

# Each medium has a unique aesthetic form

**GRADES** 4-6 **DURATION** 45-90 minutes

## OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students compare print and TV ads for the same product and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each medium to communicate a particular message. The class then brainstorms a public service message and discusses which medium would be a better way to communicate it and why.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- understand the key concept that each medium has a unique aesthetic form
- identify the similarities and differences between different media
- identify the advantages and disadvantages of using different media for a particular purpose
- apply their understanding of the differences between media forms through the creation of a public service message (optional task)

## PREPARATION AND MATERIALS

- Arrange to have access to a digital projector or digital whiteboard
- Cue up the video **“Each Medium Has a Unique Aesthetic Form”** [<http://bit.ly/19PobCs>] and the **“Get a Load of Milk”** videos at <http://bit.ly/1bCEnu9>
- Photocopy or prepare to project the print ads **“Get a Load of Milk: Viking”** and **“Get a Load of Milk: Godzilla”**

## PROCEDURE

Begin by showing the video **“Each Medium Has a Unique Aesthetic Form”** [<http://bit.ly/19PobCs>]. At the end of the video, ask students to think about the points raised in the video.

- What does it mean to say that “each medium has a unique aesthetic form?” (*Each medium has different ways of communicating with an audience.*)
- How do the differences between media affect the audience’s experience? (*Movies provide “big” experiences other media can’t; TV shows let you build a relationship with the characters; video games put you in control of the action.*)



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Now read from the screen the assignment: “Think of a message you want to communicate to a specific audience. Choose the media (or combinations of media) that will get the best results.”

Show students some of the “**Get a Load of Milk**” TV ads from the link above (the TV ads start about halfway down the page; each is roughly 5 seconds long) and then project or distribute the print ads “**Get a Load of Milk: Viking**” and “**Get A Load of Milk: Godzilla.**”

Ask students:

- What is the purpose of these media products? *(To get you to buy milk.)*
- What message is being conveyed? *(Milk gives you energy, strong bones and teeth.)*
- How is the message communicated? *(In the TV ads, people drinking milk are shown doing things requiring amazing strength or energy, skeletons are shown doing things requiring amazing strength, and people are shown with teeth so white they shine like a flashlight or lighthouse. In the print ads, the horns on a Viking’s hat are shown growing amazingly and a giant monster is shown drinking from a tanker truck full of milk.)*
- What do the ads in the different media have in common? *(They both convey the same message, and they both use humour and striking visuals to get their message across and make you remember them.)*
- What tools are available in one medium but not in another? *(TV commercials have movement, sound and music. That lets them tell a brief story and ends with the memorable moo-and-bell sound. Print ads can use more written text than TV ads [though these don’t] and are taller vertically than TV and movie screens, which lets them make images that look bigger like the Viking’s helmet and the giant monster.)*
- Which medium do you think was most effective for this purpose and message? Why? *(There’s no single right answer to this, but you can note that only three print ads were created compared to a large number of TV and movie ads.)*

Now have the class decide on a simple message that a media product could communicate in a public service announcement (PSA) such as “Don’t litter” or “Look both ways before crossing the street.” Discuss what would be the best medium to communicate this message: A print or video public service PSA? Have students identify the tools available in either medium and the advantages of each and record it on the board.

### OPTIONAL TASK

Have students create a print or video PSA communicating the message decided on above, drawing on as many of the tools identified above as possible.