



LESSON PLAN

Level:	Grades 8-12
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Duration:	40 minutes

Marketing to Teens: Alternate Ads

Overview

In this lesson students look at the less obvious methods used by advertisers to reach consumers: humorous, self-deprecating ads, product placement, product association with celebrities, ads promoting empowerment and affirmation and 'advocacy' advertising.

Learning Outcomes

Students demonstrate:

- an awareness of the subtle tactics used by marketers to target consumers
- an awareness of how they respond to advertisements that use these methods

Preparation and Materials

- Ask students to bring magazines from home (try to collect a wide variety of magazines: i.e. music, video games, women's, fitness, fashion etc.)
- Photocopy *Group Activities* sheets

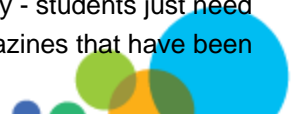
The Lesson

Guided Discussion

Advertisers don't always tell consumers to buy their product in a straightforward way. Sometimes advertising is more subtle. Some advertisers will make fun of advertising to get our attention. Others will try to make us think using their products will make the world a better place if we use them.

Activity

- Divide the class into four groups.
- Make sure each group has something to write on.
- Give each group an activity from the *Group Activities* sheets. They are self explanatory - students just need to read them, discuss, and answer the questions. Students can look through the magazines that have been brought to class to find examples.



- Tell students how much time they have to complete their activity, then bring the whole class back together.
- Have each group explain the type of advertising they explored to the class and present their findings.

This lesson has been adapted from *Seeing Beyond the Glam*, a peer education workshop from the *Expecting Respect Peer Education Program*. The original workshop is designed for secondary students who want to conduct workshops with other students about advertising and its impact on teenagers.

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For more information about the *Expecting Respect Peer Education Program* program or to obtain a copy of *Seeing Beyond the Glam*, email sthompson@mcd.gov.ab.ca.



Alternate Ads: Group Activities

Give one activity sheet to each student group:

Group One

Some ads are popular because they go against the norm. Some of these ads make fun of overused clichés or show that they know we are too smart to just accept advertising without questioning it.

Here are a few examples:

- *Special K* ads that play on society's unrealistic expectations of how women should look by applying the same standards to men. (One ad features a short, chubby man and a tall slender woman, with the caption "Ironically, she's the one worried about her weight.")
- a *McCain Pizza Pocket* ad that has teenage boys talking about how stupid pizza pocket ads are.
- an ad about a retirement plan with a guy on a yacht saying "This isn't my boat, and that's not my wife or my dog - we are all actors."
- *Sprite's* "Obey Your Thirst" ads that show a marketing company trying to create hype about a slug.

Answer these questions:

1. Can you think of more examples? (Look through the magazines that have been brought to class for similar ads.)
2. Do any of these ads make you feel good, like the advertiser is relating to you? If so, what is it about these ads that you like?
3. Do these ads make you want to buy the products? Why or why not?

Group Two

Here are some subtle forms of advertising:

- Product placement in movies and on TV shows
 - Corporate sponsorships: i.e., "Lillith fair" brought to you by Biore skin care products, and everyone gets a sample as they walk through the gates.
 - Linking celebrities to fashion:
 - Tommy Hilfiger giving his clothes to hip-hop stars to wear on stage, or designers donating clothes to stars to wear on TV (especially for awards shows) so millions of people will see their work
 - Sportswear companies giving clothes to famous athletes so they will be associated with athletic greatness
 - Brainstorm as a group to add to the list, or think of more examples of these types of advertising. (Look through the magazines that have been brought to class for similar ads.)
1. Which of these is the most or the least effective form of advertising?
 2. Which one costs least?



Group Three

Ads that try to teach us about responsible behaviour or try to get us to think about issues are called advocacy ads. Some advocacy ads are meant to benefit everyone. Asking for blood donations, messages against drinking and driving are examples of these. Can you think of other examples?

Some corporations use advocacy ads and affirmative messages to try to influence how you perceive them or their products:

- A paper company doing ads about environmental conservation
- Nike ads that focus on self-esteem
- Cigarette companies that create 'don't smoke' campaigns for kids
- Can you think of more examples of these kinds of advertisements? (Look through the magazines that have been brought to class for similar ads.)

Answer the following questions:

1. How does advertising that makes us think about issues help sell products?
2. Is it always obvious when an advocacy ad is benefiting a corporation?
3. Are the companies that create these ads truly trying to help make the world a better place? (Compare companies that you feel are doing this successfully to companies that use affirmative advertising to influence consumers.)
4. What do you consider to be the traits of a responsible advocacy advertising campaign?

Group Four

Listed below are some subtle forms of advertising. Brainstorm as a group to add to the list, or think of more examples of the types of advertising on the list.

- Athletes wearing clothing with prominently displayed logos
 - Songs with product names in them (one example is *Summer Girls* by LFO with the line "I like girls who wear Abercrombie and Fitch")
 - Shows or stars that have spin-off products like action figures or collectibles like the Melrose Place fashion line at Kmart.
 - Models in CK One ads have an e-mail address and respond with "personal" emails about their private lives.
 - Consider these examples and those that you've come up with. (Look through the magazines that have been brought to class for a few examples.)
 - Which of these is the most (or the least) effective form of advertising? Why?
1. Which one costs least to produce?
 2. Which of these types of advertisements is most common?

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