

LESSON PLAN

Ads That Don't Look Like Ads

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



LEVEL: Grade 5-9

DURATION: 1 ½ to 2 hours, plus time for the assessment activity

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Overview

In this lesson, students learn what makes something an ad and how to distinguish advertisements from reviews, focusing on the key concepts of genre, tropes, bias, disclosure, and framing. Students begin by viewing and analyzing a video to prompt critical questions about the creator's intent and visual style, then delve into the advertising genre by learning about its essential elements, like the presence of a product and brand. Students examine the differences between the “ad” and “review” genre and also use companion reading skills to evaluate the reliability and potential bias of a source by searching for undisclosed “brand deal” or “sponsored” content. Finally, students create two media pieces about the same product—

one crafted as a persuasive ad and the other as an honest review—to demonstrate their ability to apply the genre elements and tropes learned throughout the lesson.

Learning outcomes

Key concepts/big ideas: Students will understand...

Media have commercial considerations:

- Advertising is a distinct genre with recognizable elements, tropes and norms
- Source reliability and potential bias are critical considerations when evaluating endorsements and reviews

Audiences negotiate meaning:

- Our identities can influence how we respond to advertising

Frequent misconceptions to correct:

- It is easy to recognize ads
- Ads never include negative things about what they're selling
- If an influencer isn't being paid to promote something, they will give their honest opinion about it

Framework topics: Students will know...

Consumer awareness:

- The *elements, tropes, and norms* that define advertisements and reviews as distinct genres.
- The concept of “selling intent” as a core differentiator for advertising.
- The importance of disclosing compensation or free products in endorsements.

Key vocabulary: advertising, bias, disclosure, framing, genre, influencer, tropes.

Core Competencies: Students will be able to...

Understand:

- Identify characteristics that indicate a piece of media is an advertisement, even when it lacks traditional advertising cues.
- Analyze how rules of notice (e.g., colour, composition) and framing are used in non-traditional ads to appeal to specific audiences.
- Contrast the genre elements, tropes, and norms of advertisements versus reviews.
- Apply companion reading skills to evaluate the reliability and potential bias of an endorsement source or review.

Engage:

- Articulate what an ad is trying to make them think, feel, and buy.

Student-facing learning goals:

- We will **learn** what makes something an ad, and what makes ads and reviews different from each other.
- We will **think about** how important it is to check if someone giving an opinion is fair or biased when they endorse something.
- We will **be able to** show the difference between ads and reviews.

Preparation and Materials

Prepare to show the following videos:

- [*Unboxing Influencers*](#)
- [*Reading Media: Genre*](#)
- [*Reading Media: Framing*](#)
- [*Information Sorting*](#)
- [*Companion Reading*](#)

Prepare to distribute the following handouts:

- *Advertising Tropes*
- *Understanding Influencers*
- *Ads Versus Reviews*
- *Snack Attack!*

Prepare to distribute the worksheet worksheet Ad or Review?

Prepare to distribute the assignment sheet Unboxing Ads

Review the following teacher backgrounders :

- *Ads Versus Reviews? Teacher's Version*
- *Ad or Review? Teacher's Version*

Procedure

UNBOXING INFLUENCERS

Start by showing students the video *Unboxing Influencers* and then ask:

“What do you see happening in this video/post?”

- Prompting questions: Who is in it? What are they doing? What are they showing you? What is the visual style?

“What do you think about what you’re seeing?”

- Prompting questions: What does it make you think about the creator? How does it make you feel about her? What does it make you think or feel about any of the things you see in the video?

“What does this make you wonder?”

- Prompting questions: Why do you think the creator made the video? What did she choose to emphasize or focus on? What might have been left out? Why might she have made those choices?

WHAT IS AN AD?

Now ask students:

- Why might we think this was an ad?
- Why might we not think this was an ad?

You don't have to come to any conclusion on that question, just have students discuss for a few minutes. If there is quick consensus on the first question, prompt students to give more reasons in the second question.

Now show the video [Reading Media: Genre](#) and then ask students:

- What is a *genre*? (A kind or category of media work that makers use and audiences recognize.)
- What does it mean to say that advertising is a *genre*?

