



## LESSON PLAN

<b>Level:</b>	Grades 7 to 9
<b>About the Author:</b>	This unit was created by educator Arlene Petkau as part of a Media Education course taught by John Pungente at the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

# Sports Personalities in Advertising



This lesson is part of *USE, UNDERSTAND & ENGAGE: A Digital Media Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools*: <http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-literacy-framework>.

## Overview

---

In this lesson students explore the relationship between athletes and advertising through a number of different activities. Students deconstruct the "text" of ads featuring sports personalities, then research their own athletes' endorsements then explore data collection to obtain a target audience in order to understand how audience negotiates meaning. Finally, students design their own ad or ad campaign for an athlete.

## Learning Outcomes

---

Students will:

- research sports personalities in advertising
- understand how data collection obtains a target audience that negotiates meaning of ads
- identify the role of sports personalities in advertising
- identify what created these reactions and emotions
- understand how and why a sports personality is used in advertising
- create an ad campaign

## Preparation and Materials

---

- Review the backgrounder *Sports Personalities*
- Prepare to project *Popular Advertisements: Sports Personalities*
- Prepare to project or distribute the handout *Colin Kaepernick: Marketing Campaign*
- Prepare to distribute the handouts *Sports Personality Marketing Campaign Worksheet* and *Selling a Sports Personality*
- Arrange internet access for students.



## Procedure

---

### Introduction

To pique curiosity, project the handout *Popular Advertisements: Sports Personalities* and have students give their first impressions of the ads.

- Is the sports personality someone they recognize?
- Do they look different in the ads versus when they're seen as an athlete? If so, why do students think they look different?
- Can students tell what product is being advertised? Is it something they're familiar with? Does there seem like a logical connection between the product and the sports personality?

After a discussion, explain that they will be researching and understanding how specific sports personalities are used in ads today.

Ask students:

- Who are some of your favourite athletes?
- Are they familiar with other “sports personalities” who aren't athletes (coaches, announcers, etc.)?
- What do you like/dislike about these athletes?
- Do they ever appear in advertisements?
- What personality traits exhibited by athletes do advertisers want associated with their products?
- What products are advertised?

### Advertisement Analysis

Project or distribute *Collin Kaepernick: Advertising Campaign*.

Read through the handout as a class, going over the profile of the athlete, as well as the marketing campaign that he has featured in.

Lead a discussion with the class focusing on specific questions, such as :

- What does the athlete-or sports personality look like in the ad?
- What is happening?
- Which company made the ad?
- What product is being sold?
- Where is the athlete or sports personality looking?
- What techniques are used to make the ad appealing?
- Are there other people in the ad?
- What are we shown about Colin Kaepernick?



- Do you know anything about Colin Kaepernick that isn't shown in the campaign? Why might it not have been shown?
- What is the message that the ad is trying to convey? Is it successful?

Divide the class into small groups and assign them a sports personality from the list provided on the handout *Sports Personalities* (you may also have students choose their own sports personalities if the ones in this list are not relevant to them) .

Explain to the groups that they are going to be researching one sports personality and analyze their advertisements and endorsement campaigns using the handout *Sports Personalities Marketing Campaign Worksheet*, which will lead them through the different tasks.

Have the students complete the *Advertisement Analysis* section of the worksheet in their groups through online research. Make sure they find at least three ads featuring their sports personality (these ads can be in any format: print ads, video ads, sponsored social network posts ,etc.) If students need help finding or modifying media for their project, you can direct them to the resources included in the [Resources for Making Media in Your Classroom](#).

### **Target Market**

Target marketing is essential to advertisers. Have students consider some of the following questions:

- What are some examples of the types of groups that advertisers want to attract?
- What is the size and growth rate of each of these groups?
- Which groups have the most influence on what is bought? (For example: are certain sports, and certain products, meant to appeal to a certain age group? Are some sports more popular with different groups than others? How would advertisers take that into account?)
- What types of athletes do you think might work best for each group?
- Why do you buy sports-branded products or clothing. What appeals to you? Why "must" you have something?
- How do advertisers research their audience? One method is online data collection. Discuss students' experiences with data collection online: Have they ever been given a survey, or taken an online quiz, about sports or about a consumer product? Have they ever "liked," shared or otherwise interacted with an online video or a social network post about sports, or one that was about or posted by a business?
- In small groups, ask students to formulate three questions that could be used in an online survey for a chosen product, that their assigned athlete in the *Advertisement Analysis* activity created ads for. Questions will be different based on the product, but could include: How old are you? How many times a week do you participate in sports? Do you watch sports? Would you like a sports product more if an athlete endorsed or supported it? Have students complete the *Target Market* section of the worksheet using these answers.

