

Analyzing Advertising

Katielynn Gadow

Introduction:

Advertising has the power of mass communication on its side to provide various kinds of information to an audience. As advertising is multifaceted, it can promote socially beneficial behaviors or help persuade people to buy certain products and services. Today's children are a popular demographic targeted by advertisers to increase product sales. There has been much concern over the last many decades from scholars and the public about the influence of ads on children and their vulnerability to their persuasion. "Detailed insight into the development of children's advertising literacy is important, because it is generally assumed that children who are able to process advertising critically are less likely to be unfairly influenced by advertising." (Rozendaal, 2011, pp 329). It will be beneficial to teach children at a young age about advertising strategies and techniques so they will be further in control of interpreting messages.

In this unit, students will learn to identify specific advertising tactics in popular commercials and print advertising. In addition to lessons in the classroom, students will be given stimulating 'Ad Investigator Challenges' where they can test their knowledge of advertising at home and in their daily lives. Through practicing this identification in class and at home, students will learn to routinely and actively engage with advertising. Though students in the third grade may be aware of advertising's intentions to sell products, they do not comprehend the hidden marketing strategies used to manipulate their behaviors to consume.

Through the following unit, students will identify techniques such as using sound, bright colors, celebrity endorsements, logos, special effects, and catchy slogans to promote products. They will also learn about the difference between persuasive ads that sell products and public service ads that 'sell' behaviors and attitudes. While learning about these concepts, students will be involved in two main art making projects to supplement their new knowledge about advertising tactics.

Consumerism and Children:

It is nothing new to say that we live in a consumerist society, but its aggressive impact on children is astounding. As Duncum describes this phenomenon, "...children are now taught from an early age to consume." (Duncum, 2007, pp 291). And what better outlet to teach them to consume than advertising, the most basic form of visually informing children about available purchases they can make.

Young children have more influence on buying products today than ever before. Households have increased their disposable income and children play a much more active role in how that money is spent. They hold a command of 'pester power' in which they pressure and manipulate their parents or guardians to buy specific items such as popular cereals or toys. Buckingham explains, "advertisers have recognized, children may not have much disposable income of their own, but they possess a form of 'pester power' that exerts a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of others in the household." (Buckingham, 2000, pp147). He goes further by stating, "Retailers have accordingly become more 'child' oriented' in their sales techniques; spending on advertising directed at children has grown exponentially." (Buckingham pp147).

In many studies examining pester power and its relevance to advertising, there is a direct correlation between the amount of ads consumed and the frequency of purchase requests. In a study conducted by Joann Paley Galst and Mary Alice White researching the relationship between ads and purchase requests at the supermarket, "The total number of hours of commercial television watched per week was positively and significantly related to the number of purchase-influencing attempts made." (Galst, 1976, pp1093). The more advertisements children are exposed to, the more they request. And children learn to master their skills of pester power to get their desired items.

Children and Advertising:

Children around the age of eight have a basic understanding of advertising's intent to sell products, but are less aware of specific persuasive techniques used by advertisers until around the age of ten. As the authors of *Children's Understanding of Advertisers' persuasive Tactics* summarize, " The important shift around age 10 can be explained by the major changes that occur in children's socio-cognitive and information-processing capabilities around that age - more specifically, in their ability to take others' perspectives and to reason on an abstract level." (Rozendaal pp342). Therefore educating students about marketing techniques before this age may advance the rate at which they gain full understanding about advertising. The authors continue by suggesting, " To process advertising in a conscious and critical way, children need to fully understand the persuasive nature of advertising." (Rozendaal pp341).

For young children, advertising is a form of entertainment. In a study conducted by Margaret-Anne Lawlor to identify specific aspects of advertising that children (ages 7-9) found appealing, she concluded, "many of the children appear to exhibit positive attitudes towards advertising on the basis of its perceived entertainment value." (Lawlor, 2009, pp 31). The children liked catchy jingles, animated characters, humor, and music in ads. When she asked the children if they would prefer a world without commercials, forty six out of fifty two children opposed this idea. Her study reiterates the power of advertisements to appeal to children. This unit and included lessons seeks to acknowledge children's pleasures with this form of entertainment while also providing students with the tools to dissect them for its persuasive parts. There is a harmony with enjoying advertisements while also be critical of its intentions and convincing strategies.

