed

**Key Question #4:** What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?

**Core Concept #4:** Media have imbedded values and points of view

**Key Question #5:** Why is this message being sent?

**Core Concept #5:** Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power

**Grade level:** 6-9
Activity: Review the articles below before starting this activity with your students. You might want to bring in a clip of a popular Reality TV show (Kardashians, Biggest Loser, Apprentice…) that you determine to be appropriate for your class. Ask your students which Reality TV shows they watch and why? Do they believe what they see? Do they think the shows are scripted or planned out in advance? Do they enjoy the conflict between characters? Why is there so much conflict?

Next, share the information from the articles and ask students if they would want their own lives edited if they were on Reality TV. What parts of their lives would they edit and why? Would they hand over control to a producer to edit their lives for an audience? Why do producers edit the shows? Do reality stars have the right to complain about how they are presented?


The Five Core Concepts and Five Key Questions of media literacy were developed as part of the Center for Media Literacy’s MediaLit Kit™ and Questions/TIPS (Q/TIPS)™ framework. Used with permission, ©2002-2015.