Explain that:

- All ads have things that make them similar to other ads, and different from things that are not ads. These are the *elements* of the genre.
- Ads also have *tropes*, the “toolbox” of events, characters, settings, and so on that are associated with that genre.
- Works can be in more than one genre: something could be an ad and something else if it had the elements of both genres. (For example, a typical James Bond movie is in the “spy movie” genre but would also be in the “ad” genre if it advertisers paid for product placement – such as his watch or his car.)

Explain that the two most important elements of the advertising genre are that there is a product being sold, and a *brand*.

The product does not always have to be a physical thing, and it does not always have to be shown in the ad, but if there is nothing being promoted it's not an ad.

Almost as essential to the genre is the idea of a *brand*. While we may sometimes see ads without branding, most ads are not just promoting a specific product but a brand as well.

Now ask students:

- How do we know this video has the *elements* of an ad?
 - Prompting questions:
 - What product is being sold? (The original video was probably selling whatever was in the box, but this video is selling the ring light she mentions at the end of the video.)
 - How do we know? (The influencer mentions it, and names the brand; it's shown prominently in the whole video.)
 - Is there a brand? ("Hotspot.")

Now ask students: What are some *tropes* of the advertising genre? What are the things in the "toolbox" that advertisers often use, or the things that we expect to see in a work when we know it's an ad?

Distribute the handout *Advertising Tropes* and go through it with the class, then ask students which of those tropes they saw in the video. (You may wish to re-show the video first.)

Some examples:

- Bandwagon: The rising Like count
- Endorsement: The influencer says "You make me look good"
- Humour: The "vomiting" emoji, "I'm ready for my Oscar"
- Music: The ad has fun, catchy music
- Weasel words: "You make me look good" (In what way?)

INFLUENCER ADS

Now explain that many genres have *sub-genres* that have their own tropes: for example, "superhero" is a sub-genre of "science fiction."

Distribute the handout *Understanding Influencers* and explain that "influencer ads" are a *sub-genre* of advertising with distinct tropes.

Now ask: Do you think this was a *paid* ad?

- It shouldn't be! There are no hashtags like #ad or #sponsored. It should have those if she was paid to make the video or if the link to the ring light is an affiliate link (which gives the influencer a part of the money from any sale through that link.)

- That means that it either was an undisclosed ad, that she endorsed the ring light because she *hopes* to get a brand deal, or she endorsed it because she really just likes it.
- Because we don't know which of those it was, you can't be sure it was an honest endorsement.

ADS VERSUS REVIEWS

Now ask students:

- Have you ever bought anything because it was endorsed by an influencer? Were you happy with what you bought? Why or why not?
- Are influencers being honest when they say they like something because they hope to get paid or to get free stuff? Why or why not?
- Have you ever looked up reviews of something before you bought it? If so, where did you look? What did you do to find out if those reviews were reliable?

Now, distribute the worksheet *Ads versus Reviews* and explain that ads and reviews are *genres* that are similar in a lot of ways, but have some very important differences.

Have students fill out the Venn diagram in the worksheet. (You can do this together as a class or have students work individually, in pairs or in small groups.)

Prompting questions:

- What are the essential *elements* of each genre? What are the most common *tropes*? What you know about *norms* of each?
 - Which are common to both genres?
 - Which are only found in one or the other?
 - Which would be the most valuable for telling the two apart?

You can use the *Teacher's Version* to help guide the responses:

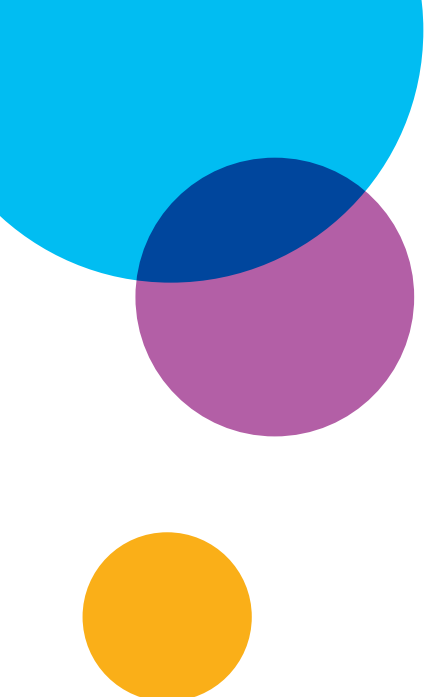
- Both ads and reviews are usually going to show the product and lay out its features. Both are going to give you some kind of *assessment* of the product.