In this unit students will also learn about public service ads, and use this concept to develop an advertisement that promotes a good behavior. Public service ads are used to inform and persuade the public towards broadly and socially acceptable behaviors. This could include values such as sharing and honesty, or safety and health. Even though these messages project positive performance, they remain

advertisements as they are a form of propaganda with an agenda to influence behavior. Students will distinguish between public service ads and advertisements that promote product consumption.

Advertising and Art:

Joan Gibbons, author of *Art and Advertising* proposed, "artists can embrace the tactics and mass media of advertising." (Gibbons, 2005, pp3). She reminds us that the two are not enemies and their relationship is dependent on one another. She goes on to say, "Advertising is also capable of providing real guidance and of supplying pleasures that enrich people's daily lives." (Gibbons, pp 6). There can be a very beneficial outcome of the relationship of art and advertising, and there is endless potential in their combination with education.

Henrik Hagtvedt and Vanessa M. Patrick discuss the idea of 'art infusion' as the combination of art with packaging, advertising, and product design. They assert, "Visual images of various kinds are often used in advertisements and product design, and previous research has revealed that such images influence consumer evaluations of products."(Hagtvedt, 2008, pp381). Many artists have been employed in the marketing field to master this ability to infuse art and advertising. Some studies have even been conducted to test the effectiveness of using art to promote products. Hagtvedt and Patrick concluded from multiple studies that, "Marketers and scholars are aware that artistic elements may successfully be employed in marketing to influence consumers in a favorable way." (Hagtvedt, pp386).

In this unit, students will grasp concepts about effectively using artistic features to influence the viewer. They will learn about intended audiences and effective strategies in employing visual images to catch attention. They will use art to illustrate a product as well as an advertisement design to bring full circle the relationship between visual images, product appeal, and promotional strategies.

There are many positive aspects and opportunities to use art and advertising as an efficient way of communicating and influencing ideas. In this unit, we will discuss the elements and principles of art in the formation of effective advertising compositions. Through viewing

and discussing various ad layouts, students will enhance their vocabulary about successful elements and principles of design. Color, emphasis, repetition, and rhythm/movement will especially be emphasized.

Conclusion:

We cannot escape the prominence of advertising in our lives, as there will always be a desire to consume. Children are not born with cognitive abilities to understand and analyze advertising effectively, therefore educators and humanity in general have a social obligation to prepare the youth with the knowledge to actively engage with advertising. These discussions are especially relevant to the age group around third grade as they are freshly developing skills at comprehending advertising tactics.

This unit aims at developing children's advertising literacy through in-depth discussions, activities, and art projects. The lessons will engage students in analyzing their favored advertisements and encourage them to practice their investigative skills routinely. Though this unit is only a brief introduction when examined in perspective, there is endless possibilities for exploration when it comes to art and advertising. Some of the topics that could be discussed further in a future unit are product placement in films, adver-games through sites such as the internet, and promotional advertising. This unit focuses on critically examining television and print advertisements as they viewed most frequently by children.

References:

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Curriculum Unit Theme: *Analyzing Advertising*

Teacher: Katielynn Gadow

Grade Level: 3rd

State Visual Art Goals:

VA3-1.1, VA3-1.2, VA3-1.4

VA3-2.1, VA3-2.2, VA3-2.3, VA3-2.4

VA3-3.1, VA3-3.2, VA3-3.3

VA3-4.2

VA3-5.2

VA3-6.2

State Media Arts Goals (if any): MA3-1.1, MA3-1.5, MA3-2.1, MA3-3.5

State Language Arts Goals (if any): 3-6.2, 3-6.6, 3-6.7

General goals for the curriculum (describe in 2-5 sentences):

This unit aims at developing children's advertising literacy through in-depth discussions, activities, and art projects. The lessons will engage students in analyzing their favored advertisements and encourage them to practice their investigative skills routinely. Students will also enhance their artistic skills through focusing on and combine composition and visual advertising techniques.

