



## **Advertising**

### **A unit for Year 8**

This unit consists of a series of activities for Year 8 on advertising.



## Building the field

### 1. *Introduction to advertising.*

In groups students read through extracts on [student worksheet 1](#), *Texts about advertising*. They use context clues and a thesaurus to complete the vocabulary activity for the extract, *Mind control* by Humphrey Macqueen, by suggesting a possible meaning for the italicised words, which is then written between the adjoining brackets. In order that this task may be made more manageable for the students, different groups should be allocated different sections (e.g. a number of lines or a paragraph) from the extract. They will then report back to the whole class, putting forward their suggested meanings.

Students then move on to discussing and answering the following questions about each text.

1. Identify the purpose of each text and two examples from the language used in the texts that helped you to identify this purpose.
2. Identify the audience for each text. Give reasons for your answer.
3. Which texts are supportive of advertising? Give reasons.
4. Which texts are critical of advertising? Give reasons.
5. Which texts are neutral about advertising? Give reasons.
6. List the texts whose views you accept and provide a short explanation of why.
7. List the texts whose views you do not support and provide a short explanation of why.

### 2. *Texts about advertising – Ideology: Responding to statements.*

In groups, students discuss and respond to the given statements on the matrix provided on [student worksheet 2](#), *Texts about advertising: Ideology*. These questions require them to consider the ideological nature of texts, in this instance, the extracts examined in Activity 1. Students place the label for each extract (i.e. Text 1, Text 2 etc.) in the appropriate column next to each statement. In explaining the purpose of this activity, the teacher should make clear how it is orienting the students to the type of reading practices they will be expected to demonstrate in the following lessons, given the focus of the unit on critical literacy.

### 3. *Reading visual images: Introduction to key structures of the visual grammar.*

Students are led through [student worksheet 3](#), *Reading visual images* using a range of print advertisements collected by the teacher to illustrate each of the grammatical structures. Refer to figures [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#) and [5](#).

Students then work in groups to complete the activities on this worksheet for a particular (unseen) advertisement provided by the teacher. Each group is then required to provide a reading of their advertisement, incorporating the grammatical structures, to the whole class.

**Note:** Students need to be alerted to the fact that they will be required to complete an oral presentation later in the unit about an advertisement which they have themselves found. They should be collecting advertisements during the course of the unit.



## Modelling and deconstruction

4. *Follow up to “Reading visual images”*: reconstructing an advertisement. Group assessment task.

This task incorporates formal assessment of students’ ability to work co-operatively and productively with other students. The activity should begin with an explanation of the task (as below). The teacher will then lead the students through the process of self- and teacher-assessment, as outlined on the [student worksheet 4b](#), *Advertising unit group task marking criteria*.

Working in groups of three, students are presented with a cut-up OHT copy of an advertisement. The group works together to reassemble the advertisement according to the grammatical structures to which they have been introduced.

Each individual group member then assumes responsibility for writing part of an explanation of how the group made its decisions and how the advertisement may be read according to particular grammatical elements. See [student worksheet 4a](#), *Advertising unit group task – Reading the advertisement*.

Students write their individual section of the group explanation and complete [student worksheet 4c](#), *Advertising unit group task: Self-assessment sheet*, obtaining peer verification of the validity of the assessment by obtaining the signatures of the other members of the group, before a presentation by each group of their reconstructed advertisement to the rest of the class. If the other group members are unwilling to sign the self-assessment, as they believe it to be inaccurate, a process of negotiation must begin between the individual concerned and his or her peers. The teacher will reserve the final judgement, according to observations made during the lesson seeking further information from each group member.

Group explanations are submitted at the end of the lesson. Along with observation during the lesson, they help to determine the teachers’ judgements in assessing each student.

5. Response writing: *Drinking. Where are your choices taking you?*

Students independently read and make notes about this advertisement according to the grammatical structures that they have studied and used to respond to other images in previous lessons. They then complete the partially written [student worksheet 5](#), *Response to advertising* using their notes. The students’ responses should be checked by the teacher for their understanding of the grammar of visual design and for meaning.

The texts will become a model for students’ own written responses later in the unit. At this stage, the unit moves into the stage of the explicit teaching of the response text type. Students are led by the teacher through [student worksheet 6](#), *Response to advertising follow up activity: Deconstructing a response*. The activity marking the text requires the students to identify the structure and language features of a response. While explaining the task to the students, the teacher might wish, by way of demonstration, to have another response text on OHT and mark that text using the key that the students will be using.

Upon completion of the task, the students’ work should be checked and corrected by the teacher, as the completed, deconstructed text will become a reference for students later in the unit.