- The brand is always the “source” of an ad: they are the reason it exists and they aim to control the messaging. For a review, though, either the reviewer or the outlet they work for (such as Consumer Reports) is the source.
- An ad is ultimately going to give a positive assessment of the product. This will sometimes only be implicit, like the fact that someone is choosing to wear an item in a “get ready with me” video. A review may be either positive or negative depending on the reviewer’s conclusions.
- An advertiser should disclose that they were paid or received any kind of compensation from the brand, while reviewers should disclose if they got the product free in order to review it (though some reviewers do not accept free products as a matter of principle.)

Now show the video [Reading Media: Framing](#) and ask students how ads and reviews will have different *framing*.

- An ad will always have a *positive* framing: as many positive things about the product will be included, and as few negative ones as possible (or negative ones the audience won’t care about.)
- A review will be careful to include all relevant positive and negative qualities of the product.

Next, distribute the handout *Snack Attack!* and have students read it aloud. (The character names were chosen to be gender-neutral, so either character can be read by any student.)



Explain to students that you are going to do a “think-aloud” to demonstrate how you would identify whether or not this is an ad or a review:

I’m going to do a “think aloud” here, where I just say out loud everything I’m thinking, even my questions, to show you how I analyze this.

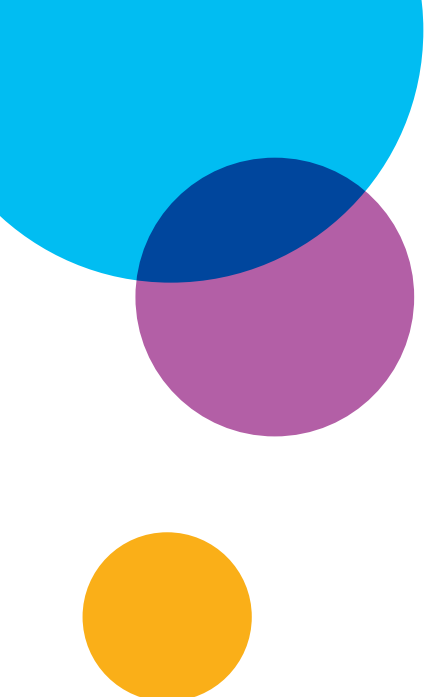
First, I always start with the very basic observations. I *hear* two people, Casey and Nia, talking about “Crunchy Comet Chips”. They describe the chips’ shape, smell, taste, and even how much seasoning they have. So, I know there’s a **product being discussed** and a **brand** (“Crunchy Comet Chips.”) This means it could be either an ad or a review, because both genres would feature a product.

Now, let’s dig a bit deeper into the **genre** and its **elements, tropes, and norms**. This is where we look for clues that help us tell ads and reviews apart. My first big question is about the source. Who is actually creating this message? Is it the chip company, or someone else? Casey and Nia introduce themselves as people who “bravely taste-test the latest munchies so you don’t have to!”

Casey clearly states that they **bought the chips themselves**. In a genuine review, the reviewer should disclose if they received the product for free or were compensated. The fact that they share they paid for it themselves strengthens the idea that this is an **honest review**, because they don’t have a hidden financial motivation from the brand.

Next, I pay close attention to the **framing**. Casey is pretty enthusiastic, but Nia makes **critical observations**. The fact that Nia gives a “sideways thumb” at the end, while Casey gives a “thumbs-up”, clearly shows a **mixed assessment**. This balance of pros and cons, and even outright criticism, is a major sign that this is a **review**, not an ad.

So, when I combine all these clues – the independent “Snack Attack!” hosts as the source, the clear mention of both positive and negative aspects of the product, the varying opinions of the two hosts, and the explicit statement that they bought the chips themselves – all of this evidence strongly suggests that this “Snack Attack!” segment is a **review** of Crunchy Comet Chips, and not an ad. They are giving their honest takes so we, the audience, can make our own decisions, which is the main goal of a review.