Lesson Title (name each lesson to reflect a general unit theme)	Visual Exemplars (list specific images and artists, TV shows, and/or books that you plan to use for each lesson)	Motivation / Dialogue (list basic issues and questions to be explored during classroom dialogue and any other motivational strategies that you plan to use for each lesson)	Media / Process (list artistic processes that your students will engage in during each lesson)	Concepts and/or Design Principles to be learned during each lesson	Closure/Assessment (list an assessment strategy used for each lesson)
Lesson 1: Intro to Ads (1 class period)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will look at a combination of print and television advertisements that the students choose. (ex. Reeses, Nintendo 3DS, Sketchers) Powerpoint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logo trivia Slogan trivia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is an Ad? What are ads for? What do you like about these ads? What do you not like about ads? Ask students to identify techniques being used in the ads to help sell the product (music, bright colors, slogans, logos, repetition, “coolness”, celebrity endorsements, familiar objects, attractive elements, special effects...) What are logos? Discuss the intentions behind using logos (easily identified, helps promote the company/ product..) Discuss the intentions and effectiveness of slogans (Helps you to remember the company, creates a desire for product...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will explore and gain understanding about the purpose of advertising. Through watching television ads and viewing print ads, students will begin to recognize different parts of an ad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising Logo Slogan Students will learn to be conscious of advertising techniques. Students will get in the habit of analyzing ads at home.	Could students recognize different advertising techniques? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad Investigator Challenge #1: Over the next week, identify one ad that you like and list the creative advertising techniques that are used.

<p>Lesson 2: Invention Design (1 class period)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caine's Arcade (show video clip of the different arcade games at Caine's arcade) • Invention examples (air conditioned shoes, dog wash machine, All-electronics-in-one gadget, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to invent their own product or enhancement of a product and then create a mini advertising campaign. <p>Consider these questions when designing the invention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we want to buy your product? • What features of your product are appealing to your potential customers? • What slogan might you use for this product? <p>Remind students: Many companies design a product with advertising in mind. Who is their target audience? Why will people buy their product? How can they enhance features to promote product? How can the product appeal to customers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will begin sketching their inventions in their journals. They will consider appeal, product enhancement, and verbal advertising strategies. • Students will also explore their own pleasures through designing an invention that interests them. • They will practice drawing objects through recalled perception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing from imagination • Product appeal 	<p>Were students creative with their inventions? Did they begin sketching ideas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad investigator Challenge #2: Try and count how many commercials you watch over the next week.
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<p>Lesson 3: Invention Design Cont. (1 class period)</p>	<p>Coca-Cola vs. Sam's Choice (or any generic/store brand)</p> <p>McDonalds' hamburgers (other Ad examples that exaggerate the performance of a product: Sketchers shoes, remote control toys, etc)</p>	<p>Generic vs. Name brand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is generic? • What is the difference between generic and Name brand? <p>Misleading Ads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever bought a product that did not look/work as advertised? • Ads often exaggerate the product to enhance their appeal <p>How can you enhance your advertisement without crossing the line?</p>	<p>Students will begin their invention drawing on 11" x 17" paper. They will outline using pencil and then use colored pencils and/or markers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic • Name brand • exaggeration • Emphasis • Color 	<p>Ad Investigator Challenge #3: Over the next week: Identify an Ad that is misleading in some way. Why might it be misleading?</p>
<p>Lesson 4 Invention Design Cont. (1 class period)</p>	<p>Various cut out print advertisements of popular products</p>	<p>Wants vs. Needs (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how advertising makes us think we need a product. • Hard to distinguish between wants and needs, but how often do we really need them? • What pleasures do we get from the products we want? (They're fun, they make me happy...) 	<p>Students will finish drawing their invented product, adding details and further enhancements (brighter colors, text, patterns, etc.)</p>	<p>Wants vs. Needs Students will learn about the power of advertising to make us want/need products.</p>	<p>Were students engaged in discussion? Were they able to distinguish between wanting and needing a product?</p> <p>Ad Investigator Challenge #4: Over the next week: When you see ads you like, Determine whether you want or need that product. Consider why you want or need that product.</p>

