

Evaluating Media Texts

All media texts have a purpose and the elements within it are chosen to help convey the intended message. You must read between the lines and beyond the lines to fully understand the message of the creator.

Behind every media text, a set of assumptions can be found. All media texts are influenced by the values of their creators. These values can be obvious in some cases while not so obvious in others.

- **Explicit messages** can be understood immediately. One explicit message from the commercial “You have the Power” is that using a clothesline is a good way to conserve energy.
- **Implicit messages** are those that are not so obvious. An example of this in “You have the Power” is when David Suzuki says “Haven’t you heard? In Ontario, clotheslines are in.” He is referring to the fact that many people in Ontario didn’t realize that the ban on using clotheslines was lifted in the cities within the province.

It is important to always question the assumptions and values that are presented in media texts because they may be in conflict with your own. People must be careful not to replace their own values with those from others’ that may not be appropriate. It is not only important to assess what is contained within the media text, but also what is left out.