



Advertising unit

Student worksheets 1 to 9
Student handout 1



Student worksheet 1

Advertising unit

Text A:

Extract from the web site of the Advertising Federation of Australia

Introduction

The advertising industry is good at celebrating creativity. And so it should be.

Awards presentation

Creative ideas are our stock in trade. They are our competitive edge. But, in

Book now!

pursuing creativity, we should not lose sight of the fact that advertising is a business tool that should be measured by its ability to contribute to the achievement of business goals. The purpose of the AFA Advertising Effectiveness Awards is to recognise and reward campaigns that have proven commercial outcomes.

Text B:

Statement by John Singleton, prominent Australian advertising executive

An advertisement is a paid-for piece of communication intended to influence or inform people.

Text C:

Extract from the book *Media: An English Approach* by Sean Monahan

Since advertising is a powerful, persuasive force in society, it is important for students to become aware of how its language and visual symbolism seek to influence them. ... Advertising is the poetry of mass media, offering many opportunities to enjoy the fertile playfulness of language. The (second) aim of the unit is to have students working with advertisements in ways that will increase their understanding (and enjoyment) of the powers of word play, connotation and symbol.



Text D:

Quote from Dr James Twitchell in Smithsonian, April, 2000

Often advertising is not about keeping up with the Joneses, but about separating you from them. That's especially true of advertising directed at a particular group, such as adolescents or young adults. It's called "dog whistle" advertising because it goes out at frequencies only dogs can hear.

Text E:

Extract from *Concepts in Commerce* by S Chapman, M Freak, and S Ross

Which current advertisement has most impressed you? What product is it advertising: soft drink, food, clothes, a car or something else? Why did it impress you? You can probably answer these questions without too much thought. This is because you have been influenced by advertising. Every day you are exposed to hundreds of advertisements. Everywhere you look producers are trying to sell us things. In Australia, businesses spend approximately \$4 billion a year on all forms of advertising.

Advertising has been around for a long time. Your grandparents may have been influenced by this old commercial. The style of advertisements may have changed over the years but their purpose remains the same. Persuasive advertisements are used to entice the consumer into buying a particular product or brand. One brand will compete against a number of other brands. The advertiser hopes to sell more of the product and increase the profits of the business.

Most advertisements are correct in what they say. Those advertisements that make false claims are breaking the law and will be prohibited. However, what the advertisement does not tell us is often of more interest to consumers.

As consumers we need to be aware of the power of advertising. The advertised product may not make us more successful, glamorous, sexier, happier, healthier or wealthier!



Text F:

Extract from the book *The Essence of Capitalism: The origins of our future*, by Humphrey Macqueen

Mind control

For firms to expand by creating new markets, they had to *colonise* [] the minds of their *domestic populations* []. One *prerequisite* [] was to overcome people's faith in *thrift* [] by *advancing* [] debt and *indulgence* [] as *virtues* []. The *promotion* [] of each branded *commodity* [] *stimulated* [] a *generalised appeal* [] to want more. Buying a Chevrolet on hire purchase nourished the mentality in which it was right and proper to enjoy more Cokes. The 1950s master of Motivational Research, Dr Earnest Dichter, advised:

In the promotion and advertising of many items, nothing is more important than to encourage this tendency to greater inner freedom and to give moral permission to enjoy life through the use of an item, whether it is good food, a speedboat, a radio set, or a sports jacket.