<p><i>Lesson 5:</i> Ad Presentations <i>(1 class period)</i></p>	<p>Students will show their own artwork to the class.</p>	<p>Consider the questions we addressed earlier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we want to buy your product? • What features of your product are appealing to your potential customers? • What slogan might you use for this product? 	<p>Students will give brief introductions to their invention designs and convince the class to buy their product.</p>	<p>Students will work on their verbal communication skills</p> <p>Students will practice how to talk about their artwork.</p>	<p>Did students incorporate multiple strategies in their advertisements?</p> <p>Ad Investigator Challenge #5: This week: Try and consider a generic alternative when you buy something (coke vs. store brand)</p>
<p><i>Lesson 6</i> Public Service Ads Introduction <i>(1 class period)</i></p>	<p>Ad examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values.com billboards and ads (Smile..pass it on) • Smokey the bear (Only you can prevent forest fires) • Bicycle safety ad (Look out for cyclists) • SC Littering commercial 	<p>Discuss ads that do not intend to sell a product.</p> <p>What is a public service ad? messages in the public interest distributed by the media, with the objective of raising awareness, changing public attitudes and behavior towards a social issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is appealing about these ads? • Ads can use persuasive techniques to change behaviors or promote good actions. • What values or behaviors are important to you? 	<p>Walk around the school to get inspiration about a useful ad</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycling (over or on a recycling bin) Eat Healthy (Cafeteria) Exercise (outside PE room) Promote School Slogan (Near Front Office) Science, Math, Reading (Around hallways) <p>Start brainstorming and sketching ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public service advertising • Values <p>Students will review advertising tactics and apply them to public service ads.</p>	<p>Have the students further develop their ideas outside of class for the assignment.</p> <p>Ask them to pay attention to more PSAs around the school or in their classrooms.</p> <p>Ad investigator Challenge #6: This week: Identify an ad that is not trying to sell a product or service.</p>

<p>Lesson 7: Beginning Ad Design (1 class period)</p>	<p>Creative Ad images: (Slideshow presentation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homer Simpson escalator ad • yoga straw ad • Hotwheels highway ad • Kit Kat Bench Ad 	<p>Creativeness in ads is very effective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniqueness catches attention. • Consider creative ad placement, or eye catching attachments when designing your ad. 	<p>Start working in groups on ad designs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be working on a large poster board with various media, including Model Magic to incorporate 3-D elements. • Students can use class computers (if available) to research their topic (finding images & useful information) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition- Students will consider preliminary layouts and formats for their designs. <p>Emphasis- element or piece given dominance.</p>	<p>Are students working well with their groups? Is each member contributing ideas?</p> <p>Ad Investigator Challenge #7: Identify effective ads around town (Billboards, advertisements on benches, buses, napkins, windows, etc.)</p>
<p>Lesson 8 Design elements in Ads (1 class period)</p>	<p>Various Print Advertisements: Disney World Burger King Nike Kid's magazines Nick National Geographic -Kids Highlights</p>	<p>Discuss design elements in advertising to make effective composition.</p> <p>Composition- How are the objects/people arranged in this ad?</p> <p>Emphasis- What is being emphasize in this ad? (Ad directs your eye towards the product)</p> <p>Color, Space, Rhythm, movement- how do these elements assist in the effectiveness of the ad?</p>	<p>Assigned groups will continue to work on their ad designs. They can begin working with Model Magic to incorporate 3-D elements.</p> <p>Students can use markers, paint, and colored pencils.</p>	<p>Modeling- Students will further learn to sculpt three dimensional objects.</p> <p>Composition Emphasis Space Rhythm/ movement</p>	<p>Are the students considering design elements when making their ad?</p> <p>Ad investigator Challenge #8: Choose an ad that you think could be enhanced. What you change about this ad to make it more effective?</p>

