Most of us have a personal philosophy, or at least a set of values and beliefs which we use to explain our personality and character to ourselves and others. When we interact with people who are relative strangers, we must convey a public image of ourselves as well. The fidelity of public images preoccupies many of us when we encounter public personalities via the media. Is this politician making himself out to be somebody he’s not just to get my vote? In this MediaLit Moment, your upper elementary and middle level students will have the chance to learn about public image and personal branding by 'trying on' the role of someone who spends much of their time in the public eye. They'll also have a lot of fun in the process.

Ask students to construct a public personality for themselves which includes their own real-life character traits.

AHA! When I present myself to the media, I'm presenting a personal brand!

Grade Level: 5-7

Key Question #4 for Producers: Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles and points of view in my content?

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

Core Concept #4: Media have embedded values and points of view
Key Question #2 for Producers: Does my message reflect understanding in format, creativity and technology?

Key Question #2: What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?

Core Concept #2: Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.

Materials: Screen, LCD projector, computer with high-speed Internet connection

For production activity: Paper, pencil, imagination

Activity: Ask students to name different kinds of public personalities--sports stars, politicians, rock musicians, talk show hosts, etc. Who are some of their favorites in these categories? If you wish, screen a video excerpt of a particular public personality, and discuss the kinds of character traits he or she appears to embody. Introduce students to KQ #4 and discuss how people promote their public/celebrity image on screen.

Next, ask students to imagine themselves as one of these kinds of personalities. What would they be doing or saying in this role? (Students are likely to be familiar with the conventions of each role, but introduce them to CC #2 if needed). How does this personality still genuinely represent their character? How does it feel to promote themselves in this way? Ask students to write a 30 second script for themselves in this role. Make sure that students have one or more partners for feedback.

Enjoy sharing and performing scripts in class.

Extended Activity: Students create a 'demo reel' of themselves as a number of different public
personalities.

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, ©2002-2014, Center for Media Literacy, http://www.medialit.com