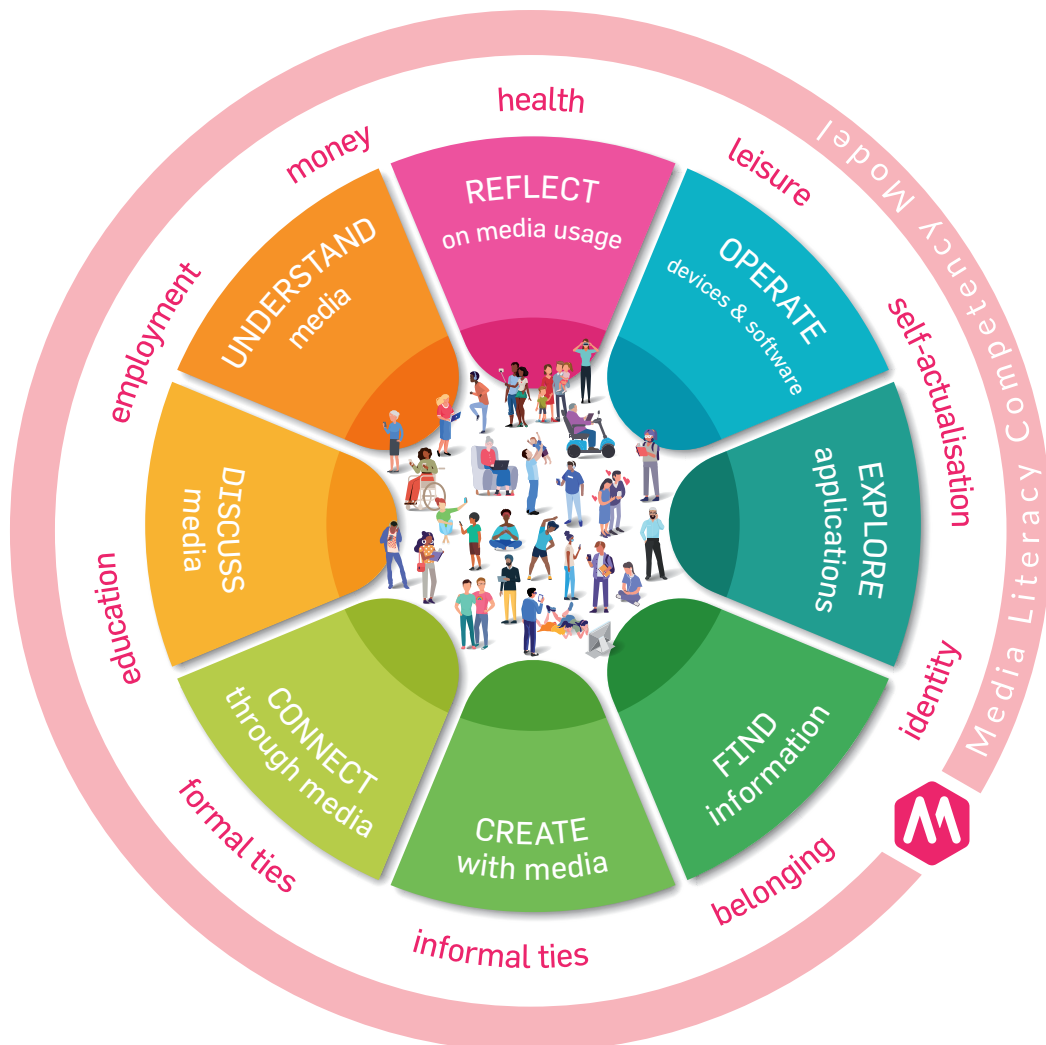




The Dutch Media Literacy Competency Model 2021

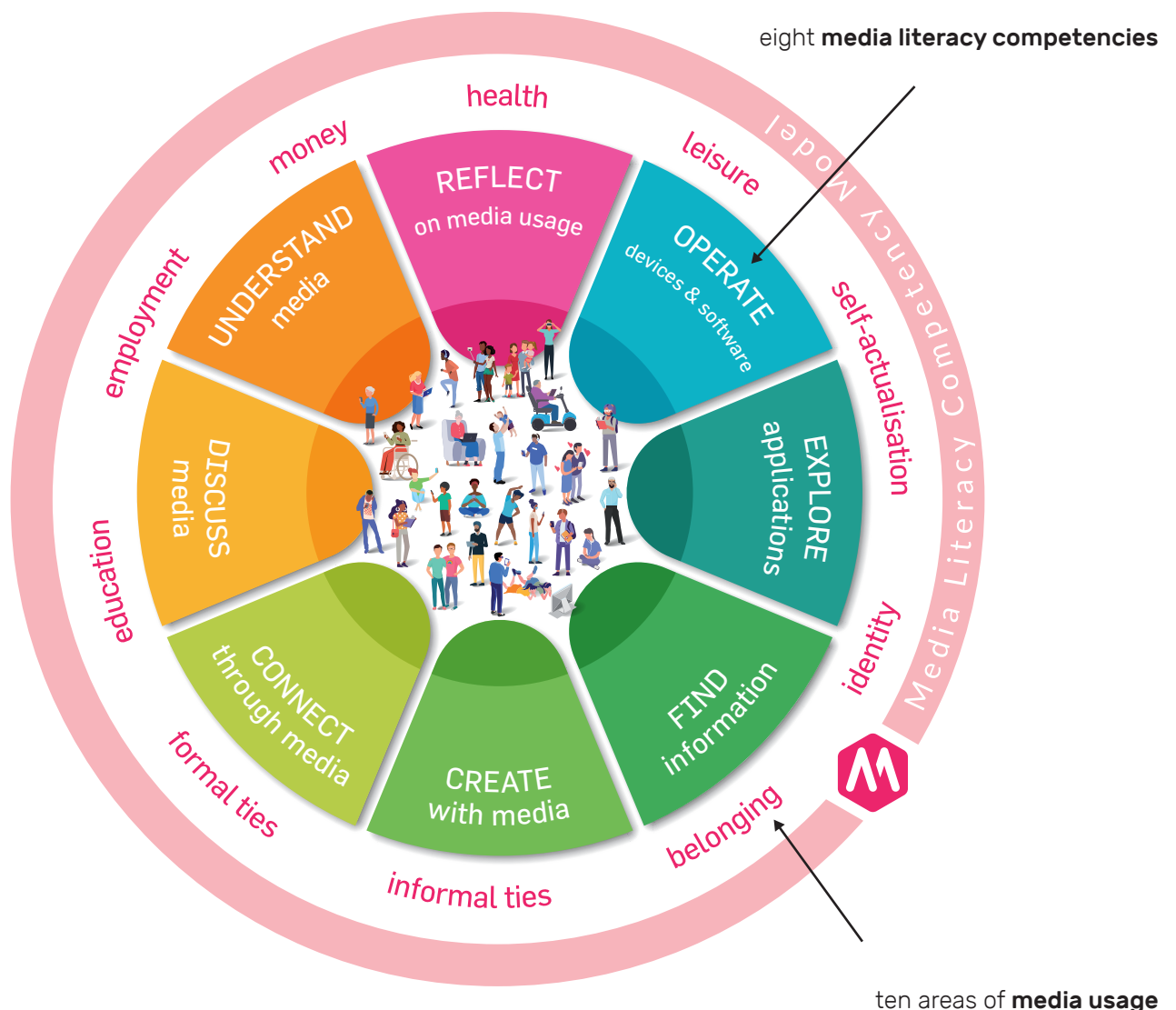


The Dutch Media Literacy Competency Model 2021

At the centre of the Media Literacy Competency Model 2021 are we – the 17,5 million Dutch people who enjoy themselves, play sports, go to school, work, enjoy their retirements, practice their hobbies, make friends, and fall in love in today's media society.

This centre is surrounded by two rings. The inner ring contains eight media literacy competencies. The outer ring contains ten areas in which people can experience concrete outcomes of their media use.

In this document we outline the **eight competencies**, the **ten areas**, and the **operation** of the model.



Eight media literacy competencies

OPERATE DEVICES & SOFTWARE **OPERATE**



- being able to operate various devices
- being able to handle software programs and applications

In order to optimally participate in the media society, it is vital to know how to operate various devices, and handle a range of software programs and applications. In all segments of the population there is room for improvement in operating skills. For example, one third of highly educated Dutch people have no more than a basic level of digital skills. The digitally most vulnerable part of the population, about three million Dutch citizens, even lack basic operating skills. Simple tasks, such as sending an attachment or changing a password, are difficult for this group.

