

# Cultural Stereotypes in Tourist Advertisements

Recent developments in electronic media technologies are experiencing an unprecedented rate of growth and expansion. Computers, video games, cell phones, television, film, and global positioning devices are changing the world in ways we can only slightly comprehend. For most of those who witnessed the implementation of these emerging technologies, making adjustments and learning how to use new electronic media texts was a necessary process of assimilation in the workplace as imperative sources of occupational survival, performance enhancement, and professional advancement. These adaptations were also beneficial away from work, providing communication tools and sources of entertainment whether at home or away as expansive television and radio networks and portable, wireless computers and other entertainment devices such as iPod players and useful applications such as GPS devices.

For children growing up as these technologies continue to develop, there is little need for intentional assimilation, it is recognized and perceived simply as the way the world is. As various media texts continue to evolve, these children's understanding of how to use them effectively will seem a natural process. However, the constant saturation of mass multimedia texts presented as entertainment sources exposes them to an overwhelming number of market driven commercial messages that they may recognize, ignore, admire, or lead to their involvement as involuntary consumers. The use of these technologies as sources of entertainment and communication may leave many young people with unrealistic perceptions as 'experts' as consumers, yet most remain media-illiterate in analyzing, interpreting, and applying critical and reflective thinking skills. The launching of [websites](#) such as MySpace,

Facebook, and YouTube on which users can upload, share, and view homespun videos have become abundantly popular with young people who create and share original, roughly polished, or in most cases crude video productions. Constructing sophisticated and innovative productions with these new technologies that express significant meaning requires active engagement in students deconstruction and analyzation of various media messages. The curriculum unit and lesson plans for advertisements involving regional identity and promoting tourism in their area is an introduction for students in how and why low budget videos can be effective, as well to whom they can and should be directed. As stated in the NCTE Guidelines; "Students who...behave responsibly as media creators and who are encouraged to reach people outside the classroom with their work learn most deeply."

The consequential problem for teachers, parents, and other concerned community members and authorities lies in how best to help them make sense and gain a true understanding of how and why mass media culture and commercial advertisements affect their lives as consumers and individuals. A primary goal for art educators should include aiding them in developing critical and reflective cognitive skills. An enterprise involving first analyzation and deconstruction of advertisements, followed by creation and production of their own advertisements, will be the basis for this curriculum unit and lesson plans. This will involve motivating factors such as individual and group identities, as well as student comprehension of stereotypes and associated misconceptions.

Adolescents are presented with an extensive range of adjustments within which to manage a complex combination of cognitive, biological, and social matters. They struggle with polarizing issues such as the need and desire for the security of life at home and their inevitable expectations of autonomy, as well as their desire to be special and unique while maintaining some status of popularity. Vander Zanden (1989)

considered the navigation through this highly complex and emotionally charged period central to the issue of self image, stating that; "Few words have the capacity to cause as much pleasure, and as much pain, to adolescents as does the word popularity," and according to the neo-Freudian psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, "the main task of adolescence is to build and confirm a reasonably stable identity." (p. 367) For the adolescent, identity is primarily constructed by answering questions such as; Who am I? Who am I going to be? These sorts of identity issues are common among adolescents as they struggle to find a sense of place and belonging in the world while attempting to establish meaning in the broader context of life. The conceptions they have of themselves and others are responsible for much of their behavior and social interaction, although individual characterizations may also be attributed to stereotypes, emotional states, objectives in given situations, and cultural backgrounds. First impressions often influence the willingness of people to interact, but can also result from unintentional assumptions concerning unspecified characteristics associated with known qualities. (Zebrowitz, 1990, p. 50) It is in this regard that children and adolescents experience stereotyping firsthand, and because these inferences are regularly and often quickly discovered to be erroneous, it is an excellent starting point for students to establish a non-correlational relationship between conceptions and misconceptions concerning cultural identities and stereotypes.

One of the reasons adolescents desire popularity is that it establishes a source of security away from the family home, so in forming an identity among peers, particularly when it is a popular one, is a move towards the autonomy that the adolescent will ultimately achieve, whether it is a subconscious idea or conscious awareness. Just as individuals develop identities, so do families, as do peer groups. The importance of perceived identity in any setting is that it is dynamic, subject to change with differing situations and

circumstances. Although the larger the group, the more stable the identity, young people alter media textual readings, as do adults, according to individual experiences, expectations, and beliefs which shape their interpretations and constructions of meaning.

