Make a Poster

Sample Poster 1

WASH YOUR HANDS

Credit: TashaNatasha/Shutterstock
Sample Poster 2

Wash Your Hands!

Credit: BlueRingMedia/Shutterstock
Media Literacy Background
Children are exposed to media every day through many sources, such as television, print advertising, and social media. Media literacy helps children to understand and think critically about media messages. Children need opportunities to view and listen to many different media texts and to identify some of the characteristics of simple media texts. They need to learn how to recognize the messages that are being communicated to them through media. Children also require opportunities to create their own media texts.

Purpose
In these activities, children will have an opportunity to view two different handwashing posters. They will analyze important elements of the posters, such as visual images, use of colour, use of text, and the message being communicated. They will relate the message on each poster to their own experiences. Then they will use what they have learned about posters to create their own posters.

Materials
- Crayons, paint, markers, pencil crayons
- Paper
- Software programs for generating art (optional)
- Soap, water, black pepper

Building Background Information: Handwashing Activities
Before children begin to examine the two posters shown above, you may wish to engage in some handwashing activities together, as outlined below.

- Conduct a simple investigation to demonstrate the importance of handwashing. Sprinkle black pepper into a bowl of water to represent a virus or germs. Ask a child to dip a finger into the water to see how the pepper sticks to the child's finger. Then have the child dip a finger into soap before dipping it into the water. When the pepper flakes, representing the virus or germs, disperse, ask children, Why is it important to wash our hands often? (to get rid of germs, to stop viruses from spreading, to protect everybody's health)

- Demonstrate proper handwashing techniques. Tell children, We need to wash all of our hands, including our palms. Then we need to put the palm of each hand on top of the other hand, one at a time, and scrub carefully between our fingers. We need to clean our fingernails by pressing each finger and thumb into our palm, one at a time, and make a circle against our palm. And don't forget to wash your wrists as well as your hands.
Ask children, **For how long do we need to wash our hands?** (for as long as it takes to sing the “Alphabet Song”; for as long as it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice; until you count to 20) You may wish to use an egg timer or a game timer to help children learn the proper length of time to spend washing their hands.

Ask children, **When should we wash our hands?** (after using the toilet, before eating, after playing outside, after sharing toys, after petting an animal, before preparing food, after going to the store, and so on)

### Analyze a Poster

**Sample Poster 1**

1. Have children share their experiences viewing posters. Ask, **Where have you seen a poster?** (in classrooms, at the dentist’s office, at a movie theatre, at a store) **Why do people create posters?** (to tell people about things that are going to happen, such as a bake sale; to tell people what to do, such as recycle; to tell people about a new movie)

2. Show children the first sample poster above. Allow time for them to talk about what they see in the poster.

3. Ask, **What message does this poster communicate to people?** (Wash your hands.)

4. Ask, **Why do you think someone might have created this poster?** (to remind people to wash their hands a lot, to tell people to use lots of soap when they wash their hands, to show that washing our hands helps us stay healthy)

5. Tell children, **The poster features the words “Wash Your Hands” to communicate a message about handwashing.** Ask, **Why do you think the person who created the poster used such large letters?** (to show that the message is really important; to make sure that everyone can see the message) **Where did the person put the words?** (on a bar of soap) **What else did the person who created the poster do to communicate a message to people?** (They drew a colourful picture. They drew a bar of soap and some soap bubbles.)

6. Ask children to look at the visual in the poster. Ask, **Do you think the picture of the bar of soap and the soap bubbles will help people to remember to wash their hands? Why or why not?** (Yes, because the bubbles show you that you need to scrub your hands well with lots of sudsy soap to make sure your hands get free of germs. No, because it is hard to figure out that the pink thing is a bar of soap.) **Do you think the colours used will make people look at the poster? Why or why not?** (No, because I think the colours need to be brighter. Yes, because pink is my favourite colour. Yes, because pink and green look nice together.)

7. Ask, **What people do you think this poster was created for?** (for kids, for people who work in restaurants, for people using a public washroom) **Where do you think would be a good place for this poster?** (in the bathroom or kitchen at someone’s home, in the washroom at school, in the school lunchroom, at the playground, at the pet store)

8. Ask, **What personal connection can you make to this poster?** (We learned about washing our hands properly at school. My Dad always reminds me to wash my hands.)
Sample Poster 2
1. Show children the second sample poster and provide time for them to talk about what they see in the poster.
2. Ask, What message does this poster communicate to people? (Wash your hands.) Why do you think someone might have created this poster? (so people won’t forget to wash their hands often; to tell people to use lots of soap when they wash their hands)
3. Say, The poster features the words “Wash Your Hands” to communicate its message. Ask, Why do you think the person who created this poster used large letters like these ones? (to make the message jump out at you; to make you notice the message right away and remember it) Where did they put the words? (at the bottom of the poster) What surrounds the words? (soap bubbles) Why do you think the person who created the poster surrounded the words with soap bubbles? (to remind you to use lots of soapy water when you wash your hands; to make sure that you clean your hands so well that you make sudsy bubbles with the soap) What else did the person who created the poster do to communicate a message to people? (They drew a picture of a hand.) What do you see all over the hand? (germs, viruses, dirt)
4. Ask children to look at the visuals in the poster. Ask, Do you think the pictures will remind people to wash their hands often? Why or why not? (Yes, because the hand is so gross that it makes you think about all the germs that might be on your own hands. Yes, because some of the germs look mean and scary, like little monsters.) Do you think the colours in the poster will make people look at the poster? Why or why not? (Yes, because the artist used lots of bright colours. Yes, the colours of the germs really stand out on the hand. Yes, the colours used in the picture and in the words really pop out.)
5. Ask children, What people do you think this poster was created for? (for kids because the picture looks like a cartoon; for kids because the germs were drawn to look like little cartoon characters with faces) Where do you think would be a good place for this poster? (in the bathroom at someone’s home, by the kitchen sink, in the washroom or lunchroom at school, on a bus or subway)
6. Ask, What personal connection can you make to this poster? (When I see this poster, it makes me think about all the nasty germs that I might have on my hands. It reminds me to wash my hands the right way, a lot, to get rid of germs.)

Compare the Two Posters
Have children compare the two posters. Ask, Which poster do you think will work better to help people remember to wash their hands? Tell me why you think that. (I think the poster with the germs will work better because it is funny. I think the one with the germs because it makes you think about all the germs on your hands. I think the first poster because it shows soap and bubbles and that reminds us to wash our hands a lot.)
Make a Poster

1. Have children make their own poster. Brainstorm ideas for a message they would like to tell people about (e.g., handwashing, sneezing into their sleeve or a tissue, physical distancing, recycling, turning off the lights, showing good manners, and so on).

2. Review some decisions and elements that children will need to think about when making a poster:
   - What people am I making this poster for?
   - What is my message?
   - What kind of letters do I want to use? How big should they be? What colour of lettering should I use?
   - Where will I put the words on my poster? (at the top, in the middle, at the bottom, inside my picture)
   - What picture do I want to draw?
   - How will my picture help people to understand my message?
   - What colours do I want to use in my picture?

3. When children have finished creating their poster, have them share it with family members and decide where they are going to place it. Family members might like to share some feedback with children using sentence starters such as the following:
   - The part of your poster that really makes me pay attention is....
   - I really like the colours you chose to use because....
   - I think your picture really helps me to remember your message because....
   - I think your message is important because....