EXPLORE APPLICATIONS



- having an open, curious and investigative attitude towards devices and applications

New media offer innumerable possibilities to make your life easier, to achieve personal goals, and to broaden your horizon. Those who want to benefit from this, should stay up-to-date with new applications, actively try them out and see if and how they can enrich your life. This competency is about having an open, curious and investigative attitude.

FIND INFORMATION



- being able to find, evaluate, filter and select useful and reliable information
- being able to store, organise, retrieve, share and present information
- being able to detect disinformation and fake news

In today's information society it is important to be able to find useful and reliable information. To do this, you must know how to critically evaluate the information supply and to filter and select the right information. Afterwards, it is helpful if you can store, organise, retrieve, share and present the collected information as well. Besides these two skills, detecting disinformation and fake news is part of the essential information literacy skills of the 21st century.

CREATE WITH MEDIA



- being able to create media content using various applications
- being able to write elementary code

Participating in the media society not only means consuming the media content of others, but also creating media content yourself. This can be as simple as taking a photo or sending a GIF, but also more complex, such as editing a video, creating an infographic, building a Minecraft landscape, contributing to Wikipedia or printing a self-designed object in 3D. At the end of the creative spectrum is the ability to write code in a programming language.

CONNECT THROUGH MEDIA



- being able to connect with others through media in a pleasant, meaningful and constructive way

Communication in the current media society increasingly takes place online. We exchange text messages with family and friends, make video calls with colleagues, and chat with companies and organisations. The quality of our social life depends on how well we are able to connect with others through media. Social media offer many possibilities to maintain and strengthen social relationships. But at the same time there are many people who do not know how to take advantage of these possibilities, who often end up not feeling seen or heard, and feel lonely as a result.

DISCUSS MEDIA



- critically and constructively discuss your own media usage, that of others and the direction of the media society as a whole, in an open dialogue with others

In today's media society, nobody holds a monopoly on media literacy. How much personal data you are willing to share, how many smart devices you should purchase, how much screen time is good for you; these and many other questions are at the centre of the current social debate. Media literacy has no definite end point where everyone should arrive at. What is media literate and what is not, is something we must discover together; both as individuals through mutual dialogue, and as a society through social debate. The competency DISCUSS is (just like EXPLORE) an attitude aspect: the attitude to critically and constructively discuss one's own media usage, that of others, and the direction of the media society as a whole, in an open dialogue with others.

UNDERSTAND MEDIA



- understand the mediatisation of society
- being able to recognise the colouring of media messages
- understand the technologies and techniques applied by media producers
- being able to understand underlying business models

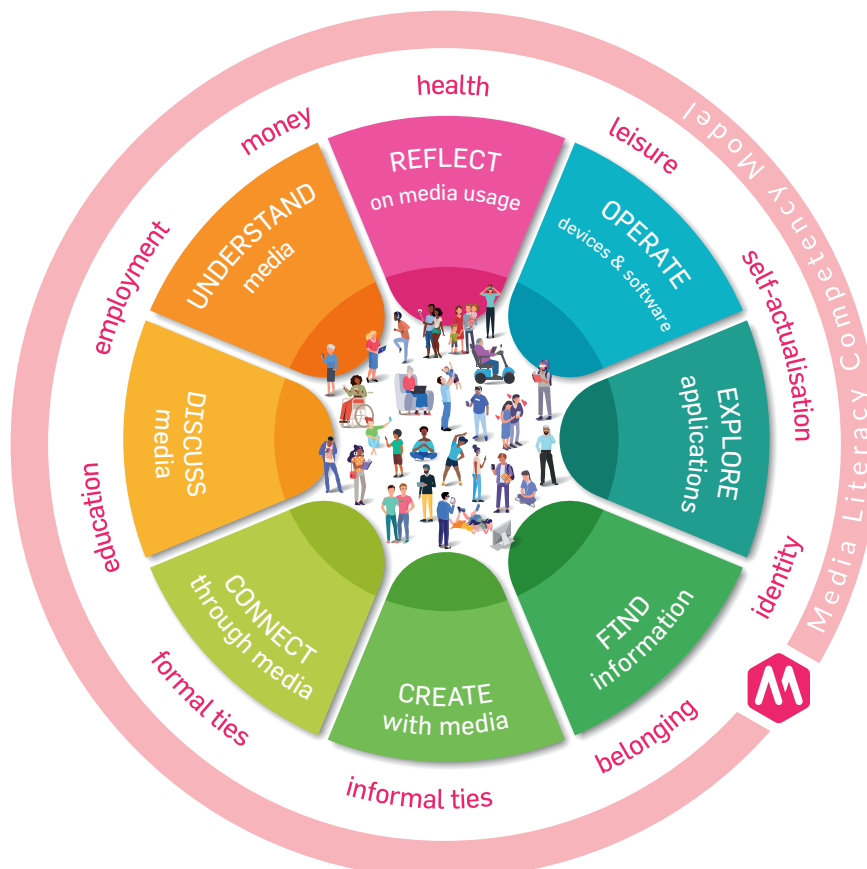
In order to remain in control of your media usage, it is essential to understand the techniques that media makers use. Your digital life will become much more comfortable if you can recognise spam, phishing, clickbait and bots. Your perception will get a lot more nuanced when you know which political stance newspapers and television networks represent. Your internet use will become a lot more conscious if you understand which algorithms, imaging and web design techniques media companies use, and how they make money using those techniques.