Make sure students have at least three advertisements for their assigned sports personality in their group.

- Ask students to analyze their ads in relation to target audience.
- What is the brand or product being sold or promoted?
- What is the target audience for this campaign? (Think about age, gender, interests, race, etc.)



- What tells you this is the target audience?
- Why might this athlete be appealing to this market?
- What other aspects of the ad or campaign (where the ads appeared, images, music, phrases, etc.) were chosen to appeal to this audience?
- What audiences might be *excluded*—how might the choice of athlete or other aspects of the ad or campaign make some people uninterested or tell them the brand is not “for them”? Why?
- Have each group write their answers about the target market in the *Target Market* section of the worksheet and share with the class.

### Assessment Task: Selling a Sports Personality

Distribute the assignment sheet *Selling a Sports Personality* and go through it with the class. If you think students may have trouble choosing athletes who don't currently endorse products, have the class make a list of every athlete they can think of. Make sure students define “athlete” broadly to include anyone who participates in a competitive activity (esports, chess, quiz shows, etc.) when choosing the athlete who will be the focus of their project.



## Sports Personalities: Example list

---

Please choose one sports personality from the list below and assign it to each group within your class in order to complete the lesson:

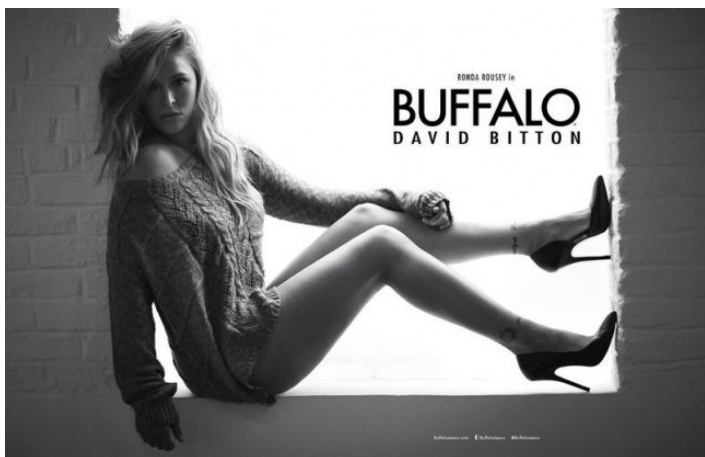
- Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson
- Serena Williams
- Tiger Woods
- Patrick Mahomes
- Simone Biles
- John Cena
- Tom Brady
- Naomi Osaka
- Cristiano Ronaldo
- John Madden
- LeBron James
- Maria Sharapova
- Roger Federer
- Stephen Curry
- Kevin Durant
- Kei Nishikori
- Virat Kohli



## Popular Advertisements: Sports Personalities



Introducing  
**Stride Mintacular.**  
Chewing redefined. Again.



## Colin Kaepernick: Marketing Campaign

### Profile

Born: Wisconsin, United States, 1987

Football history: Played six seasons for the San Francisco 49ers in the National Football League (NFL)

### Activism

Colin Kaepernick became a national activist when he completed a simple, silent gesture: kneeling. Kaepernick knelt for the national anthem before the 2016 NFL games as a “protest against social injustice, especially the deaths of African-Americans at the hands of the police.”<sup>1</sup>

After Kaepernick knelt in 2016, his contract with the San Francisco 49ers was not renewed for the 2017 season causing him to file a grievance report with the NFL, stating that he was being pushed out for his actions. His actions incited activism far beyond the NFL and he has since become a face for change.