Distribute the worksheet *Ad or Review?* Read through the two texts (or have students read them on their own) and have students identify which is an ad and which is review, and their reasons for thinking that. Use the *Teacher's Version* to help guide the discussion:

- What is included in both texts?
- What is only included in one text or the other?
- What genre elements does each text have?
- What tropes of each genre did you notice?
- What conventions of each genre did you notice?

SORTING REVIEWS

Now show students the video *Information Sorting* and then ask:

Which information sorting step do the things we've learned so far fit in?
How do we know?

- Close reading – we've been learning how to examine a work closely and look at things like framing and genre.

Next, show the video *Companion Reading* and ask:

How could *companion reading* help us identify whether something is a review or an ad?

- You could check Wikipedia or use a search engine to find out if a reviewer or review outlet (like Consumer Reports) is seen as an unbiased source. If they claim to have expert knowledge on a topic, this will show if that's true as well.
- You could do a search for a reviewer's name and words or phrases like "brand deal" or "sponsored" to check for undisclosed ads, or skim *other* reviews by them: are they all positive, or is there a mix of positive and negative reviews?
- You could find reviews of the same thing from sources you already know are reliable (like *Consumer Reports*, or a reliable news source) to make sure you're getting the whole story.

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

Distribute the assignment sheet *Unboxing Ads* and go through it with the class. Have students make two videos where they “unbox” and review a product: one that is intended to be an ad, and one that is an honest review. The videos should demonstrate their knowledge of the key elements and tropes of the two genres.

Depending on time and equipment available, you may wish to have students make actual videos, audio podcasts or transcripts similar to the *Snack Attack!* transcript. If you have students make a video, you can find a range of options for video editing apps at <https://alternativeto.net/category/video/video-editing/>.

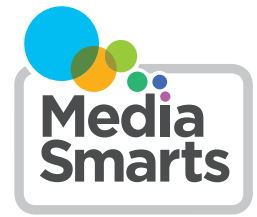
You may also choose to have students complete this individually, in pairs or in small groups.

Optional: Have each student (or pair, or group) randomly choose *either* their ad or their review to share with the class. The rest of the class should then try to identify whether that work was an ad or a review, and give reasons for their opinion.

REFLECTION

As an exit ticket, have students write a brief reflection that explores the following questions:

- How do the ideas and information we discussed today connect to what you already knew or have experienced online or when watching videos?
- What new ideas, insights, or strategies did you learn today that broadened your thinking about how advertising and reviews work, or how to critically evaluate the content you see online?
- What questions do you still have about how to tell when online content is trying to influence you?



ADS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE ADS

Advertising Tropes

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Advertisers have many methods to try and get you to buy their products. Lots of times, what they are selling is a lifestyle, or an image, rather than the product. Here are some tricks of the trade.

Bandwagon: Join the crowd! Don't be left out!
Everyone is buying the latest thing: aren't you?

Best is Better: Advertisers don't like to say that one product is "better" than another, because that's something that can be measured and might be false advertising. But most of the products in a category are basically the same, so it's actually safer to say that a product is "the best"!

Colour: Bright, vivid colours can make a product seem more memorable and exciting, while brown or other dull colours can make it seem healthful or environmentally friendly.

Endorsement: Your favourites sports star, celebrity or influencer telling you that their product is the best! Kids listen, not realizing that the star is being paid to promote the product.

Feel-Good Ads: These make you feel good, or feel good about yourself. An ad for a restaurant might show a family or friends all having fun together, or an ad for dog food might show a dog running happily to greet its owner.

Health Halo: Using things like brown paper packaging, images of fruit, added vitamins, or words like "natural" to make something seem healthful when it isn't. Some ads or packaging may point out what a product *doesn't* have to make it seem healthy, like saying potato chips are "sugar free."

Humour: Making an ad that's funny is a way to make it memorable, to have it go viral, and to make us connect the brand or product with good feelings.

Logos and Mascots: A memorable, colourful logo helps us recognize a brand. A funny or likeable mascot makes us feel good about it.

Music: Whether it's a pop song that makes us think a product is cool, a jingle that we can't get out of our heads, or sappy strings that make us cry, music has a powerful emotional effect on us.

