

2e

10 Ways to Sell an Idea: The Basics of Persuasion

The power of advertising is its ability to persuade and advertisers have a wide array of techniques to use in constructing their persuasive messages. This activity introduces ten common techniques that can be found in many ads. Students identify and deconstruct examples of these techniques in magazines and then create their own ads using some of these strategies. By combining analysis with production, students not only become conscious of the ways advertising works but also more active and critical with the advertising they encounter every day – whether on T-shirts, television, the Internet, billboards, or at the mall.

Objectives: Students will be able to...

1. Recognize various techniques of persuasion used in advertising
2. Understand how advertisers use persuasion techniques for manipulative reasons.
3. Demonstrate their understanding of different techniques of persuasion through creating posters about some of the strategies advertisers use to convince consumers.

Correlation With McRel National Standards:

Language Arts Standards and Benchmarks

- Grades 3-5: (S9/B7)
- Grades 6-8: (S9/B9)
- Grades 9-12: (S9/B10)

Curriculum Integration:

This lesson integrates well with Health issues by analyzing ads for tobacco, alcohol, healthy and junk food, etc.

Materials/Preparation:

1. Copies of Handout 2E: “10 Techniques of Persuasion.”
2. Magazines to cut up.
3. Ten name cards, each with the name of one the techniques of persuasion written large.
4. Ten sheets of poster paper.

Teaching Strategies:

I. Discussion

- Begin with a discussion about advertising:
 - ? What is the purpose of advertising?
 - ? Where do you see ads?
 - ? Do ads ever lie or mislead us? How do ads work?

II. Introduce Techniques of Persuasion

- Teacher reviews and discusses the list of ten basic techniques of persuasion with the class.
- Inform students that many ads use several techniques at the same time.
 - ↳ For younger students, introduce only a few techniques at a time.
 - ↳ For older students, also explore more sophisticated techniques of persuasion such as bandwagon, testimonials, plain folks, name calling, use of prizes, etc.

III. Search and Sort

- In groups, have students search magazines to find examples of the different techniques. Use the name cards as designated collection points for the ads. Rip out the ads and place them in the appropriate pile.
- Once completed, go through the piles with the whole class to review some of the choices made. Ask students to defend why they made some of the less obvious decisions and review ads that use more than one technique. Also discuss which techniques are most and least popular and why they think that is so.

IV. Creating Collages

- Once the ads are separated into ten piles, assign each team one technique of persuasion. They will need to create a poster by cutting up the pictures and words from that pile of ads to create a collage that visually shows their technique of persuasion.
- When the collages are completed, attach the title of the technique of persuasion to the poster and use it as a resource for students to refer to when analyzing other ads or creating their own ads.

10 Techniques of Persuasion

The following is a list of various strategies that advertisers use to entice us to want the product being advertised.

1. **Humor** Funny or crazy images.
2. **Macho** Strong, tough, powerful – usually males. May carry weapons or be pictured in dangerous situations. Cowboys.
3. **Friends** Groups of people enjoying each other and doing things together. Buddies, pals and friendship.
4. **Family** Mother, father, children or a family. May also be intergenerational group.
5. **Fun** Everyone is happy – smiling and laughing. Often images of people doing fun things and having a good time.
6. **Nature** Outdoor settings – mountains, ocean, desert, snow, flowers, etc. May or may not have people included.
7. **Sexy** Emphasis on physical attributes of models, usually female; may wear revealing clothing and be shown flirting through attitude or body language.
8. **Cartoon** People or animals portrayed as drawing or animation, often humorous.
9. **Celebrity** Someone most people recognize – athlete, musician, politician, or movie star.
10. **Wealth** Expensive and elegant places and things. Big houses, new cars, jewelry, designer clothing, etc.