



Drama 10

Developing
Self-Esteem

Respecting
Diversity

Using Drama to Explore Media Advertising

Contributor

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Unit Objective

These lessons are part of a unit titled “Exploring Media Advertising Through Drama.” The unit uses a thematic approach to integrate drama and media literacy. The focus is on advertising. Drama is the medium used to explore it.

The purpose of these lessons are to introduce students to the meaning of the term *media literacy* and to help them begin to understand the impact of commercial advertising. Students will learn terminology associated with media literacy and will deconstruct advertisements by engaging in experiential explorations using drama. They will analyze speech and movement and apply theatrical techniques in exploring related issues.

The unit can be adapted to meet learner outcomes in COM1020 (Media and You), COM1010 (Presentation and Communication) and English Language Arts. Students can earn one credit each for Com1020 and COM 1010 if they complete the whole unit/module. These lessons have been selected to specifically meet learner outcomes for Drama 10.

 **Time** 3 class periods (approximately 5 hours)

Materials

Pre-prepared booklets (one per student) that contain

- lists of terms related to media literacy
- related articles, graphics and tables
- journal questions

Getting Started

Knowledge Now

This lesson should be preceded by several introductory classes designed to build trust and help students feel comfortable with each other. The games that prepare students best for this exploration are Person to Person, Sharks and Lifeboats, Exchanging Sounds and Movements, Hypnosis and The Glass Cobra (see Instructional Strategies and Learning Activities). Select the games most appropriate for your group.

Use the cartoon “At Least Things Here Are Simple!” Ask the students the following questions: What is the point of this cartoon. Is there truth in it?

Using word association, ask students to brainstorm ideas and thoughts they have related to media and advertising. Stimulate thinking by:

- asking students what they think of when they hear the words *media, advertising, consumerism, stereotype, TV, magazines, beauty industry, manipulation* and so on.

Use these questions to further stimulate brainstorming:

- What is media?
- What role does media play in our lives?
- How much influence does advertising have on you as a consumer?
- Do you think media literacy is important?

Write all student suggestions on flip chart paper. Post it.

Engaging Interest

Use the **Sculpture Wheel** Instructional Strategy to help students translate/physicalize the ideas and concepts generated by the word association into concrete images. Use terms such as *stereotyping, sexism, manipulation* and so on to stimulate the sculpture building.

Introduce the idea of journal writing as a way of responding to the work and making the learning explicit. Use the Focus Questions for Journal Writing (see the end of this lesson) to help direct and stimulate writing. Provide pages in the Student Guide/Journal for this purpose and provide a few minutes periodically for reflective writing throughout the unit.

Ask students to explore the Adbusters Website (www.adbusters.org). This website spoofs popular ads. Find the link to Spoof Ads. Ask students to explain the meaning of *spoof*? Why are these ads funny? What does this article mean in light of what we understand about advertising? Write your thoughts and ideas in the Student Guide/Journal.

Learning Activities

Deconstructing Ads: This part of the lesson asks students to deconstruct media. This process requires interaction, discussion and analysis of ads and media. Begin with a large group discussion and break into small groups later. Spread out the laminated ads on the floor to aid in the discussion.

Using the laminated example ads, discuss the following with the whole class:

- Terms from Deconstructing Ads: Terms and Ideas
- The image, logo, slogan and target audience for each ad.
- Is the ad effective or not? Why or why not?
- Various methods of persuasion, the ad claims, ad appeals, stereotypes and gimmicks used in each ad

Organize the students into small groups. Discuss the techniques used in each ad based on information pages and questions in the Student Guide/Journals.

Use **Story Circle** (see Instructional Strategies) to help students share their personal experiences related to advertisements, advertised products or advertising issues. Encourage every participant to share a story. (Model a personal story. I chose an ad for hair color. I told a story about how I am torn between coloring my hair to look younger and my belief that natural is better.)

Tableaux

These stories will be used to create advertising messages that students will later express in Tableaux. Ask students to select one member's story on which to base the group's tableaux.

To create the tableaux ask students to form small groups. Select one key idea from one member's story that everyone can relate to. Ask students to decide what they want their tableau to say. Create a tableau using all group members to illustrate the action or issue. Ask audience members to title others' tableaux and write an inner dialogue for each character to follow up the tableaux activity.

