

Technology/Media Choices

Month: Mar.

Week #: 24

Day: a. Mon. Time: 20 min.

# Collecting Data

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

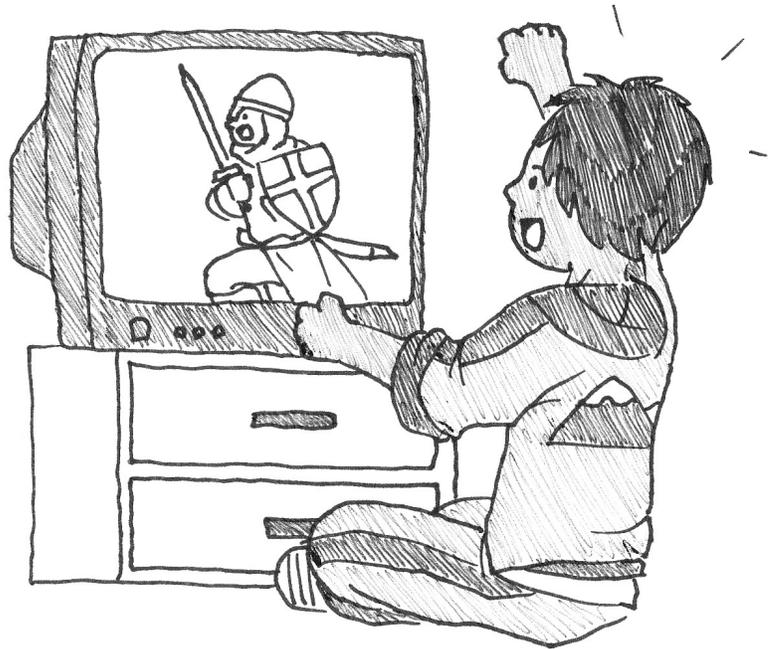
The students will: become conscious of the potential negative consequences of the inappropriate use of the TV and computer; learn how this media can be used in a constructive manner.

Materials

Technology/Media Choices worksheet (See 'Computer Generated'), pencil

Illustration

How much TV do you watch and what kind of programs do you view? How much time do you spend on the computer and what kind of software do you use? These and other important questions will soon be answered!



Background

In America, we have moved from an agrarian to an industrial and finally to today's informational-based society. This is primarily based on our rapid development of communication and informational technologies that include both the television and the computer. When the automobile was first invented, there many accidents and deaths because the 'rules of the road'

had not yet been established: people drove on both sides of the street, there were no stoplights or stop signs, and there were no posted speed limits. In time, our society learned how to limit this newfangled 'horseless carriage,' this new technology, so that it was no longer such a threat and instead became a benefit to society. (In light of the auto's contribution to global warming and the fact that since 1913, 2.5 million Americans have died in automobile accidents [as opposed to 1 million who have died fighting in wars since the Revolutionary War], one could argue against the automobile's benefits.) Although the TV and computer do not pose any physical danger, they can adversely affect us, especially children, if they are used inappropriately.

Definitions:

TV = Passive media: television, home movies

Computer = Interactive media: computers, Game Boy, Internet, etc.

Entertainment: video game, cartoons, movie, You Tube, etc.

Educational or constructive: NOVA, e-mail, drawing program, History Channel, etc.

Edutainment: programming that is both entertaining and educational at the same time

**Note:** The Technology/Media Choices Worksheet needs to be gone over and distributed a week in advance of this activity. This is why this activity may seem out of order.

### **Group Activity**

1. Hand out the Technology/Media Choices worksheet and say, “This next week you will graph the amount and type of ‘screen’ time you have each day. Screen time includes the TV, which is essentially a passive media that includes things like home movies, most TV shows and most cartoons. It also includes computers, which is essentially an interactive media and includes video games, Game Boy, the Internet, e-mail and the like. This is how you fill in the worksheet.” Demonstrate on the board how to fill in the worksheet and clarify what the terms: passive, interactive, entertainment, educational and edutainment mean. “At the bottom make sure you list the name of the programs watched/used and the type of technology used.”

Next week we will use this data to critically discuss and analyze both how much screen time is appropriate and what content or programming best meets the needs of a young person. I will be challenging your thinking using current research about technology and media. The overall objective of these discussions will be to help you become more intentional and conscious about the choices you make in regard to these technologies. In the final analysis, however, I will not tell you how much screen time, or what exact programming is appropriate for you. This is something that I will leave up to you and your family to decide upon.”