Group dynamics also play a significant role in the interpretation of popular media texts and culture. Alan McKee (2005) refers to popular media sources of communication as "The public sphere," and recognizes that different groups and individuals have a wide range and number of potentially valid opinions regarding whether popular culture consumption is valuable or detrimental for Western societies, although he considers commercialization a worthwhile component of this 'public sphere.' New and emerging communication technologies are considered by some as corrupt, unprincipled, and deliberately deceitful, while others feel that these texts are promoting consumer awareness and democracy. This curriculum and lesson plan agree with the latter opinion that the public sphere has resulted in a compelling case for democratization of Western media. According to Lumby (1999),

The focus of the curriculum and lesson plan is not to promote these views, but rather to provide students with an opportunity to gain valuable insight into consumerism and commercialization in which they are free to form their own opinions. The use of stereotype misconceptions and individual and regional identity should prove an interesting and engaging source of insight for students as they examine the content and meaning of televised commercials while creating their own.

Group dynamics, or the processes involved when people in a group interact with each other, exist when any two or more people who share a common definition and evaluation of themselves and behave according to such a definition. (Vaughan & Hogg, 2002, p. 200.) Groups consist of a collection of people who interact with one another, accept rights and obligations as members, and who share a common identity. These groups may be formed as a result of spontaneous or organized social structures. Examples include family groups, religious groups, sports organizations, school classes, social cliques, etc. Adolescents are likely to observe participation in some, if not all, of these types of group organizations. They are also influenced by categories of local and regional environments, in which they are often aware of some conceptions and misconceptions of local stereotypes, but accept other stereotype impressions according to established, prevailing convictions of regional sentiment, whether these assumptions involve their own geographical locations or those of others.

Among the conceived perspectives associated with stereotypes are race, gender, age, and accent, which vary according to regional environments and cultures. According to Gregory (1989), "To talk of [local environments and cultures], is to refer to understandings and feelings...Physical areas or spaces provide settings for interactions," in which people draw upon to help shape identity and live their lives. Smith (1994) implied that locality also contributes in cultural connections, stating that; "Shared conditions can lead people into making sense of things that are very different from other places...In dealing with everyday events people come to know their way of doing things." Shared conditions will provide relevance to students who are producing a tourism advertisement for their state. Cultural identity is equated with the expression of one's place in the world, as implied by Richards (2007). He stated that; "Cultural tourism represents both a significant opportunity and challenge for the tourism

[advertisers] and communities in which it is embedded.”

The combination of individual and cultural group identities with stereotype misconceptions are often used by advertising producers to make connections or highlight erroneous beliefs among consumers to help sell their products. Although the majority of advertisements are concerned with creating desire for specific products, such as automobiles, soft-drinks, and health and beauty aids, other major advertising campaigns are concentrating on services (often accompanying products), such as cellular phones, computers, and airlines.

A curriculum unit and lesson plan designed around student construction of State tourism advertisements which feature their own youth culture will provide students with opportunities to develop an appreciation for specific purposes of advertisers and their target demographics, and help them understand how and why advertisers construct commercials. This unit will also allow students to express their identities as individuals, youth culture, and regional groups. Furthermore, it will advance their understanding of stereotypes and provide them with opportunities to demonstrate this awareness by breaking misconceptions in stereotypes in a manner that promotes their individual and regional group identities. This will also aid them in gaining insight into individual and group stereotype misconceptions concerning their own local region as well as that of other regional territories around the United States and other parts of the world. Finally, the students will learn about technical aspects of video production such as storyboarding, scripting, camerawork, lighting, and editing, and understand how various methods and techniques can be used to manipulate public opinion.

In this curriculum unit students will be encouraged to create an advertisement promoting tourism in their area, and to broadcast their work publicly. This will provide motivation for student participation in local (and global) media events and promote a sense of pride in their region and culture as

well as enhancing awareness concerning identity and self-esteem issues among the students. The production of a video promoting their region involving identity will provide them with an expressive outlet, and an opportunity to take a deeper look at both positive and negative aspects of their environment. It will also heighten their perceptions of the necessity of teamwork, and strengthen their skills in effective and efficient actions as a group. In this curriculum unit they will also learn about target demographics, various advertising strategies, and technical video production skills such as story-boarding, camera operation, lighting, editing, etc. Ultimately students will gain critical and reflective thinking skills in perceptions of the advertisements they are inundated with, and probably give little thought to.