REFLECT ON MEDIA USAGE



- the attitude to regularly think through, evaluate and adjust one's own media use and that of the group(s) in which one participates

Media can enrich your life. But they can also put the brakes on your development. Media can make your life easier, but may keep you trapped in unproductive patterns. For this reason it is important to be able to openly and critically reflect upon your own media usage. This competency is about the willingness to regularly think through, evaluate and, where needed, adjust your own media usage and that of the group(s) that you take part in.



Ten areas of media usage

Media literacy is not about media literacy itself, but about becoming healthier, deepening friendships, achieving success in education and work, enjoying leisure activities, etcetera. Media literacy therefore never occurs in a vacuum: media literacy is always about achieving certain goals. In the outer ring of the Media Literacy Competency Model 2021, we describe ten areas in which a media literate use of media brings you closer to your goals.

health

In terms of physical health, mental balance and lifestyle, you can reach various goals online. The internet provides information on all kinds of diets, super foods, ailments and diseases. You can find tips for exercising and read about the functioning of the brain. Besides that, there are more and more devices and applications to measure your physical condition. Based on all the information you can retrieve online, you can take better decisions regarding your physical and mental well-being.

leisure

The internet offers many possibilities to make your free time more enjoyable. Music lovers buy tickets for concerts online; sports fanatics book trips for matches held anywhere in Europe on the internet. Furthermore, for many people digital media is also a form of leisure activity itself. Many spend their free time gaming, looking at art, reading e-books, listening to music, chatting with friends or shopping online.

self-actualisation

The pursuit of self-development characterises us as human beings. New media offer countless possibilities to develop ourselves as a person, to learn, to discover and to undertake new things. Through the internet you can order exactly the item that you need for your outfit or equipment. On forums and on social media you are able to get in touch with people that share your hobbies, passions and interests. Those who love cooking, can be inspired by food and cooking blogs.

identity

Every person every once in a while wonders: who am I, and who do I want to be? These questions are answered in the offline life, but more and more in the digital domain as well. New media offer innumerable possibilities to shape your own digital identity. Which profile picture do I choose? Which groups do I choose to join? Who do I accept as friends? What do I click on? What do I 'like' and what do I share? What information do I expose, and what would I rather keep private?

belonging

Over the last decades, our society has become more individualistic. Traditional ties have weakened. Processes of modernisation and globalisation have further eroded the ties of people's own social environments. Media can help restore those lost feelings of belonging and connection to a community. This can be achieved, for example, by installing a neighbourhood app or a local news app, but also by taking part, for example, in a community of people with the same sexual orientation, age or country of origin.

informal ties

The more time we spend online, the more we make use of our smartphones and tablets to strengthen our personal relationships or to create new ones. This can include relationships with our partners, family members and friends. However, it could also concern personal contacts with neighbours, club mates, fellow political party members or fellow believers.

formal ties

By formal ties we mean the formal relations between companies, governments, organisations and institutions. To return a product, to receive a grant, to claim your rights, or to make your voice heard, citizens of today's media society increasingly rely on online communication channels.