To convince people to buy what they had never thought of needing, advertisers at first replaced *religious inhibition* [] with *secular guilt* []. Once customers felt the lack of something other than Jesus in their lives, advertising could offer them *redemption* []. In the 1920s, soap manufacturers had funded a Cleanliness Institute, which reinterpreted the *maxim* [] that cleanliness was next to godliness as meaning that families should bathe more often than on Saturday. Listerine had been sold only to hospitals until 1926, when its owner diagnosed *halitosis* [] as a *social disease* []. One of the founders of behaviourism, ex-professor John Broadus Watson, joined the J Walter Thompson advertising agency where he advised a campaign for Johnson's baby powder. In a 1925 lecture, he explained how he increased its sales by making the mother who did not use it "feel bad, that she was less of a mother, not really a good mother". Advertisers raided every school of psychology. Freud's lectures on Psychoanalysis, published in New York in 1922, *diffused* [] the idea that humans were not wholly *rational* [] and so were *amenable* [] to *suggestion* []. Had Freud analysed the good life as portrayed in *corporate* [] advertising, he would have *recoiled* [] from its embrace of instant gratification ... Advertising has *suffused* [] every layer of *consciousness* [] with encouragements to consume until we inhabit a *super-saturated solution* [] of *purchase signals* []. Advertisements alter consciousness, yet leave each generation believing that its appetites are natural.



Student worksheet 2

Texts about advertising: Ideology

According to The Macquarie dictionary (1987, p. 867), ideology is the body of doctrine, myth and symbols of a social movement, institution, class, or large group.

- Consider the following statements about the texts you have read and discussed.
- List each of the texts in the appropriate column next to each statement.
- Be prepared to justify your choices to the class.

Statement	Texts which support this statement	Texts which do not support the statement	Texts which you are unable to place
Advertising provides consumers with essential information and therefore greater choice.			
Advertising is above all a business, designed to make money for those who make the advertisements and those who have them made.			
Advertising is essential to our society.			
Advertising ensures that we all enjoy a higher standard of living.			



Statement	Texts which support this statement	Texts which do not support the statement	Texts which you are unable to place
Advertising is designed to convince us to buy things we don't need.			
Advertisers are dishonest in the sense that they offer us false images of products.			
Advertising has replaced religion in our society in offering us hope for the future.			
Advertising is exciting and innovative.			
Advertising is dangerous.			
Advertising is another word for brain washing.			
Advertising gives consumers power and control.			
Advertising is something we need to be informed about.			



Student worksheet 3

Reading visual images

Context of culture:

- Who is the advertisement aimed at (target audience)? Be specific.
- Where might it have appeared? (Suggest magazine titles you may be familiar with or the likely content of the magazine.)

What's going on? (field)

- Is it a narrative or a concept, an idea?
- What is gained by this representation?
- Can the ad be read in terms of vectors? If yes, provide a reading.
- Is the background realistic or is it abstract (represents the world through symbols)? What meaning does this create in the ad?

How is the viewer involved? (tenor)

- What sort of power relationship is established between the viewer and the image? How is it established? (Consider camera angle)

Drawing together what's going on and how the viewer is involved (mode)

- Give a reading of the advertisement in terms of its given and new pattern.

Given	New

- Give a reading of the advertisement in terms of its representation of the ideal and the real.

Ideal
Real



Student worksheet 4a

Advertising unit group task

Reading the advertisement

Group members:

Task:

Provide a reading of how meaning is made in this advertisement using the theoretical framework and elements of visual grammar you have been studying in class.

Note: Each group member must be independently responsible for the completion of a section of the explanation (as given below). Allocate sections as the group considers appropriate.

Your explanation should include such information as:

- how you made the decisions relevant to that section of the theoretical framework by using your knowledge of the theory
- how these decisions have made meaning in the advertisement and contributed to the effectiveness of the advertisement.

Field: What's going on? (narrative or concept, vectors, background: realistic or abstract)



Student worksheet 4b

Advertising unit group task

Marking criteria sheet

Name:

Knowledge and skills criteria	Level of achievement					
	Self-assessment			Assessment by teacher		
	Developing	Achieved	Highly developed	Developing	Achieved	Highly developed
Identifies elements of visual grammar, including: Ideal/real Given/new Vectors Narrative or concept Camera angle						
Uses knowledge of such elements of visual grammar to contribute to composition of a print advertisement according to the theoretical framework studied (field, tenor, mode)						
Reflects on the process of composing and demonstrates an understanding of the theoretical framework by contributing a section to a group explanation of how meaning is made in the advertisement						
Displays cooperative learning skills: Contributes ideas constructively Listens to and respects ideas of others Remains focused on completion of set task Completes allocated tasks to best of ability						



Student worksheet 4c
Advertising unit group task
Self-assessment sheet

What new knowledge have you developed in this unit?

