

Food: Activity Suggestion

DECONSTRUCTING ADS FOR SNACK AND JUNK FOOD WHICH TARGET YOUNG CHILDREN

Written and produced by Frank Baker, Copyright 2004



Have students select a magazine that might target kids their age and likely include food ads aimed at them. (I selected *Nickelodeon* magazine)

Instruct students to locate ads specifically targeting children with food and/or drink.

[Download](#) the chart. Distribute to your students. Each student should locate at least one ad in which to study and complete using the downloaded chart.

Here are some questions your students might consider researching and answering:

1. Define healthy; nutritious; snack food
2. Is the product healthy? How do you know?
3. Is the food designed to be eaten during a meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner) or snack? What clues in the ad tell you so?
4. Does the website for the product indicate its nutritional values? If no, why not?
5. Where can you locate nutritional information about this product? Is it reliable? How do you know?
6. Who is portrayed in the ad? (boy or girl, both or neither)

7. What does their facial expression tell you?
8. What, if anything, are they doing in the ad? How does their action relate to the product?
9. Does the ad make the food/snack look appealing? How so?
10. Why does the ad NOT say anything about the sugar content?
11. Who is the target audience for the magazine in which the ad was found?
12. Do you think you would find similar ads in men's magazines? Why or why not?

Further Discussion:

Have students research and answer this question: **Should snack food companies be required to post all nutritional information in their print and broadcast advertising?**