

# 8th Grade ELA Study Guide

**Video Title:** *The AQBS Rule – Ask Questions. Be Skeptical*

**From:** *Media Masters Rock!*

**Focus:** Media literacy, emotional manipulation, critical thinking, digital citizenship, and persuasive writing

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Evaluate the credibility of online messages and identify manipulative emotional triggers.
- Analyze how media creators influence viewers through tone, visuals, and emotion.
- Apply the AQBS Rule to real-world examples to assess trustworthiness.
- Write arguments that cite clear evidence and reasoning.
- Engage in thoughtful discussions with peers to clarify and challenge ideas.

Aligned with: *Alabama Course of Study – 8th Grade ELA*

- **ELA.8.10:** Determine a central idea and analyze its development.
- **ELA.8.15:** Analyze how differences in points of view create effects.
- **ELA.8.23:** Participate in discussions, respond to diverse perspectives, and evaluate viewpoints.
- **ELA.8.25:** Evaluate the advantages of using various media to present ideas.
- **ELA.8.27:** Write arguments that support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

## WATCH + THINK

Lead-in Prompt:

“Have you ever felt tricked into being angry or sad by something online? This video helps us understand how emotions can cloud our judgment — and how the AQBS Rule gives us the tools to see more clearly.”

## AFTER-VIEWING DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. **What does AQBS stand for, and why is each part important when reading posts online?**  
*(Ask Questions. Be Skeptical — It slows us down and helps us spot manipulation.)*
2. **What emotional triggers does the video mention, and why do they work so well?**
3. **Why do you think posts designed to make us mad or shocked get shared more than balanced or neutral posts?**
4. **Can you give an example of a time you saw a post that *seemed true* but turned out to be missing context or misleading? What happened?**
5. **How can we respond thoughtfully to emotionally manipulative content, instead of reacting on impulse?**
6. **How does the AQBS Rule help us become more responsible digital citizens?**

## ELA ACTIVITY OPTIONS

### 1. ***Argument Writing: “Should Emotionally Manipulative Posts Be Regulated?”***

Prompt:

“Social media platforms are being asked to monitor emotionally manipulative content — posts that intentionally provoke anger, fear, or outrage without full facts. Should platforms take stronger action to stop this kind of content?”

Expectations:

- Strong thesis
- Logical structure (intro, claims, counterclaims, conclusion)
- Evidence from the video and real examples
- Transitions and persuasive language
- MLA-style citations (optional)

Provide scaffolds like claim-evidence-reasoning charts or model paragraphs.

## **2. Source Detective Lab – Who’s Behind This Post?**

Give students sample social media posts (realistic but fictionalized), each with:

- A bold headline
- An emotional image
- A surprising claim

Students will:

- Identify the emotional trigger
- Analyze the source (Who benefits from this? Who might be behind it?)
- Ask at least 3 critical questions (AQBS Rule)
- Determine whether they'd trust or share the post

Use a rubric to evaluate reasoning and skepticism.

## **3. Mini-Debate: “React or Research?”**

Divide the class into two sides:

- Side A argues that reacting emotionally to posts is natural and acceptable.
- Side B argues that we have a responsibility to stop, question, and research before reacting.

Each side must:

- Use evidence from the video
- Prepare rebuttals
- End with a call to action

This encourages students to defend and test their beliefs using logic, not emotion.

## **KEY VOCABULARY**

- **Manipulation** – controlling or influencing someone unfairly
- **Bias** – a one-sided or unfair perspective
- **Credibility** – how trustworthy or believable a source is
- **Skepticism** – questioning or doubting rather than accepting at face value
- **Emotional trigger** – something designed to provoke strong feelings
- **Fact vs. opinion** – distinguishing what’s provable from what’s personal
- **Confirmation bias** – favoring information that confirms what you already believe

## **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP MANTRA**

**“Get Triggered? Go Bigger. Ask Questions. Be Skeptical”**

Create a student-designed poster or graphic for the classroom or hallway that shares this message. Reinforce it as part of online class discussions or current events work.

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