#### References:

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Gregory, D., and Walford, R. (1989) Horizons in human geography. Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Press.

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Smith, M. (1994). Local Education: Community, conversation, praxis. Bristol, PA; Open University Press.

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Vaughan, and Hogg. "Group Dynamics, Processes & Development." Wilderdom – a Project in Natural Living & Transformation. Retrieved November 26, 2010, from <http://wilderdom.com/Group.html>

Zebrowitz, L.A. (1990). Social perception. Pacific Grove, CA: Open University Press.



Curriculum Theme: Tourist Advertisements and Cultural Identity

Teacher: Hugh Stephen Leitzsey

Grade Level: High School (9-10)

State Fine Art Goals: VAH1-1.1, VAH1-1.2, VAH1-1.3, VAH1-1.4, VAH1-2.1, VAH1-2.2, VAH1-2.3, VAH1-3.1, VAH1-3.3, VAH1-4.1, VAH1-4.2, VAH1-4.4, VAH1-4.5, VAH1-5.2, VAH1-5.3, VAH1-6.1

State Media Arts Goals: MAHS1-1.1, MAHS1-1.2, MAHS1-1.4, MAHS1-1.5, MAHS1-2.1, MAHS1-2.2, MAHS1-2.3, MAHS1-3.1, MAHS1-3.2, MAHS1-3.3, MAHS1-3.5, MAHS1-3.7, MAHS1-4.1, MAHS1-4.4, MAHS1-5.2, MAHS1-6.1, MAHS1-6.2

State Language Arts Goals: N/A

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

The students will analyze and deconstruct video advertisements to gain a more thorough understanding of advertisers' target demographics and the various methods they use to connect to the audience. The primary goal of the curriculum is to develop critical and reflective thinking skills concerning advertisements they are exposed to on a regular basis. This will involve associating their existing knowledge of

advertisement strategies with products and services they buy or use. They will explore their understanding of various stereotypes and the ways advertisers use popular misconceptions and identity issues to generate positive attitudes towards their products. The students will then work as a group to construct a 'tourism' advertisement promoting their geographical region, using misconceptions and realistic conceptions of regional identity, and local activities and attractions they feel that others may be unaware or misinformed about. They will decide who their target audience consists of and explore ways of breaking personal and regional identity misconceptions. The students will be divided into smaller groups to work on the various components necessary for constructing innovative, meaningful, and effective advertisements, while learning about scripting, camerawork, lighting, composition, editing, etc.