Repetition: Advertisers hope that if you see a product, or hear its name over and over again, you will be more likely to buy it. Sometimes the same commercial will be repeated over and over again.

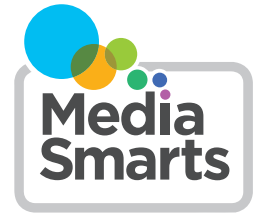
Sell the Solution: These ads start by showing you a problem you didn't know you had, then sells you the product as a solution. You may never have noticed that your thumbs are sore after gaming, but by the end of the ad you'll be ready to buy something to fix it.

Tell a Story: If advertisers don't have anything good to say about their product, they can tell a story that shows it instead. For example, an ad could show how a product would be useful in a particular situation without saying anything outright about its quality.

Weasel Words: Advertisers can't just lie, but they can use words to mislead you:

- words like "improved," "premium" and "natural" sound good but don't actually mean anything; words like "crunchy" or "juicy" make a product sound good but can't be proven or disproven (how do you measure crunchiness?); saying that a product "fights" something only means that it affects it in some way.

ADS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE ADS



Understanding Influencers

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"Influencer ads" are a *sub-genre* of advertisements.

An endorsement from an influencer feels like a recommendation from a friend. We can have strong feelings about someone they only know through media, even someone who isn't real like a character on a TV show. We look up to them, follow the ups and downs of their lives, and listen when they say you should buy something.

"They feel like they are our friend, even though they aren't." Colin Campbell, professor of marketing, University of San Diego

Unlike TV characters, though, we can interact directly with influencers, liking and replying to their posts and sometimes even getting a reply from them. And unlike TV commercials, sponsored posts look just the same as influencers' other posts.

Here are some tips for recognizing and engaging critically with influencer ads.

Influencers should clearly show if a post is sponsored, with a hashtag like #ad, #sponsored #affiliate or #sp (sponsored post).

But while influencers have to say if they've been paid or given free stuff, they **don't** have to say anything if they're endorsing something because they **hope** to make a deal with a brand. (The average influencer makes **three-quarters of their money** from brand deals.)

Assume that any endorsement is an ad unless you have good reason to think it's an impartial review.

"If you don't see a line in my post that says, 'Nobody paid me for this,' then I've probably been paid for it." Caitlin O'Connor, influencer

Don't assume that someone needs to have a million followers to be an influencer.

Some advertisers see "nano-influencers" with as few as a thousand followers as a better deal than mega-influencers. Because they seem more trustworthy and relatable, an endorsement from them can be twice as effective as one from a celebrity.

Here are some questions to ask about any endorsement from an influencer, whether you know it's paid or not:

- "Do you think they got paid to endorse it? Do you think they really like it or use it?"
- "If they take money from an advertiser, or want to get a sponsorship deal, do you think they can say what they really think?"
- "Do you think what they're endorsing really is good? How can we find out?"

Influencer Advertising Tropes

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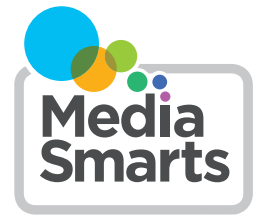
Influencer ads don't just try to sell you something: they also try to make you like the influencer, and to feel like you know them. That way, each video makes you more likely to buy what they're selling in every other vide.

Here are some tropes that influencers use to make it look like they really know you:

- Acting like they're in a rush, or adjusting the camera at the beginning of the video
- Finishing up their preparation (for instance, putting on lip gloss) at the beginning of the video
- Giving personal details about their lives

- Speaking to you directly by saying "You"
- Calling you a nickname or a casual greeting like "friends" or "fam"
- Being alone and looking right at the camera while talking
- Talking about things that happened or that they did in previous videos
- Asking you to give feedback or share your opinion about the post or video
- Talking about "backstage" details of how the videos are made (including their brand deals)

ADS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE ADS



Snack Attack!

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Casey: What's up, snack fanatics! Welcome back to 'Snack Attack!', the podcast where we bravely taste-test the latest munchies so you don't have to! I'm Casey!

Niana: And I'm Nia. And today, we've got something that claims to be out of this world. Literally.

Casey: That's right! We're diving into a bag of **Crunchy Comet Chips!** I snagged this bag for three bucks at the corner store yesterday when I was getting a Slurpee. Had to try 'em out!