## Building the field

6. [Student handout 1](#), *Reading visual images*, Introduction to further key structures of the visual grammar.

Students' knowledge of the grammar of visual design is extended by the teacher leading the students through the notes provided in *Reading visual images*. Again, the teacher should illustrate each grammatical structure as it is introduced by talking to a range of advertisements that have been collected for this purpose, including re-reading images shown to students earlier in the unit.

Students then return to their groups from activity three and re-read the advertisement they presented to the class in that task, making the notes they will need to re-present the advertisement on the [student worksheet 7](#), *Reading images: Compositional analysis* and using the guiding questions at the bottom of the worksheet. (**Note:** Students should be provided with a second copy, upon which they are not to write, which will act as a scaffold in future activities requiring them to generate a reading of an advertisement which they have found themselves.)

Each group then re-presents their advertisement to the class, providing an extended reading, which includes reference to the grammatical structures that are referred to in *Reading Visual Images*.

## Modelling and deconstruction

7. [Student worksheet 8](#), *Deconstructing Mr Right Diet Pepsi advertisement*, see [figure 1](#).

Students are provided with colour copies of the Diet Pepsi advertisement, which was originally part of a series for this product which appeared in magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, and use the scaffold provided by *Reading images: Compositional analysis* to generate an initial reading of the advertisement. The groups' ideas are then shared with the class.

Once the students have a clear understanding of how the advertisement has been composed, the reading practices required for them to a resistant reading of the advertisement, which challenges the gender stereotypes and ideology of the advertisement, are scaffolded for them in the [student worksheet 8](#), *Deconstructing Mr Right Diet Pepsi advertisement*. This task may be completed in pairs or in a small group.

In explaining this task to students, the importance of a critical literacy curriculum and the students' need to become resistant need to be emphasised by the teacher.

## Independent construction

8. Sample assessment task: Students are set the task of individually writing a response to the Mr Right Diet Pepsi advertisement. The teacher might wish to negotiate the assessment criteria with the student. A sample marking grid is provided below.
9. Sample assessment task: Students prepare and present an oral response to an advertisement of their own choosing.

The task is outlined on the [student worksheet 9](#), *Year 8 assessment task: Interpretation*. This was an across-the-board assessment task for all of Year 8 and includes marking criteria specific to the oral presentation and the type of text required.

## Year 8 Advertising Unit – Response writing Marking criteria



Criteria	A: Excellent achievement	B: High achievement	C: Substantial achievement	D: Satisfactory achievement	D: Elementary achievement
Context of advertisement established: Target audience, purpose, positioning of audience					
Knowledge of visual grammar in supporting reading of advertisement					
Critical challenge: Identifies ideology of advertisement and provides challenge or resistant reading					
Text type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilises structure and language features</li> <li>achieves academic register through given, new pattern, controlled use of modality, passive voice, complex naming groups, words to show judgement</li> </ul>					
Written expression: Spelling, grammar, punctuation					

**Overall result:**



## References

- Callow, J., 1999, *Image Matters: Visual Texts in the Classroom*, Primary English Teaching Association, Newtown.
- Goodman, S., 1996, "Visual English" in Goodman, S. and Graddol, D. (eds), *Redesigning English: new text, new identities*, Routledge, London.
- Kress, G and van Leeuwen, T., 1996, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, Routledge, London.
- Lane, A., 2001, *Fast Food Nation*, Penguin Press, London.
- Midalia, S. , 1999, "Textualising Gender", *Interpretations*, 32 (1) quoted in Hurrell, G., 2001, "Masculinities in the English Classroom: Fracturing Stereotypes", *English in Australia*, No 131.
- Nodelman, P., 1988, *Words about Pictures: The Narrative of Children's Picture Books*, The University of Georgia Press, Athens.
- Stephens, J. ., 1997, "Visual literacy: Enabling and promoting critical viewing" in Sawyer, W. et al ., 1998, *Re-viewing English*, St Clair Press, Sydney.

## Advertisements

[Figure 1](#): Clemenger, Sydney Pty. Ltd., 2000, *Diet Pepsi*, Sydney.

[Figure 2](#): Commonwealth of Australia, 2002, *Drinking. Where are your choices taking you?*, Canberra. Courtesy of the National Alcohol Campaign: Drinking. Where are your choices taking you? Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

[Figure 3](#): Ferrero Australia Pty. Ltd., 1998, Advertisement for "Ferrero Rocher Chocolate" in *HQ Magazine*, Australia.

[Figure 4](#): Pfizer Pty Limited, 2001, *Schick Silk Effects Razor*, West Ryde NSW 2114.

[Figure 5](#): 3M Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd, 2001, *Tri-profen*, Thornleigh NSW 2120.