

## 5 YouTube Videos to Help You Make Better Decisions Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The following videos expose the hidden influences on our judgments and decisions and provide simple strategies for helping us make choices that are in our best interests.

### "Influence and Persuasion: Crash Course Media Literacy #6" (9:50)

1. Provide the definitions for the following terms:

Advertisements	
Public Relations (PR)	
Propaganda	

2. What does market research accomplish?
3. Edward Bernays, author of *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, said humans are most sensitive to which influence?
4. What is the formula for the sales pitches of most modern ads?
5. Once an advertiser gets our attention about the needs we want to fulfill with their product, what techniques/appeals tend to make us believe the product is worth getting? (The video identifies five.)
6. Fallacies are errors in reasoning that undermine the logic of an argument. Describe the four fallacies commonly used in advertising this video mentions.

Appeal to emotions	
False dilemma	
Red herring	
Traditional wisdom	

## The Key to Media's Hidden Codes by Ben Beaton and TED-Ed (5:59)

Media codes are symbolic, written, or technical tools used to construct or suggest meaning in media products ([mediaknife.org](http://mediaknife.org)) in order to convince us to think, act, or feel a certain way.

1. Provide examples of how the three symbolic codes have been used in media you've seen and how you think the media creator was trying to influence the way you think, act, or feel.

Symbolic Code	Example	Media Creator's Intended Influence

2. Provide examples of how the three written codes have been used in media you've seen and how you think the media creator was trying to influence the way you think, act, or feel.

Written Code	Example	Media Creator's Intended Influence

3. Provide examples of how the three technical codes have been used in media you've seen and how you think the media creator was trying to influence the way you think, act, or feel.

Technical Code	Example	Media Creator's Intended Influence

## "5 Tips to Improve Your Critical Thinking"

by Samantha Agoos, Addison Andersen, and Nick Hilditch for TED-Ed (4:29)

1. When we're considering information in order to make a decision, what are some hidden issues that critical thinking can help us notice?
2. Rather than choosing an answer because it feels right, a person who uses critical thinking subjects all available options to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Add more detail about what one would do for each step of the critical thinking process suggested in this video.

Formulate your question	
Gather your information	
Apply the information	
Consider the implications	
Explore other points of view	

## "The Psychology Behind Irrational Decisions"

by Sara Garofolo and TOGETHER for TED-Ed (4:38)

1. The negative psychological impact we feel from losing something is about twice as strong as the positive impact of gaining the same thing. (In other words, we get very upset if we lose \$20, but we're only a little bit happier when we gain \$20.) This experience is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Heuristics are mental \_\_\_\_\_ that can lead to \_\_\_\_\_ decisions.
3. Heuristics are especially unreliable when we're trying to make judgments and decisions that deal with \_\_\_\_\_ (and numbers in general).
4. What happens when we experience the anchoring effect?
5. In what kind of situation are we especially vulnerable to the anchoring effect?
6. When can heuristics be helpful?
7. When you encounter complex decision making situations (involving numbers, probability, or multiple details), what can you do to try to avoid the negative influence of heuristics?

1. What are three methods you can use to compare options when you're trying to make a decision?
2. Why can imagining possible outcomes help you make a better decision?
3. If you're feeling overwhelmed by a decision, why can it help to spend a couple of minutes on a different, moderately difficult task?
4. Why is it helpful to "step outside yourself" to pretend you're helping someone else?
5. Why isn't decision making like a test?

### Wrap-Up

Which three concepts/strategies from this collection of videos do think will be most useful to you as you're making judgments and decisions throughout your life? Identify each concept and explain why you think it's important.

Concept/Strategy	Importance