Advertising Quotes

Ask students to identify quotes they agree and disagree with. Sum up by asking them to make general statements about advertising. Consider asking them to record their ideas and opinions in their journals.

Assessment/Analysis

Revisit the questions raised at the beginning of this lesson.

- What is media?
- What role does media play in our lives?
- How much influence does advertising have on you as a consumer?
- Do you think media literacy is important?
- Have your ideas changed?
- What do you know now that you didn't before we undertook this exploration?

Application

Consider establishing criteria for students to do peer grading on various aspects of the study. Ask for volunteers to share insights and observations from their Student Guides/Journals. Encourage students to continue to think critically about the media messages they are constantly exposed to.

Students who are interested in pursuing COM1020 (Media and You) or COM1010 (Presentation and Communication) may want to create a technical production based on information and experiences in this Drama 10 unit.

Drama 10 Learner Outcomes

Goal I To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience

- develop positive and realistic self-image
- extend understanding, acceptance and empathy for others

- Goal II To develop competency in communication skills through participation in and exploration of various dramatic disciplines
- extend the ability to give form and expression to feelings, ideas and images

Safe and Caring Topics and Concepts

Developing Self-Esteem

Learning and applying constructive ways to express emotions to peers

Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice

Stereotypes Limit Our Perception and Understanding of Other People

Teaching Strategies

Go to www.sacsc.ca for strategy descriptions	Cooperative Learning	Inquiry Learning	Direct Instruction

Generalization and Transfer	Peer Teaching	Empathy/Affective Education	General Teaching Activities/Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tableaux 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story Circle • Sculpture Wheel • Journaling • Person to Person • Sharks and Lifeboats • Exchanging Sounds and Movements • Hypnosis • The Glass Cobra 	

Supplementary Resources

www.media-awareness.ca/eng/med/class/teamedia/bodye.htm

www.media-awareness.ca/eng/med/class/teamedia/tupe.htm

Material for inclusion in Student Guide/Journal (see end of lesson)

- Deconstructing Advertisements: Terms and Ideas
- Aristotle's Persuasive Discourse Model
- Advertising Claims
- Advertising Appeals
- Quotes on Advertising

Samples of mainstream advertisements (laminated)

Adbusters website <www.adbusters.org>

Unit Outline At-A-Glance Using Drama to Explore Media Advertising

The lessons in this unit are organized in the following sequence:

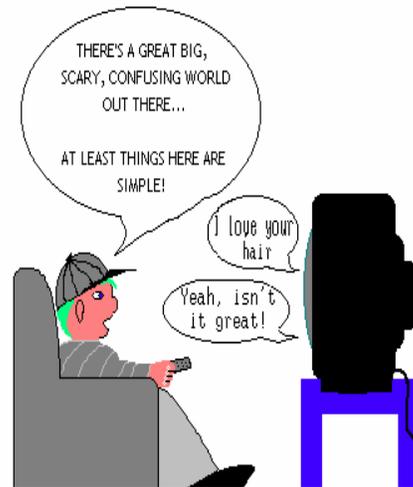
- Warmup games
- Cartoon—At Least Things Here Are Simple! (See end of lesson)
- Brainstorm
- Sculpture Wheel Activity
- Debriefing and discussion using laminated ads:
 - Deconstructing Advertisements: Terms & Ideas
 - Aristotle's Persuasive Discourse Model
 - Advertising Claims
 - Advertising Appeals
- Adbusters website (www.adbusters.org)
- Story Circle
- Tableaux
- Quotes on Advertising
- Peer grading

Teacher's Guide

Focus Questions for Journal Writing

These sample questions will help students write responses to various aspects of these lessons. Select one or two questions for each writing session.

1.
 - a) Write down the story that you shared in the story circle. You can also write another story on a similar theme that you may like to share in the future.
 - b) Describe the tableau that you created in your small group. What was it about?
2. Please comment on one or more of the following:
 - a) What were your expectations for the discussion and the drama activities we did today? Did you think you would enjoy them? What did you think you would learn?
 - b) What did you like or dislike about the work we did today? How did it make you feel? What did you learn about drama? What did you learn about deconstructing ads?
 - c) Do you think the media is manipulative? Have you ever felt that you have been manipulated?
 - d) Comment on your story or the stories told by others. How does advertising influence our lives?
 - e) Comment on one or more of the advertising quotes we looked at. Do the speakers make any good points?



At Least Things Here Are Simple!

