In honest communications, the appearance or feel of something (a sign, words or anything designed for us to engage with or respond to) should help us understand how to respond or engage with it. A good example of this effect is an optical illusion, where our brain “sees” something that is not there.

Show your students two slides and ask them what they see

AHA!: I often see what I WANT to see! But this may not be what someone else WANTS me to see.

Grade Level: 3-6

Key Question #3: How might different people understand this message differently?

Core Concept #3: Different people experience the same media message differently.

Materials: Two PowerPoint slides.

Activity: These optical illusions show how our brain can easily trick us.

Show these slides:
PARIS

IN THE

THE SPRING

(Most people seeing this for the first time say, Paris in the Spring. But the word “the” appears twice.)

Then, Ask students to read all the words in the box below and count how many times the letter f or F appears:

How many ‘f’s?

FINE POINT

It is easy to miss the

Finer

Points in life. Folk are

Frequently guilty of
falling into this trap.

(The letter f appears eight times in the box. People commonly count seven, by failing to see the last one.)

For more information on Heuristics and Nudge Theory: http://www.businessballs.com/nudge-theory.htm

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.