education

Our education, courses, and workshops have long taken place in classrooms, lecture halls and training rooms. Nowadays, our study careers have an increasingly larger online component. We inform ourselves online about new courses, visit online open days, follow online courses and MOOCs, and add the courses we have followed to our LinkedIn profiles. Furthermore, also within our education programs digital media play an increasingly important role.

employment

Within more and more professions, being digitally competent is becoming increasingly important in order to carry out one's job effectively. This is the case, obviously, for computer workers. However, also colleagues who do not work behind a computer are performing more and more tasks online. Even in sectors in which technology played no major role for a long time, effective use of media is becoming increasingly important. Bakers and hairdressers see their turnover increase through effective use of social media. Farmers use drones to monitor crops and social media to gain recognition for their work. Furthermore, nowadays, in order to get a job in the first place, one needs digital skills since application procedures have an ever increasing digital component.

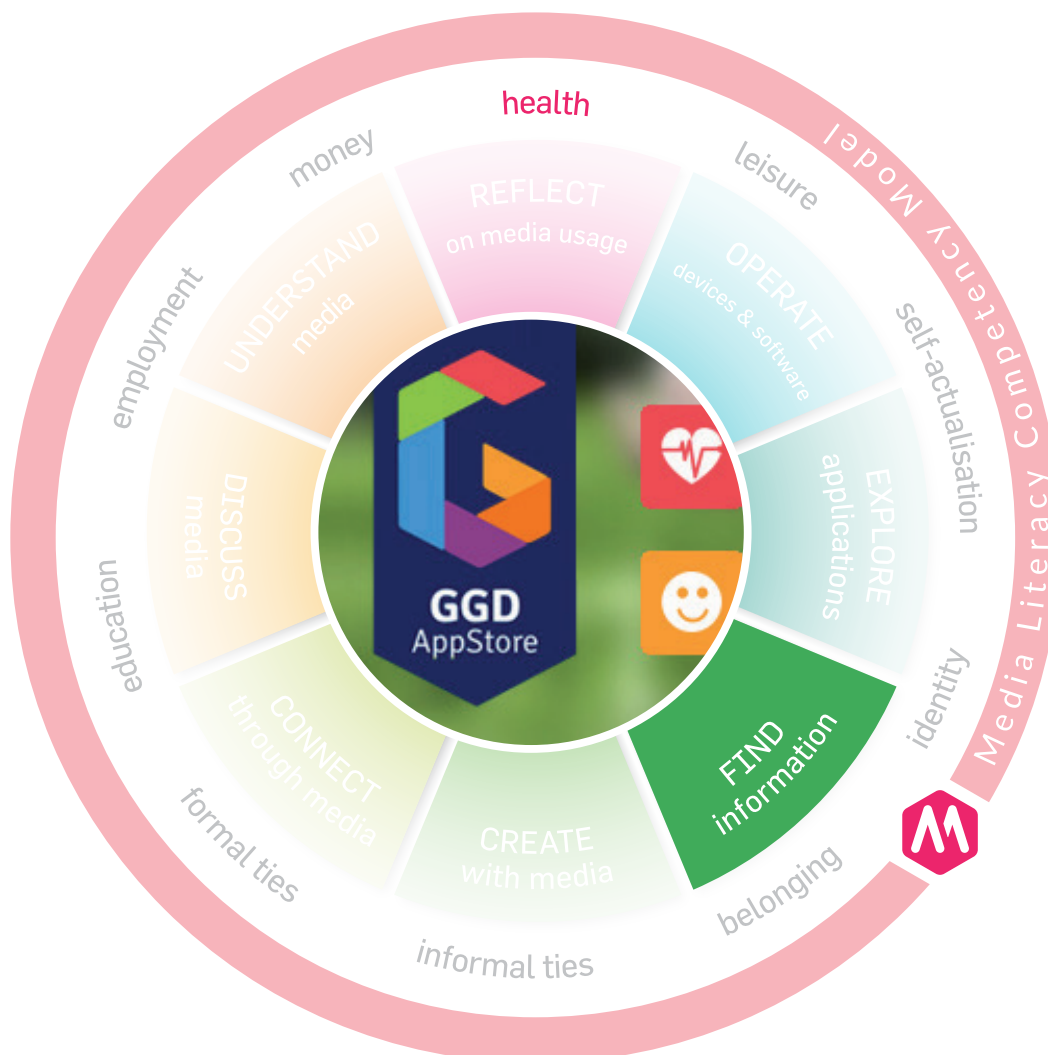
money

Whether it comes to selling your old stuff, purchasing new products, buying shares (or bitcoins) or transferring a mortgage; in all these cases, media literacy is indispensable. Those who make a smart use of online possibilities can benefit greatly. In addition, for instance, the internet can help you gain a better insight about where banks, energy companies and pension funds invest your money.