What skills have you developed?

In what ways might such knowledge and skills be of use to you in your studies and in your life?

The self-assessment component is a true and accurate reflection of this student's contribution in the completion of this task.

.....
Group member

.....
Group member



Student worksheet 5 Response to advertising

Name:

Complete the following response by using the notes you have made about the advertisement, *Drinking. Where are your choices taking you?* You may need to add more than one word.

The advertisement, *Drinking. Where are your choices taking you?* is a _____ and _____ warning to _____ women about the dangers of _____ drinking. Rather than telling them not to drink, the advertisement

The ad first grabs the reader's attention because of _____
_____. This visual is eye-catching because _____
_____. The reader immediately receives the message that _____
_____. The reader's eye then follows the
vector to _____ because of the direction of the woman's
arms and faces. The clear message to readers about alcohol is that it _____
_____. Our eyes next follow the vector to the _____
_____. These words gain the reader's interest because we
_____. Our eyes then follow the vector to the
_____ right-hand corner. There we see _____

This is a very important component of the ad because _____
_____.



The advertisement may also be read in terms of its presentation of the _____
_____ and the real. The ideal presented by the ad in its _____
half is that _____. The real, presented in its _____
half is that _____. Visual texts also feature a given and
_____ pattern. In this ad, the _____, which is
seen on the left hand side, is _____. The
_____ which features on the right-hand side is _____.

Reading the advertisement in this way reinforces its message that _____

_____ because it helps the reader to visualise, or see, _____
_____.

Overall, *Drinking. Where are your choices taking you?* succeeds in its purpose of _____
_____ and will appeal to its target audience of _____
_____ because it is _____
_____ and _____.



Student worksheet 6

Response to advertising

Follow-up activity: Deconstructing a response

A response is a factual piece of writing that responds to and evaluates a text. The text could be such things as a film, a book, an art work, an advertisement, or a performance.

Responses generally follow a similar structure and have similar language features.

Structure

- an opening statement that identifies the context of the text
- adjectives in the opening statement which give a preview of the writer's response (i.e., tell whether he or she likes it)
- a series of paragraphs, each describing different elements or features of the text
- a concluding paragraph that gives a judgment or evaluation of the work.

Language features

- descriptive language
- most responses written in the present tense
- technical language relevant to the subject
- words and phrases that express value judgment
- words to show cause and effect
- conjunctions to link the ideas
- the use of high modality.

Activity

Complete the following on the model response you have completed.

1. Put brackets around the opening statement.
2. Put ticks above the adjectives in this statement if you think they show approval OR crosses if you think they show disapproval.
3. Draw a thick line beside the paragraph that tells the reader how the advertisement gains the reader's attention and interest.
4. Draw two thick lines next to the paragraph that tells the reader how the advertisement may be read according to its layout.
5. Draw three thick lines next to the paragraph that gives the author's evaluation and judgment about the advertisement.
6. Draw a circle around three examples of descriptive language.
7. Underline three different verbs which show you that the response is in the present tense.
8. Write a big T above three examples of technical language.
9. Write a big V above two words or phrases that show a value judgment.
10. Draw an -> above two examples of words that show cause and effect.
11. Draw a big ! above three examples of high modality.