<p>Lesson 9: Ad Design Work days (2 class periods)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>These work days will be designated to working and finishing the group advertisements.</p> <p>Remind students about emphasis (What will catch people's attention, what do you want our eye to gravitate towards?)</p> <p>Hold up student's advertisements from a distance and ask the group what they could add to enhance the ad.</p>	<p>Students will be working on and finishing their advertisement designs.</p> <p>They can paint their Model magic if desired</p> <p>They will glue on their 3-D Model Magic attachments (teacher will hot glue if needed)</p>	<p>Students will review elements and principles that they are applying to their artwork and what can be improved.</p> <p>Repetition Emphasis Movement</p>	<p>Do the student's designs reflect their ad intentions? Are they consciously using elements and principles to enhance their design?</p>
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<p><i>Lesson 10:</i> Unit Conclusion <i>(1 class period)</i></p>	<p>Student's completed & installed ads</p>	<p>The class will walk around the school to discuss the group ad designs. Example questions to ask students about each ad:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is most eye-catching about this ad? • What techniques are used to "sell" this idea to you? (examples could include: it makes [reading, eating healthy, exercising] look fun, it is humorous and memorable, creative, colorful) <p>What have we learned through this unit? (Review main ideas and</p>	<p>Students will gain more verbal experience talking about artwork.</p> <p>The will review all topics discussed in the unit and how they relate to their advertisement.</p>	<p>Advertising techniques are reviewed and verbalized by students.</p>	<p>Did students incorporate multiple strategies in their advertisements?</p> <p>Did they effectively combine art techniques with advertising tactics?</p> <p>Reiterate the purpose of the unit to help develop student's advertising literacy and understanding of persuasive techniques.</p>
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Lesson #6**Title:** Public Service Ads Introduction**Grade:** 3rd**Teacher:** Katielynn Gadow**Length:** 1 class period**State visual art goals: VA3-1.2, VA3-1.4, VA3-3.1, VA3-3.2****State media arts goals (if any): MA3-1.1, MA3-1.5, MA3-2.1, MA3-3.5**

Objectives: Students will learn about the benefits of public service advertising and its ability to influence behaviors to make better decisions. Students will begin to consciously distinguish between ads that sell products and ads that 'sell' ideas and behaviors. Students will begin to develop ideas on how to convey messages in artwork, through advertising techniques.

Concepts and vocabulary:

public service advertising- messages in the public interest distributed by the media, with the objective of raising awareness, changing public attitudes and behavior towards a social issue.

values- important personal ideas or beliefs that serve to improve behaviors. Examples: Sharing, being truthful, being healthy, education

Teacher materials:

The teacher will provide a powerpoint slideshow with images relating to public service ads. These ads include and are not limited to:

- Values.com billboards and ads (Smile..pass it on)
- Smokey the bear (Only you can prevent forest fires)
- Bicycle safety ad (Look out for cyclists)
- SC Littering commercial

Student materials:

Students will use their journals to write notes down during the class discussion & 'field-trip'.

Procedures (detailed step-by-step description including dialogue):

The teacher will spark a discussion about public service ads by showing a PowerPoint of various examples. (These will include a combination of print and television ads) Discuss what a public service ad is and how it differs from regular advertisements. 'Regular' advertisements aim to sell a product or service, while public service ads promote the changing of an attitude or behavior.

Questions and topics during presentation:

- What is appealing about these ads?
- Ads can use persuasive techniques to change behaviors or promote good actions. What tactics are being used that we have previously discussed? (special effects, color, music, etc.)

After the presentation ask the students:

- What values or behaviors are important to you?

The teacher will take the students on a 'field-trip' around the school to discuss potential advertising placements that will catch attention from their peers.

Tell the students that they will work in groups to make an advertisement supporting a specific cause.

Examples could include:

Recycling (over or on a recycling bin)

Eat Healthy (Cafeteria)

Exercise (outside PE room)

Promote School Slogan (Near Front Office)

Science, Math, Reading (Around hallways)

[Students will later be placed in groups with similar ideas]

When walking around, ask the students about already existing advertisements in the school (the nutrition pyramid, recycling sign, school motto).

What can be enhanced about these messages?

What visual images can be added that relate to these concepts?

Assessment/Closure:

Ask the students to further explore public service ads by spotting them in their classrooms or outside of school.

Ad investigator Challenge #6:

This week: Identify an ad that is not trying to sell a product or service. Can you spot any public service ads?

Learning center/ back up activity (if any):

With leftover time, students will begin brainstorming or sketching ideas in their journals.

(They will collaborate with their group to build ideas, if groups have been assigned)

- What imagery can you use to convey your message?
- Start thinking of some advertising tactics you can incorporate.