Functioning of the model

The use of two rings in the Media Literacy Competency Model 2021 allowed us to develop a dynamic model, which can be used in three ways. Firstly, the model emphasises that developing the media literacy competencies of the inner ring is always aimed at achieving concrete goals. The outer ring hereby functions as a 'checklist' and as a stimulus.

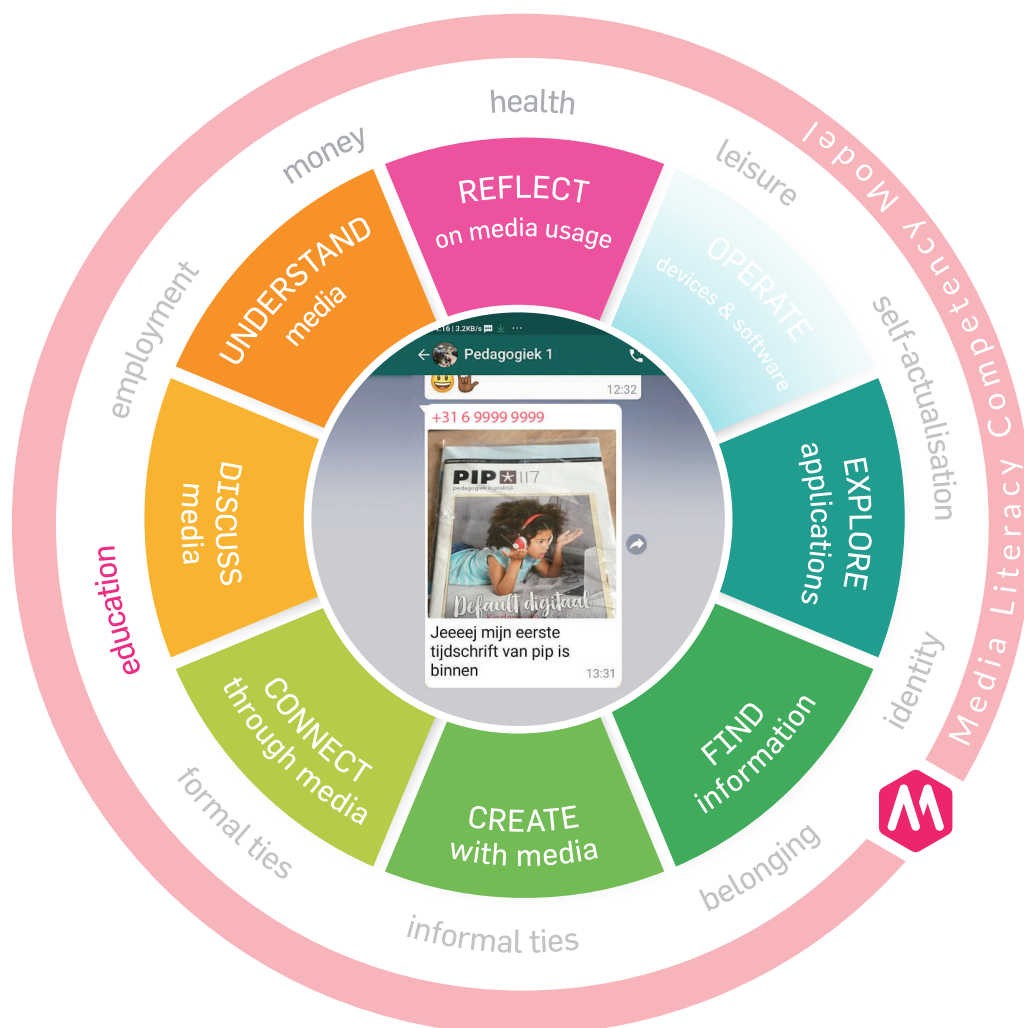
For example, anyone who develops teaching materials, and aims at improving a target group's information skills (competency FIND from the inner ring), can identify in which areas of media use this can be done (for example, FIND with regard to **education**). The model is hereby intended as a stimulus to offer a broader range of possibilities. The model challenges media literacy professionals to develop services, materials, and products related to areas of media use that haven't been covered in depth (for example, CREATE with regard to **work**; EXPLORE with regard to **belonging**; FIND with regard to **health**).