Nia: And I saw them there too, figured why not. The bag design definitely tries hard. It's got that neon green and purple, like, space-alien graphic.

Casey: Okay, so here we go. First impressions: they're definitely triangle-shaped, pretty classic corn chip stuff, but they have these little dark speckles. Smells... kind of cheesy, with a hint of something else. Spicy maybe?

Nia: Hmm. Mine actually look a bit unevenly coated. Some chips have a lot of seasoning, some barely any. Okay, taking a bite. Oh, wow. That's a serious crunch.

Casey: This crunch is awesome! Super satisfying. And the flavour? It's like, a blast of cheesy, almost pizza-y taste, and then a little kick at the end. Not *super* hot, but definitely there. I actually really like that little spicy surprise!

Nia: The crunch is definitely good, I'll give it that. But the flavour for me is a bit... much. It's really strong, and then that spice, while not super hot, kinda lingers. I think I prefer a milder chip. Also, my fingers are already coated in orange dust. I don't want that on my phone screen.

Casey: I think the strong flavour is what makes them cool. You know you're eating a *serious* chip. And for three bucks, the bag is a decent size. Not like those tiny ones you sometimes get.

Nia: True, the quantity is fair for the price. But for me, the flavour is a bit overwhelming after a few chips. It's not bad, but it wouldn't be my first pick. It's like they tried to do too much at once. It's an okay chip if you like really bold flavours and a massive crunch, but it's not going to replace my regular plain ones.

Casey: See, for me, this is awesome. If you want something that really wakes up your taste buds, these Crunchy Comet Chips are a solid try. I'd totally get them again.

Nia: I'd probably finish the bag if it was the only thing around, but I'm not going out of my way for them. So, Casey gives the Crunchy Comet Chips a thumbs-up for bold flavour and crunch. I give them a sideways thumb for being a bit too much for my taste.

Casey: There you have it! Our honest take on Crunchy Comet Chips. Join us next time for another 'Snack Attack!' review!

ADS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE ADS

Ad or Review? GlimmerPop Stick

Take a look at the two texts below. Which is an ad and which is a review? How can you tell?

MY THOUGHTS ON THE NEW 'GLIMMERPOP STICK'

Hey everyone! It's Casey here, and I wanted to share my thoughts on a new makeup product I recently tried. It's called the 'GlimmerPop Stick', and I bought it with my allowance last week at "Sparkle & Shine Beauty" for about \$7.99.

The 'GlimmerPop Stick' is designed to add a bit of shimmer to your cheeks or even just a little highlight to your eyes. I picked up the 'Cotton Candy' shade, which is a soft pink. It's super compact, so it fits easily in my makeup pouch or even a small pocket, which is pretty handy.

Applying it is pretty straightforward. You just twist it up and swipe it gently onto your skin, then pat it in with your finger if you want to blend it a bit. It gives a nice, subtle pink shimmer that looks pretty and natural for school or just hanging out. It's definitely not a super bright or intense glitter, which I think is good for an everyday look.

However, I did notice a couple of things. While it blends okay, the texture can feel a little bit waxy when you first put it on, though that feeling goes away once it's blended. It also doesn't last all day. I found that the shimmer faded quite a bit by the time school was over, especially if I touched my face a lot, so you might need to reapply it if you want the glow to last longer. It has a very faint, sweet smell, almost like candy, but it's so subtle you barely notice it.

Overall, the 'GlimmerPop Stick' is a good product if you're looking for something that gives a light, gentle shimmer and is easy to use.

Do you think it's an ad or a review?

*What **elements** of the genre does it have?*

*What **tropes** of the genre did you notice?*

*What **conventions** of the genre did you notice?*

Review: The ‘GlimmerPop Stick’

Hey squad! It’s Casey, and if you’re like me, you’re always on the hunt for that perfect, sparkly shimmer that makes you feel amazing, right? Well, I just have to tell you about the new GlimmerPop Stick from GlowGirls Cosmetics – it’s literally changed my whole look!

I got sent a sample of the new “Cotton Candy” stick last week, and I’ve been wearing it non-stop. My face used to look a bit dull sometimes, but this stick is the instant solution! It gives a nice, subtle pink shimmer that catches the light perfectly and just makes you feel so confident and sparkly when you’re talking to your friends or taking selfies.

