How can Knowledge of Generational Cycles Improve Media Literacy?

By Susan Abbott
Who Knew?

• Examine the list of childhood activities below—place a X or a M to represent if you feel that the activity is more common for:
  - Generation X—those born between 1961-1981 or to
  - Millennials—those born from 1982-2002
Millennials and GenXers—A Difference in Generations

- All Generational research taken from:
Gen X Scaring America

• Punk rockers
• Drug Use
• STDs
• Latch Key Children with little supervision

• Clearly beyond hope...;0
Pres. George H. W. Bush said...

• The Class of 2000 MUST be saved!

• Millennials are Wanted, Protected and Worthy

• America changed because our view of our children changed
Millennials share 7 Characteristics

- Special
- Sheltered
- Confident
- Team oriented
- Achieving
- Pressured
- Conventional
Educational Strategies

• Special—parental contacts and vision
• Sheltered—safety, small learning communities
• Confident—hope, optimism, work/life balance
• Team Oriented—on-line communities, peers
• Achieving—left brained, technology
• Pressured—long term goal setting, job skills
• Conventional—risk averse, feedback, monitor
What about the post millennials?

• They don’t remember a time without connectivity
• They are used to being able to present in a social way to peers and to be available to parents 24-7
• Nicknamed the iGeneration—individualized for me: TV, music, all technology customizable
iGeneration traits

• Early introduction to technology.
• Adeptness at multitasking.
• Desire for immediacy.
• Ability to use technology to create a vast array of "content."
Millennials and the Digital World

• Media Literacy:

“The ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create information” Considine et al. 1999.
Our Role as Teachers...

• 1. Expand the concept of text
  – Sanctioned vs. unsanctioned
  – Printed text, technology and social dialogues
  – Digital natives move easily through technology and master the changes easily
  – Closing the achievement gap means use of cellular access to the internet for many of our at-risk kids
Internet—open it up!

• 2. We must integrate the internet more fully into classroom practice
  - Instruction on evaluating search engines and websites
  - Practice analyzing the context of the message
  - Avoid false sense of student competency
  - Open up more access to the internet at school
Sites Schools Block
The Implications...

• Sheltered--Special Millennials are flooded with media messages

• Conventional—Achieving Millennials will need tools to evaluate the messages sent to them or they will swallow them whole

• Confident—Team oriented Millennials will need to manage 10 to 14 different jobs in their lifetimes, technology levels the market
The T.A.P. Model
A triangle of interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genre, codes, characters</td>
<td>Marketing, consumption</td>
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</table>

**Audience**
Who IS and IS NOT addressed by this text
Almost done...

• PEW Center for Research on Millennials—worth checking out

• Final thoughts...
• Questions...

• Thank You!