Darrell Masuzumi

Deconstructing Advertisements: Terms and Ideas

Mass Media: Mass media involves the communication of information to large numbers of people through television, radio, books, photography, magazines, newspapers, movies, music, computer technology and advertising. Today the media is highly commercial and technological.

Media Literacy: Media literacy critically examines the impact of media messages and how these messages shape culture and manipulate opinions. Media literacy reduces the potentially negative impact of messages designed to shape behavior and influence attitudes. Media literacy helps us understand all forms of media better.

Advertising: Advertising is media used to sell a product or deliver a message. It includes radio and television commercials and print ads found in magazines, newspapers and mail-out flyers. It is found on billboards and other outdoor signs, on public transit and even on clothing and bags.

Consumer Culture: Consumer culture means that society places a great deal of importance on the acquisition of material objects. Being a consumer (a people who buys) is seen as an important part of our North American culture.

Deconstructing Ads: This means to take apart an advertisement. Deconstructing helps us analyze ads and become aware of the strategies used in advertising. In deconstructing an advertisement, we examine how it is put together, methods used to gain attention, meanings of main text and subtexts and what, if any, subliminal or hidden messages are incorporated.

Manipulative: Advertising is a way to influence, control or even or trick consumers into buying specific products. Often the strategies are so subtle consumers are unaware of them.

Gimmick: A gimmick is a trick or scheme used to gain attention. For example, advertising often uses sex to sell products.

Subtext: The subtext is the underlying message of the ad. It is usually hidden.

Advertising Claims: Ad claims provide information about a product. For example, ad claims may describe how the product is made by explaining its features and benefits or by reporting test results from experiments. These claims may be difficult to prove, misleading or inaccurate. For example, an ad for a cleaning product might claim it is 30 percent stronger than other products. Stronger in what way? Which other products? Is there real evidence to support this claim?

Weasel Words: Product claims often include words that sound convincing but don't really mean anything. Words such as *virtually*, *helps*, *can be* and *includes* are often weasel words. For example, an ad for a drink might say, "Has real fruit goodness," but the drink may not contain any real fruit. Or an ad for a breakfast cereal might say, "It's part of a nutritious breakfast," but maybe the milk used on the cereal is the nutritious part.

Advertising Appeals: Many ads try to gain attention by appealing to emotions—desires, dreams,

beliefs and fears. Ads may appeal to our wish to be loved, to fit in, to be healthy, to look young, to be successful or to feel safe. For example, a car ad might appeal to a sense of adventure or a desire for luxury.

Stereotype: A stereotype is an oversimplification or a generalization that does not take into account individual differences. Common stereotypes are blonds are dumb (or have more fun), boys are better at math than girls, men don't cry or white men can't jump.

Objectification: Ads sometimes treat a person as if he or she were an object.

Fantasy World: Advertising often portrays a world or situation that isn't real or true to life.

Logo: A symbol or design associated with a product.

Slogan: A catchy phrase associated with a product. For example, "Nike—Just do it!" or "Things Go Better with Coke."

Jingle: A tune or song associated with a product.

Placement of Product: This refers to where the product or name of the product appears in the ad, how big or small it is, whether it is close to the top or bottom or how it is used to catch the eye. Product placement is carefully planned to maximize product appeal.

Image: Portrays a personality type or lifestyle associated with the use of a particular product. Advertisers try to create the illusion that by purchasing the product, the consumer will acquire the lifestyle shown in the ad.

Target Audience: The group to whom the ad is directed. Knowledge of the target audience helps advertisers create ads that appeal to the tastes and preferences of a particular group.

Deconstructing Advertisements: Terms and Ideas

Questions for Discussion

1. How much influence does advertising have on you as a consumer?
2. Which advertising medium influences you the most: television, magazines, billboards, the Internet and so on?
3. What advertisements have influenced your own buying? Name the products.
4. Are you a “walking advertisement”?
5. What is media?
6. What role does it play in our lives?
7. Do you think media literacy is important?

Aristotle's Persuasive Discourse Model

Adapted with permission from: Parsons, J. & Sanford, K. (1994). Playing with language. Edmonton, AB: Les Editions Duval Inc., p187-188.

Aristotle lived in ancient Greece. In his society, the art of public speaking was highly valued. Successful speakers could persuade their audiences to believe what they said. Aristotle believed that there were three basic ways that speakers could persuade their listeners.