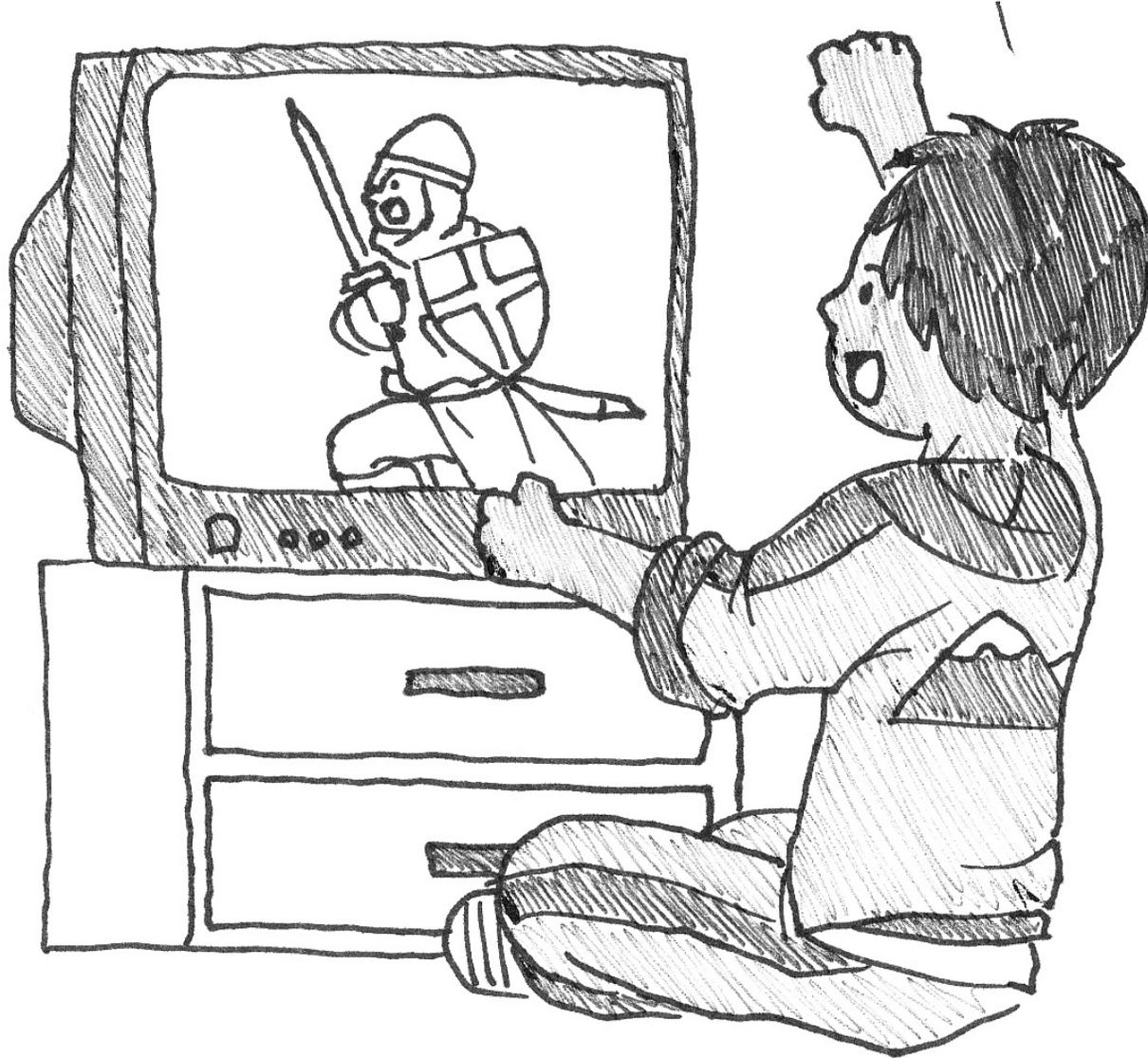
### **Group Discussion Questions**

1. Are there any questions on how to fill out this worksheet?
2. Why are we going to take all this time and trouble to fill out these worksheets?  
A: Because we need to learn how to use these technologies/media appropriately for our own well being.

### **Variations/Extensions**

#### **Conclusion**

Say, “When the automobile was first invented, there many accidents and deaths because the ‘rules of the road’ had not yet been established: people drove on both sides of the street, there weren’t any stoplights or stop signs, and there weren’t any posted speed limits. In time, our society learned how to limit this new-fangled ‘horseless carriage,’ this new technology, so that it was no longer such a threat to life and limb and was a benefit to society (although some scientists would argue its benefits). Both the TV and computer are relatively recent inventions, and although the TV and computer do not pose any physical danger, they can adversely affect us if they are used inappropriately. We need to figure out the ‘rules of the road’ for the TV and computer so that they can benefit us.”



**How much TV do you watch and what kind of programs do you view?  
How much time do you spend on the computer and what kind of software do you use?**

## TECHNOLOGY/MEDIA CHOICES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please graph the amount of 'screen' time you have each day. Screen time includes the TV, which is essentially a passive media that includes things like home movies, most TV shows, and most cartoons. It also includes computers, which are essentially an interactive media, and includes video games, Xbox, Wii, the Internet, e-mail and the like. At the bottom make sure you list the name of the programs watched/used and the type of technology used.

Next week we will use this data to critically discuss and analyze both how much screen time is appropriate and what content or programming best meets the needs of the child. I will be challenging the student's thinking using current research about technology and media. The overall objectives of these discussions is to help the student become more intentional and conscious about the choices they make in regard to these technologies. However, in the final analysis, I do not tell the students how much screen time, or what exact programming is appropriate for them. This is something that I leave up to the student and their family to decide upon.

TV = Passive media: TV shows, movies, etc.

COM = Interactive media: computers, Game Boy, Internet, etc.

 = 1/2 hour of Entertainment: video games, cartoons, movies, etc.

 = 1/2 hour of Educational or constructive: PBS, e-mail, drawing program, History Channel, etc.

 = 1/2 hour of Edutainment: active program that is both entertaining and educational at the same time

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6															
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1/2															
0	TV	COM	TV	COM	TV	COM	TV	COM	TV	COM	TV	COM	TV	COM	
hours	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday		Sunday		

**Names of programs watched or utilized:**

Monday: \_\_\_\_\_

Tuesday: \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday: \_\_\_\_\_

Thursday: \_\_\_\_\_

Friday: \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday: \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday: \_\_\_\_\_