In this MediaLit Moment, students are entertained by a recent anti-smoking PSA that has received more than three million views on YouTube. Use the clip for a mini-deep deconstruction exercise where students watch, listen, and evaluate the techniques used to create the message.

Ask students why this particular clip went viral

AHA! This message made me laugh so I’m sharing it with all of my friends

Grade Level: 6-9

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.

Key Question #5: Why is this message being sent?
Core Concept #5: Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power (in this case, power of persuasion).

Materials: Computer with internet access and projector. Here is the link to the PSA: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLtschJxRy8
Activity: Show the video three times without giving any explanation to students except to watch and listen without commenting. Play the video on a big screen for the class. Then play it again without the sound—just video. The third time, play the sound only—no video. Ask students to comment on the creative techniques used to make this film. Would the clip have been as effective without all of the elements coming together? Was the message clear? Were students persuaded not to smoke? What was the most compelling part of the message? Cats, music, text...Would it have been better to use humans? Was YouTube the right platform for releasing this video? Why or why not?

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