Functioning of the model

Secondly, the model shows that media literacy is indispensable for achieving goals through media use. This time, the inner ring functions as a 'checklist' and as a stimulus.

For example, a teacher in higher education can create a WhatsApp group to communicate practical information about the time of the lectures and to share study material (**education**). Checking the eight media literacy competencies could inspire the teacher to broaden the functions of the group. Students could share video reports of completed practical assignments (**CREATE**), and thereby inspire each other to try out new programs and apps (**EXPLORE**). They can share tips, facts, events and news from their field that they have found elsewhere (**CONNECT**). In addition, the teachers can help their students to distinguish reliable information from sensationalist news (**FIND**; **DISCUSS**; **UNDERSTAND**). Furthermore, the teachers are able to discuss online the social processes that occur in the group (**REFLECT**; **DISCUSS**). By addressing multiple media competencies, the possibilities of media to achieve tangible results within the area of **education** will be exploited.

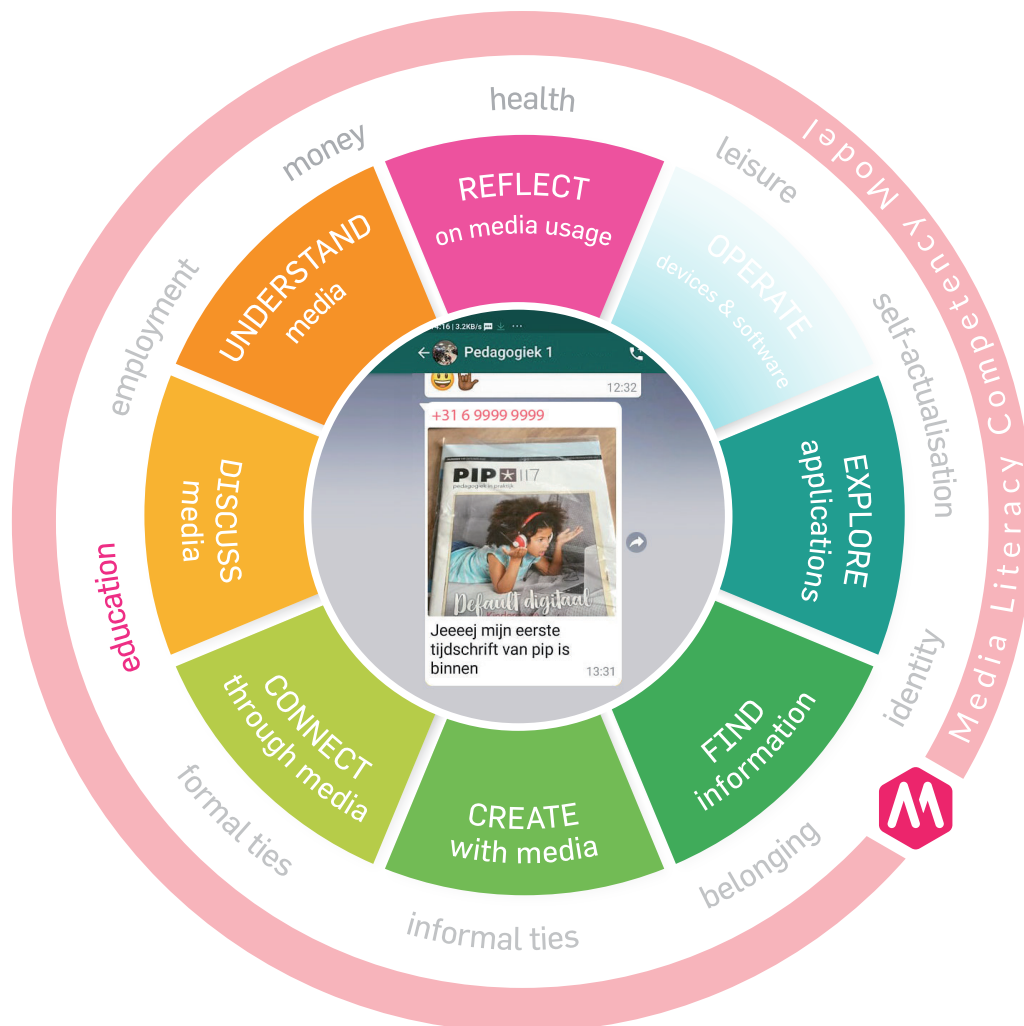


Functioning of the model

Thirdly, the model shows that the media literacy competencies are organically linked. A media literate action or a media literate consideration rarely address only a single media literacy competency. Nearly always there are several in play at the same time.