### Marketing

Nike made Kaepernick the focal point of its sports advertising campaign, “Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything. #JustDoIt”. This marketing campaign provoked boycotts as well as praise for the company’s actions, but it seems to be paying off for Nike: as of 2021, Kaepernick remained one of the company’s highest-paid spokespeople..



### Sources

1 Branch, J (2017). The Awakening of Colin Kaepernick. The New York Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/07/sports/colin-kaepernick-nfl-protests.html>



## Sports Personalities Marketing Campaign Worksheet

---

### Advertisement Analysis

Chosen Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Profile of Athlete:

Born: \_\_\_\_\_

Sport/Team: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Interesting fact/Controversies/Activism

---

---

---

---

#### Three advertisements featuring the athlete:

Brand 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Image/Video ad link: \_\_\_\_\_

Brand 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Image/Video ad link: \_\_\_\_\_

Brand 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Image/Video ad link: \_\_\_\_\_





## Sports Personality Marketing Campaign Worksheet

---

Ad campaign:

### Survey questions

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Target Market

1. What is the brand or product being sold or promoted?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the target audience for this campaign? (Think about age, gender, interests, race, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What tells you this is the target audience?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why would this athlete be appealing to this market?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What other things (images, music, slogans, etc.) were chosen to appeal to this audience?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What audiences might be *excluded*—how might the choice of athlete or other aspects of the ad or campaign make some people uninterested or tell them the brand is not “for them”? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Selling a Sports Personality

---

For this assignment, you will choose an athlete who does not currently endorse any product or brand and create an ad campaign featuring them. This will show your understanding of how athletes are used to appeal to specific audiences.

1. First, select an athlete. This does not have to be someone who plays a professional sport: it can include anyone who participates in any kind of competitive activity (esports, chess, quiz shows, etc.).
2. Next, identify what possible audiences this athlete would appeal to. Who would like, admire, trust or want to be like this athlete? Why?
3. Third, choose one of those audiences and identify a **brand, product, service or issue** that they would be interested in. This could include commercial brands and products but could also include nonprofits or social issues.
4. Fourth, think of at least three other ad elements (images, music, slogans, etc.) that would appeal to the same audience and would be a good match with your chosen athlete.
5. Finally, create an ad in any format (print ad, video ad, sponsored social network post, etc.) that use **your chosen athlete** to sell **your brand, product, service or issue** to **your audience**. Make sure to include the other ad elements you thought of in the previous step. You can use existing images of the athlete (if available) or create your own.

## Task Assessment Rubric

<b>Category</b>	<b>Learning Expectations</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
<b>Access</b>	<p><i>Reading Media</i></p> <p>Interpret medium and genre elements that direct attention, communicate meaning and provoke inference</p>	<p>Insufficient (R)</p> <p>Beginning (1)</p> <p>Developing (2)</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>
<b>Use</b>	<p><i>Making and Remixing</i></p> <p>create a media work that makes effective use of codes and conventions of the medium and genre</p> <p>use medium and genre elements to direct attention, communicate meaning and provoke inference</p> <p>make effective and creative use of media tools</p>	<p>Insufficient (R)</p> <p>Beginning (1)</p> <p>Developing (2)</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>
<b>Understand</b>	<p><i>Reading Media</i></p> <p>decode media texts and recognize elements of medium and genre</p> <p>identify the choices made by media makers and analyze the implications of those choices</p> <p><i>Media Representation</i></p> <p>understand how media, including those produced by one's peers and oneself, influence our views of reality and our identity</p> <p><i>Consumer Awareness</i></p> <p>identify the intended audience(s) of a media work</p> <p>understand how media business models (e.g. advertising, subscription, etc.) affect how content is created, distributed and selected</p>	<p>Insufficient (R)</p> <p>Beginning (1)</p> <p>Developing (2)</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>
<b>Engage</b>	<p><i>Media Representation</i></p> <p>ask critical questions about what is and is not included in a media work and the implications of those choices</p> <p><i>Making and Remixing</i></p> <p>tailor media content to different audiences</p>	<p>Insufficient (R)</p> <p>Beginning (1)</p> <p>Developing (2)</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>