Everyone at school has been asking me what I’m wearing! It’s super easy to apply, too – just one swipe, and you’re good to go! But unlike some shimmers, it doesn’t stick to your face all day: if you put it on in the morning and have the natural look by the afternoon.

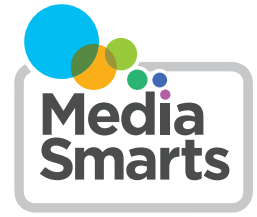
If you want to feel amazing and have a shimmer all day, you have to get your hands on the new ‘GlimmerPop Stick’. It’s a total game-changer for your makeup bag! Go get yours now!

Do you think it’s an ad or a review?

*What **elements** of the genre does it have?*

*What **tropes** of the genre did you notice?*

*What **conventions** of the genre did you notice?*



ADS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE ADS

Ad or Review? – Teacher's Version

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Take a look at the two texts below. Which is an ad and which is a review? How can you tell?

MY THOUGHTS ON THE NEW 'GLIMMERPOP STICK' IN COTTON CANDY

Do you think it's an ad or a review? Review

What **elements** of the genre does it have? It gives an assessment of the product with a **neutral framing** that includes both positive and negative qualities of the product.

What **tropes** of the genre did you notice? It gives you details about the product and its features and a recommendation to the audience.

What **conventions** of the genre did you notice? The reviewer is the source and discloses that she paid for the product herself.

REVIEW: THE 'GLIMMERPOP STICK'

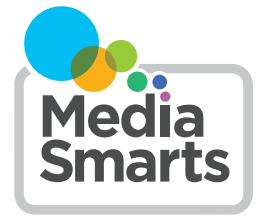
Do you think it's an ad or a review? Ad

What **elements** of the genre does it have? It gives an endorsement of the product with a **positive framing** that only includes positive things about the product or possibly negative things framed in a positive way (e.g. the way that it wears off over the day is framed as being an advantage).

What **tropes** of the genre did you notice? It uses the influencer ad tropes of addressing the audience directly ("if you're like me") and calling them a nickname ("squad").

Some other advertising tropes students might notice include "selling the solution" ("my face used to look a bit dull sometimes,") and using "weasel words" like "game-changer."

What **conventions** of the genre did you notice? The reviewer says she "got sent a sample" but doesn't disclose where it came from or whether she was paid to review or endorse the product.



ADS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE ADS

Unboxing Ads

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Your task is to become a media creator and produce **two unboxing videos** about the *same product*. One piece will be an **advertisement** for that product, and the other will be an **honest review** of the same product. This activity will show how well you understand the key differences between ads and reviews, and how they try to influence an audience.

STEP 1: CHOOSE YOUR PRODUCT

Select ONE product that you will feature in both your advertisement and your honest review. This can be anything you like: a snack, a video game, a piece of clothing, a book, a new gadget, a school supply – anything that you could put into a box and take out again.

STEP 2: CREATE YOUR ADVERTISEMENT

Your Task: Create a piece of media that aims to make your audience think positively about your chosen product and want to buy it. This is your chance to be persuasive!

- **Product and Brand:** Your product and its brand **must** be clearly featured. Remember, an ad always promotes something and usually a specific brand.
- **Positive Framing:** Your ad should *only* highlight the positive qualities of the product. If there's something that could be seen as a negative, try to **frame it as a positive** or in a way that **won't matter** to your audience.
- **Advertising Tropes:** Use common advertising "tools" (tropes) that grab attention and persuade.
- **Target Audience:** Think about who you want to buy this product. Tailor your language, visuals, and overall message to that specific audience.

STEP 3: CREATE YOUR REVIEW

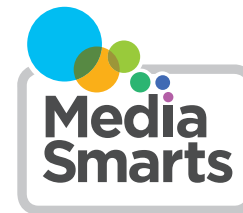
Your Task: Create an honest and balanced review of the *same product* you used for your ad. Your goal here is to inform your audience so they can make their own decision, not just to sell them something.

