

INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA LITERACY

Five-Part Lesson for Grades 9-12

Lesson 3: Advertising and Influencing

Description

In this lesson, students will learn the most common advertising techniques used across various media today. They will create their own advertisements and critique how other students' messages were conveyed.

Objectives

- Students will identify the most common advertising techniques used in the media.
- Students will compare and contrast which techniques they find most effective.
- Students will properly identify techniques across different advertisements.
- Students will design their own counter-advertisement using a technique or combinations of techniques and will present and justify their choices to the class.

[Texas TEKS State Standards](#)

[ISTE Standards](#)

Length

90 minutes (at least 2 45-minute class periods)

Resources

Laptop, screen projector or TV

Magazines or newspapers containing ads.

Drawing paper, scissors, markers, other creative tools for students to use as they create their own ads (a stack of magazines to cut from would be ideal, but not totally necessary)

Students will need computer access or Chromebooks

Slideshows: Advertising and Influencing: [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)

Handout: [Advertising: Memorable Ads Activity](#)

Handout: [Advertising: Creating Your Own Ad Activity](#)

Lesson step-by-step

Day 1

1. Building Background – 10-15 minutes

Using the slideshow, [Advertising and Influencing Part 1](#), tell students that today they will learn about advertisers' tactics and discuss the techniques used across different types of advertising. Go through the history of advertising.

In Slide 6, pause for a short discussion by asking students what is their favorite ad.

Slide 7 talks about Super Bowl Advertising. There is a 5-minute YouTube video to show if time allows.

2. Analyzing ads – 10 minutes

Have students search for commercials or print ads online or look through magazines and newspapers until they have 1-2 ads. Students should work quietly for 10 minutes analyzing their ad and completing the handout: [Advertising: Memorable Ads Activity](#).

Be sure to tell students to bookmark, print, or cut out their ads to keep for tomorrow's activity.

3. Advertising Techniques – 15 minutes

Using the slideshow, [Advertising and Influencing Part 2](#), go through the different type of techniques advertisers use to sell their products.

Slide 5 deals with emotional ads and has two short YouTube Clips with emotional commercials that make you cry and laugh.

Slide 6 deals with stereotypes and how advertising is changing in this area.

There is a YouTube clip of a Barbie ad made in 2021 that shows both boys and girls of all ethnicities playing with Barbies. The commercial explains how Barbies can help children develop empathy and generosity.

There is also a link to Dove's Real Beauty Campaign website. Click on that and walk through how Dove has changed how they advertise their product to women, and how they have taken a stand to promote real women in their ads.

4. *Literacy reflection and part two preparation — 5 minutes*

Now that the class has a decent understanding of some of the main techniques in advertising, it's time to think about this genre of media from a more literate perspective and to prepare them for the project they'll work on tomorrow. Explain that all advertising techniques are based off assumptions and knowledge about how the human brain works, including what's important to us and how we make decisions.

Thinking back to the stereotypes that many of the ads used, ask students how they feel about advertisers assuming such basic stereotypes about teens? Do they believe these stereotypes to be true? Are any of them offended by the stereotypes advertisers use to sell ads?

For part two of this lesson tomorrow, students will create and brainstorm a “counter-ad” meant to play off the techniques and stereotypes evident in the ads they analyzed.

Day 2

1. *Explaining the project — 10 minutes*

Using the ads students brought in and analyzed yesterday, they will spend time working in groups to prepare counter-ads that address the stereotypes or poke fun/satirize the techniques advertisers used to sell the products. Media literacy requires consumers to be active in engaging with and responding to media, and this activity is one way to do that.

Place students in groups of three. Make sure they have access to a computer or Chromebook to pull up the handout [Advertising: Creating Your Own Ad Activity](#). Explain that their goal is to create a team rebuttal for each ad in their group (so each group works together on each of the three ads that team members brought). This rebuttal, or counter-ad, should serve to dispel or critique the stereotypes and techniques the advertisers used. The students can design the ad online using a program, such as Canva or Google Slides, they can use video, or they can design on paper with markers and magazines to cut from.

So, for example, an ad with a blonde cheerleader looking for a low-calorie snack with an overall message about being body-conscious, might be re-imagined showing an average student picking a snack from a table full of food, with an overall message that reminds adults that students are growing and full of energy. As they brainstorm each new ad, they can draw the new ad, or describe it (if you have no artists at the table!).

The teams will ultimately present their old and new ads to the class and will explain their choice for the counter ad.

2. *Group work — 30 minutes*

Allow groups to work and brainstorm and walk to room to offer feedback or provide suggestions.

3. *Present — 10 minutes*

Ask the group to present and explain their best counter ad to the class.

References

(n.d.). *Canva with articles from The New York Times*. Canva. Retrieved February 25, 2024, from https://www.canva.com/p/canva-with-articles-from-the-new-york-times/?utm_medium=referral&utm_source=creator_share&utm_campaign=creator_share

(2014, March 15). *HOW ADVERTISING AFFECTS US*. Journalism Educators Association. Retrieved February 26, 2024, from <https://curriculum.jea.org/wp/how-advertising-affects-us/>