Lesson title	Visual Exemplars	Motivation / dialogue	Media / process	Concepts and/or design principles	Closure
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<p>Lesson 1</p> <p>Television Ads; Target Demographics</p>	<p>Assorted television and internet advertisements students are likely to be familiar with:</p> <p><a href="#">Sarah McLachlan Ad:</a> <a href="#">Jenna Fisher Ad:</a> <a href="#">Lebron James Ad:</a></p>	<p>The teacher will ask students to create a list of their favorite TV shows and associated advertisements. Which ads do they like/dislike? Why? Which of these advertisement products do they buy or consume? How and why are the advertisements effective? Why do the advertisers choose certain shows to air their commercials? The students will write their responses and any other related thoughts in their journals.</p>	<p>Students will analyze and interpret the construction of advertisements. They will be given a homework assignment in which they list all ads shown during their favorite programs. They will analyze &amp; deconstruct at least one advertisement of their choice, counting the number of images and edits, and will answer the following questions; Who is this advertisement's target demographic? How is it effective? How might it be improved?</p>	<p>The students will focus on the different people, places, and things that are included in the advertisements. They will select compositional strategies and determine how the advertisements attempt to connect with the audience; Identity, emotion, aesthetics, etc.</p>	<p>The students will be given a quiz on advertisements; What are they selling? Who are they selling to? How are the advertisements effective? How do they fail? They will be required to keep a journal with lesson topics covered in class &amp; discovered at home. The teacher will monitor journals for homework responses.</p>
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<p>Lesson (class period) 2</p> <p>Stereotypes &amp; Misconceptions in Advertising</p>	<p>Videos:  <a href="#">Toothpaste Ad: Racism &amp; stereotypes in Ads:</a>  <a href="#">Racism in Ads: Canada Ad:</a>  <a href="#">Heineken Ad:</a>  <a href="#">California Ad:</a>  <a href="#">New Orleans Ad:</a>  <a href="#">Utah Ad:</a>  <a href="#">Gender in Media</a></p>	<p>Students will discuss the use of stereotypes and misconceptions in advertisements shown in class. The teacher will encourage the students to describe the different ways Southern culture might be viewed by other areas of the country as stereotypical? The students will answer the following questions;          What types of stereotypes are applied to students in your school or community?          Examples might include hair color, kids who wear glasses, jocks, geeks, Goths, etc.          How might these be juxtaposed to reveal misconceptions?          What types of different activities do students in your area like to do?          Who is your target audience?          What activities and events do you like about South Carolina that people who have never been to SC would probably enjoy if they did?          How might these things be emphasized with stereotypes and misconceptions?</p>	<p>All students will begin brainstorming for ideas to use erroneous stereotypes and misconceptions in SC tourism ads. Then they will begin storyboarding and writing the script for their advertisement. Students involved in groups who are focusing on areas other than storyboarding and scriptwriting will collaborate to aid them later in shooting &amp; editing, &amp; provide suggestions to writers.</p>	<p>Advertisements sometimes use false information to sell their product, but they can also expose misconceptions to highlight other areas of strength. What photographic, lighting, or other art techniques do you recognize in these ads? How do editing and music contribute to significance?</p>	<p>The teacher will monitor student journals to check for ideas listed and questions answered. Students will be expected to participate in group activities.</p>
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<p>Lesson (class) 3</p> <p>Introduction to Video-camera Functions</p>	<p>Videos:</p> <p><a href="#">How to use a Digital Video Camera</a></p> <p>Books:</p> <p>How Video Works, Second Edition: From Analog to High Definition.</p>	<p>Instructions concerning video camera operations will be covered. The teacher will ask students; What are the advantages of tripods? Disadvantages? What is panning? What is depth of field? Describe how to perform white balance to set correct colors? How might you use these aspects of video cameras to emphasize your ideas?</p>	<p>All students will learn about operating video cameras. After the introduction students will examine cameras, but writers &amp; story-boarders will continue to develop ideas while students responsible for camera operation, editing, and acting will experiment with cameras, effects, &amp; lighting. All students will discuss possible locations for shooting.</p>	<p>Focus shifting, manual iris, white balance, panning, and tripod use. The ways these camera functions and devices can be used to enhance or emphasize desired effects, &amp; reduce or eliminate undesirable ones.</p>	<p>The students will be given a quiz on camera functions in which they are free to use their journals and notes. Participation &amp; effort will account for a pre-established grade point percentage on rubric handouts.</p>