Those who intend to ride Alpe d'Huez by bike and want to take advantage of the digital possibilities, can download training schedules (FIND) and read blogs about the benefits of having a power meter on your bicycle (EXPLORE). In such case, alertness is required, because seemingly independent reviews often turn out to be sponsored (UNDERSTAND). Once you're in training, you can increase your motivation by sharing your progress on the app Strava (EXPLORE; CONNECT).

Another example: those who consider cancelling their Netflix subscription (REFLECT; UNDERSTAND) and propose this to their own partner and children (DISCUSS) can benefit from reading the file 'Healthy online' on Mediawijsheid.nl (FIND; UNDERSTAND) and exchange ideas with other parents on a parenting forum (FIND; CONNECT; DISCUSS).



This explanation on the functioning of the model is intended as an inspiration, not to flatten out any creative use of the model.

We would like to invite the network to come up with surprising, original ways to get started with the model. The model, with its dynamic circular structure, has deliberately been developed with this adaptability in mind.

Value of the model

Over the past years, the previous Dutch Media Literacy Competency Model (2012), has given direction to the actions of Dutch media literacy professionals. The model:

- gave substance to the definition of media literacy by the Dutch Council for Culture ('media literacy is the sum of knowledge, skills, and attitudes citizens need to consciously, critically and actively find one's way in a complex, ever-changing and fundamentally mediated society' (CfC, 2005);
- was the point of departure for setting up new activities, projects, and services by the 1000+ network partners;
- was the starting point for research projects and the development of instruments to determine and monitor media literacy among various target groups;
- was leading with the allocation of incentive grants, determining of the themes for the yearly Media Literacy Week, and the design of the media literacy game MediaMasters.


The Media Literacy Competency Model 2021 retains the strengths of the previous model. The competencies EXPLORE and DISCUSS have been subsequently added. Also, the new mission of the Media Literacy Network – **Everybody media literate** – is reflected in the new model. By adding the outside ring, we emphasise that media literacy is about inclusion and participation of all Dutch citizens in every domain of the media society. We want all Dutch citizens to develop their media literacy competencies, so they can better achieve their goals in all of the ten areas of media usage.

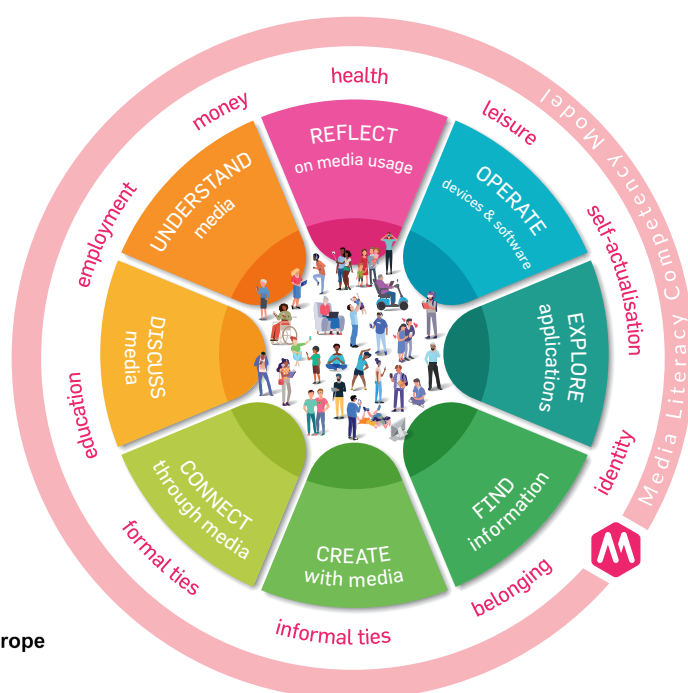


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