Focus on Honesty and Balance:

- **Product and Brand:** Clearly identify the product and its brand.
- **Balanced Framing:** Your review **must** include **both** the positive and negative qualities of the product. Provide a fair and comprehensive assessment. Think about including specific pros and cons.
- **Review Elements & Tropes:** Include typical features of a review.

Be ready to share **either** your ad **or** your review.

ADS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE ADS

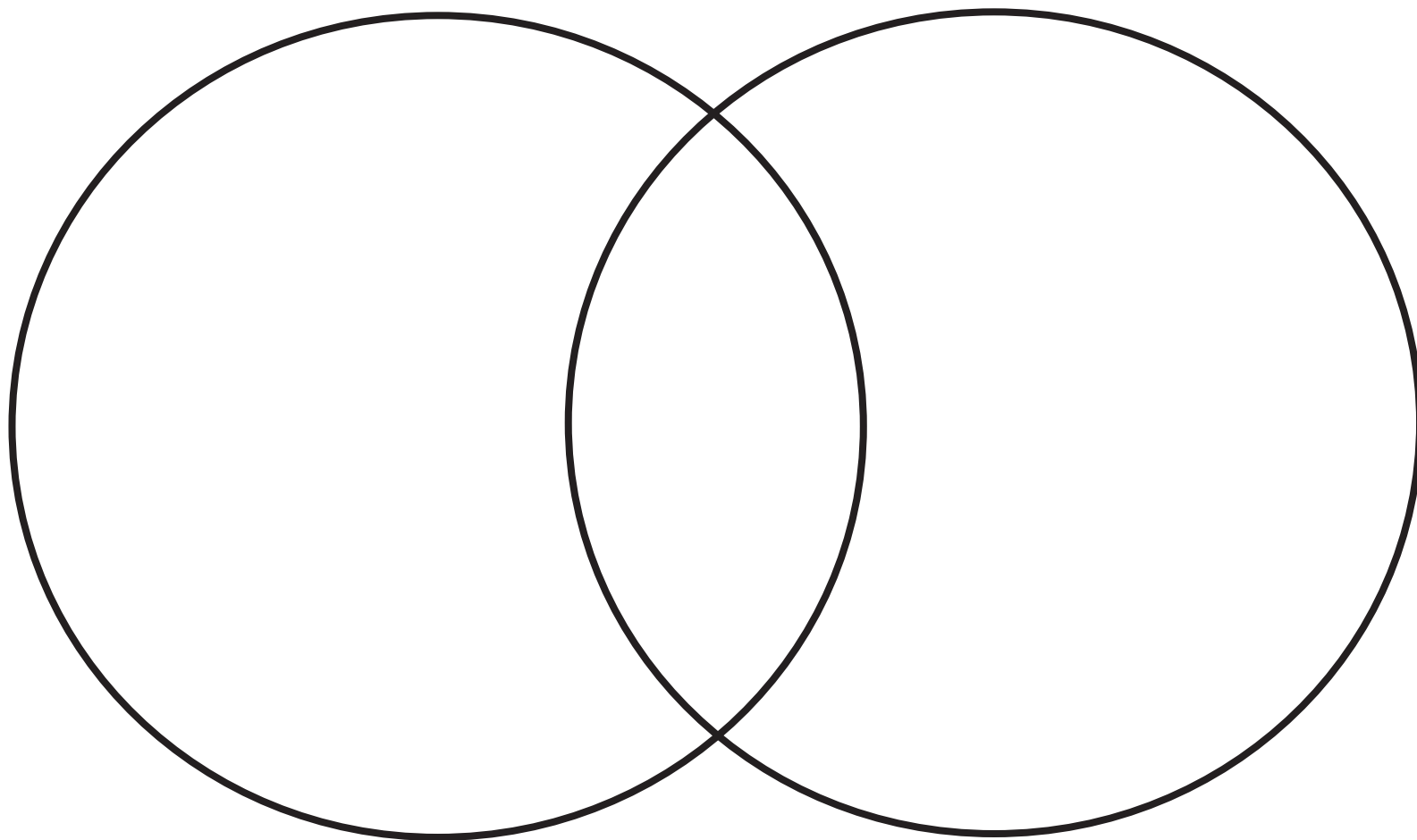


Ads versus Reviews

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ADS

REVIEWS



Ads versus Reviews: Teacher's Version