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<p>Lesson (class period) 4</p> <p>Advertisement Planning/Teamwork</p>	<p>Essential Questions of Basic Scriptwriting</p> <p>What are the five elements that make up a script?</p> <p>Who are the characters? What is the plot (events/sequence of actions)? When does the advertisement take place; year, season, day, etc.</p> <p>Where is the setting?</p> <p>For what reason does the story take place?</p>	<p>Lesson 4 will be a continuation of the first three lessons.</p> <p>Students will work in groups to present organized ideas and share them with other groups.</p> <p>The teacher will encourage students to explore the development of new ideas generated, and to collaborate to integrate ideas into step by step production guidelines.</p>	<p>The structure of a script; Beginning, Middle, and The beginning introduces characters, setting, and the story situation. The middle: highlights conflicts, develops characters, and sets up the resolution to the story. The end: resolution of the story which resolves the conflict or creates a "to be continued" scenario to be explored</p>	<p>All students will contribute ideas for script enhancement.</p>	<p>The teacher will check student journals for the five elements that make up a script.</p> <p>The students will be given a short answer quiz regarding the functions of the beginning, middle, and end of a script.</p>
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<p>Lesson (class periods) 5 &amp; 6</p> <p>Shooting the advertisement.</p>	<p>Video:  <a href="#">How to use a Digital Video Camera</a></p> <p>Books:</p> <p>Video Shooting Basics, by Candace Lee Egan.</p> <p>How Video Works, Second Edition: From Analog to High Definition.</p> <p>Editing Techniques with Final Cut Pro</p>	<p>The teacher will help the students in planning the sequence of the video shoot.</p> <p>The students will be encouraged to shoot all scenes which might be useful, because sometimes improvised scenes can be as useful as those scripted in pre-production plans.</p>	<p>All students will be involved in various roles of production. These two days will be primarily concerned with video camera operation, lighting, and composition, but will also include improvised ideas which support the original script and story-board.</p>	<p>Students will be encouraged to use techniques observed in advertisements or class instruction such as focus shift, panning, and the use of close ups, wide shots, medium shots, etc.</p>	<p>The teacher will monitor the shooting of video to offer suggestions and advice as needed.</p> <p>The teacher will use a rubric designed to assess student involvement in group participation, craftsmanship, creativity, and journaling.</p>
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<p>Lesson (class periods) 7 &amp; 8</p> <p>Putting it together.</p>	<p>Books:</p> <p>Editing Techniques with Final Cut Pro.</p> <p>Videos:</p> <p><a href="#">iMovie instructional video.</a></p> <p><a href="#">How to use advanced editing techniques in iMovie '08</a></p>	<p>The students will watch and have access to computers with iMovie software programs.</p> <p>The teacher will demonstrate how to import video clips, and each group will be given a computer in which to download all video clips.</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to follow the original script as well as to experiment with any new ideas generated by video or textbook tutorials. They will also be given the opportunity to bring in music of their choice that they feel will effectively contribute to their original ideas.</p>	<p>The teacher will provide a basic instructional guide to editing decision lists.</p> <p>Each group will edit their own advertisement to present to the class. This will include adding voice-overs, music, and any other editing techniques they fell will enhance their production.</p> <p>Students will include effective media techniques in their journals, and describe how they were used to enhance their video.</p>	<p>Post production.</p> <p>Each group will present their edited versions of the advertisement.</p> <p>The teacher will lead a class discussion in which students will evaluate and reflect on effective editing techniques.</p> <p>Th students will describe these reflections in their journals. They will also include how and why they believe editing choices strengthened their use of stereotype and misconceptions in a tourism video.</p>	<p>Students will be expected to reflect on all versions presented. The teacher will monitor student journals to check for editing ideas and techniques, and reflections of group presentations.</p>
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<p>Lesson (class period) 9</p> <p>One Last Chance</p>	<p>Students will have access to all videos and books relating to video editing.</p> <p>Video: <a href="#">YouTube Downloader</a>.</p> <p>This video includes information on software that allows downloading videos from YouTube, including HD and HQ videos, Facebook, Vevo, and many other sites, and how to convert them to other video formats. It also provides legal requirements concerning age, content, etc.</p>	<p>The teacher will inform the students that they are to perform one final edit intended to be downloaded to an appropriate video sharing site. This site is subject to the teachers approval. The students will have the option of using their individual group productions, or to perform a final edit as a class in which they will have to collaborate to incorporate what they feel creates the strongest positive message promoting South Carolina Tourism.</p>	<p>All appropriate versions will be allowed for downloading or sharing on other public media as approved by the teacher or other school administration authorities.</p>	<p>This final process involves technological, legal, and ethical concepts.</p>	<p>The students will be graded on a rubric structured and designed to assess student involvement in group participation, craftsmanship, creativity, and journaling.</p>
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Lesson # 2