Example: How could I persuade someone to quit smoking?

Ethical persuasion focuses on the power of the speaker. How trustworthy is the speaker? If the speaker can be trusted, the message can be trusted. This method of persuasion relies on the image of the person speaking.

Example: I smoked for 10 years and I managed to quit. It wasn't easy, but it was worth it. You can do it too!

Pathetic persuasion argues that something is either good or bad for you. It focuses on your emotions. It wants you to feel rather than think.

Example: My grandfather died of lung cancer. It was a slow and painful death. I wish you would quit smoking. I care for you and I don't want the same thing to happen to you.

Logical persuasion uses arguments of reason. It attempts to show that the claims are true and make sense.

Example: Medical evidence shows that smoking causes cancer, heart disease and emphysema. It's a dirty and expensive habit. You know that this is true. Why don't you quit?

Advertising Now

Advertising uses persuasive techniques very similar to Aristotle's. If you know how advertisements and commercials work, you won't be persuaded to buy something you don't want to buy. If you can learn to analyze advertising for the type of persuasion it uses, you will be able to make better decisions and become more informed consumers.

Questions for Discussion

This example shows how one may be persuaded to quit smoking through use of the ethical, pathetic and logical methods of persuasion?

1. Can you think of other possible arguments to convince someone to quit smoking?
2. Which method does your argument fall under?
3. Examine ads from magazines. Categorize the method of persuasion using Aristotle's Model.

Advertising Claims

1. Weasel words

An advertisement uses words that are meaningless or unclear.

2. Water is wet

An ad says something about a product that is true of any such product.

3. Scientific facts

An ad gives facts and numbers to impress the consumer.

4. Endorsements

An ad uses famous people, an expert or just ordinary folk to promote a product.

5. The question

An ad asks you a question then answers the question by favoring the product.

6. We're better

An ad may claim to be new and improved, better than before or better than the competition.

7. We're unique

An ad claims that the product is different from others and special.

8. We're reliable

An ad may claim to be trustworthy or to have a long track record.

9. Will benefit you

The product will help you save time or money, achieve better health or get prompt relief or safer living.

10. Bandwagon

An ad may suggest that everyone is doing it, so you should do it, too.

Advertising Appeals

1. Special Consumer

An ad flatters the consumer.

2. You deserve it

You should buy this product because you deserve a reward.

3. You'll be loved

If you buy this product you will be loved, wanted or needed by others.

4. You'll fit in

If you buy this product you will fit in with a particular crowd.

5. For your lifestyle

This product fits in perfectly with your kind of lifestyle: healthy, free, busy, etc.

6. For your image

This product fits with your image: youthful, successful, hip, sporty, classy, etc.

7. Snob appeal

This product will show that you are superior.

8. Security

If you buy this product you will feel safe and be worry-free .

9. Family

This product will strengthen your family and your home.

10. Patriotism

This product will help you fulfil a responsibility to your country. It would be an act of good citizenship to buy this product.

Questions for Discussion

1. Can you think of ads that might fit in each of the ad claims or ad appeals categories?
2. Generate a list of ad slogans. Match advertising slogans with ad claims and appeals.
3. Is the power of advertising visible or invisible?

Quotes on Advertising

Advertising nourishes the consuming power of men. It sets up before a man the goal of a better home, better clothing, better food for himself and his family. It spurs the individual exertion and greater production.

Winston Churchill, former British Prime Minister

Ads are really doing their work when you don't notice them.

Marshall McLuhan, Canadian communications expert

The purpose of advertising in our capitalistic system is to educate and inform people so they can make a choice.

Sue Feldman, research director for American Express Canada, Inc.

The trouble with most advertising is that it insults the intelligence of the public and bores you to death.

David Ogilvy, advertising executive

Advertising sells ourselves to ourselves.

Judith Williamson, advertising analyst

A TV ad can be offensive, silly, annoying and exaggerated, yet it can still accomplish its ultimate goal of making people buy.

Erich Fromm, psychoanalyst

Everyone has a button. If enough people have the same button, you have a successful ad and a successful product.

Jerry Della Femina, advertising executive

Questions for Discussion

1. Which quotes do you agree with? Why?
2. Which quotes do you disagree with? Why?
3. What insights, generalizations or thoughts do you have about advertising? Write a paragraph that reflects your ideas.