Stereotypes & Misconceptions in Tourist Advertising

Grade: 9-10

Teacher: Hugh Stephen Leitzsey

Length: One 90 minute class period

State Fine Art Goals: VAH1-1.1, VAH1-1.2, VAH1-1.3, VAH1-1.4, VAH1-2.1, VAH1-2.2, VAH1-2.3, VAH1-3.1, VAH1-3.3, VAH1-4.1, VAH1-4.2, VAH1-4.4, VAH1-4.5, VAH1-5.2, VAH1-5.3, VAH1-6.1

State Media Arts Goals: MAHS1-1.1, MAHS1-1.2, MAHS1-1.4, MAHS1-1.5, MAHS1-2.1, MAHS1-2.2, MAHS1-2.3, MAHS1-3.1, MAHS1-3.2, MAHS1-3.5, MAHS1-3.7, MAHS1-4.1, MAHS1-4.4, MAHS1-5.2, MAHS1-6.1, MAHS1-6.2

## Objectives:

### Students will:

Work in groups to encourage participation and develop and appreciation for the teamwork necessary in commercial advertising productions.

They will analyze the use of a variety of stereotypes and misconceptions in advertising.

They will gain a more thorough understanding of the implications and problems caused by stereotypes and misconceptions.

They will explore ways that stereotypes and misconceptions might be broken in a tourism advertisement promoting their local region.

They will analyze advertisements to gain an understanding of the complexity or simplicity involved in different advertisements and describe how elements and principles of design contribute to their effectiveness.

They will begin to develop a tourism advertisement which emphasizes stereotypes and misconceptions of Southern culture. The goal is to break these false assumptions while expressing their own identities and reinforcing the positive aspects of the region in which they live.

## Concepts and vocabulary:

Composition: The [plan](#), [placement](#) or [arrangement](#) of the [elements of art](#) in a work. It is often useful to discuss these in reference to the [principles of design](#), as well as to the relative [weight](#) of the composition's parts.

Demographics: The characteristics of a [human population](#) as used in [marketing](#) or opinion research, or the [demographic profiles](#) used in such research. Commonly used demographics include gender, [race](#), age, income, disabilities, mobility (in terms of travel time to work or number of vehicles available), educational attainment, home ownership, employment status, and location. The five most common types of demographics in marketing are age, gender, income level, race and ethnicity.

Editing: The preparation and choice of material for publication by arranging it to form a coherent whole by correcting, condensing, or otherwise modifying it.

Juxtaposition: The state or position of being placed close together or side by side, so as to emphasize [comparison](#) or [contrast](#).

Metaphor: a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable, or a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else, especially something abstract.

Parody: An imitation of the style of a particular writer, artist, or genre with deliberate exaggeration for comic effect.

Scripting: The writing of dialogue and instructions for a film, television program, or other video production.

Stereotype: A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.

Story-board: Graphic organizers such as a series of [illustrations](#) or [images](#) displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualizing a [motion picture](#), [animation](#), advertisement, or other video production.

Teacher materials:

Videos;

[Toothpaste Ad:](#)

[Racism & stereotypes in Ads:](#)

[Racism in Ads:](#)

[Canada Ad:](#)

[Heineken Ad:](#)

[California Ad:](#)

Blackboard/Whiteboard

Student materials:

Computer and television access.

## Procedure/Discussion/Motivation:

Students will work in groups, discussing the advertisements shown in class, as well as the ones they observed at home.

Topics will include stereotypes and misconceptions, number of shots, music, and advertising strategies.

The teacher will make a list of advertisement observations generated by each group.

The students will then discuss how listed stereotypes and misconceptions are used by the advertisers to help sell their products or services. These strategies will also be listed.

The students will include listed stereotypes, misconceptions, relevant observations, and advertising strategies in their journals.

The students will then describe the different ways the South might be viewed by other areas of the country as stereotypical. These ideas will also be listed.

The students will answer the following questions concerning the production of a Tourism advertisement intended to emphasize misconceptions and stereotypical impressions of the South;

How might people who have never been to South Carolina perceive it with stereotypes?

What types of misconceptions might they have?

In what ways are these accurate or erroneous?

How do these misconceptions apply to teenagers?

What types of different activities do you and fellow students in your area enjoy?

What do people not know about South Carolina who have never been here?

What things would they would probably enjoy if they had?

What things would you like them to know about South Carolina?

How might stereotypes and misconceptions be used in an advertisement promoting tourism in South Carolina?

How might juxtaposition of stereotypes and misconceptions be used to expose these inaccuracies in the advertisement?

Who is their target audience?

Closure:

The students will be instructed to view television programs and advertisements with critical thought in terms of stereotypes, misconceptions, and advertising techniques and market strategies.

Learning Center/back up activity:

Students can also write about personal experiences involving stereotypes and misconceptions, or conduct research on local culture and tourism.