Student worksheet 7

Reading images: Compositional analysis

Target audience	
Narrative or concept idea	
Background (realistic? abstract?)	
Salience (what stands out?)	
Vectors (the invisible reading lines)	
Angles: vertical angle (high, low, straight on) and power relationship	
Angles: horizontal (frontal or oblique)	
Gaze: offer or demand	
Colour (tone and saturation, symbolism)	
Lighting (incl. shade and shadow)	
Modality	
Framing of shots: intimate (close-up), social (medium), public (long)	
Given/new	
Ideal/real	

- On the back of this sheet write a short explanation of how the target audience is being positioned to respond to this visual image.
- How might this persuade the target audience to buy the product?



Student worksheet 8

Deconstructing Mr Right

Diet Pepsi advertisement

1. Consider the following word bank with a partner. Then place the words which you think best describe the woman and the man in the appropriate box. Some words may belong in both boxes and you may not find it appropriate to use all of the words.

sexy vulnerable glamorous vicious in control abusive sweet sensitive unsure	macho weak fussy nerdy decisive strong calm subordinate normal	brave unbelievable real independent insecure supportive neat loving weird
Words to best describe the woman.		
Words to best describe the man.		

2. Using the lists you have just created, consider the oppositions which may be said to be present in creating meaning in this advertisement. Complete the following table, using the example provided to guide you.

Femininity	Masculinity
independent	subordinate



Student worksheet 9

Year 8 assessment task: Interpretation

You will give an oral presentation in the form of:

- a review
- an interpretation
- or a combination of the two

of a film, book, story, or poem that you have read or seen this year.

You may present your work in one of the following ways:

- a lecture
- a speech
- an interview (as the author or director of the text). You may get a fellow student to ask you questions but only you will be marked
 - in character as a professional TV or radio reviewer.

You may use overheads, images or other technology to enhance your presentation.

Marking criteria	<i>Not present</i>	<i>Under developed</i>	<i>Below average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above average</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
Body language Eye contact, stance, gesture	0	1	2	3	4	5
Voice Clarity, volume, tone, face	0	1	2	3	4	5
Test type features Present tense, adjectives, words to express judgement, explicit references to the text	0	1	2	3	4	5
Flair and creativity Interesting and appropriate delivery, good use of appropriate technology	0	1	2	3	4	5
Time 2–4 minutes	0 0–1	1 1–2	2 2–2.30	3 2.30–3	4 3–3.30	5 3.30–4

A = 21–25, B = 20–16, C = 16–11, D = 10–6, E = 0–5



Student handout I

Reading visual images

Here are a number of additional visual codes which are key elements of the theoretical framework we have been using to analyse how meaning is made in visual images.

Angles: The vertical angle

The use of camera angles establishes a relationship, which may be identified in terms of power, between the image being represented and the reader.

Common camera angles are:

- *high*: the reader looking down on an image suggests that the character or object is in a subservient (less powerful) position
- *low*: the reader looking up at an image suggests that the character or object is in a dominant (powerful) position
- *straight on*: the audience looking straight on suggests that the character or object is in a position of equality.

Angles: The horizontal angle

An image can have either a frontal or oblique (not straight or direct) point of view.

- Point of view establishes the involvement of the reader with the image.
- The frontal angle represents a point of view in which the reader is “involved” with the represented character(s) or object(s).
- The oblique angle establishes a point of view in which the reader is positioned to be “detached” from the represented character(s) or object(s).
- The frontal angle, then, establishes a point of view in which the reader will recognise the characters or objects as being recognisably part of his or her world, something that they are involved with. The oblique angle creates a point of view in which the reader does not recognise the character(s) or object(s) as part of his or her world but rather as something they are not involved with.

Framing

The relationship between the reader and a visual image may be defined in terms of its social proximity.

The frame, which determines how much information is given to the reader, represents a social relationship with the reader through the social distance it establishes.

The frame can be defined in terms of the shot used:

- a close up may seek to represent an intimate or personal relationship between the image and the reader
- a medium shot may seek to represent a somewhat personal relationship, but with a more social type of distance
- a long shot may seek to represent an impersonal relationship, with a public social distance.



Lighting

Photographic images depend of light. The way in which visual images which appear in print advertising are lit will tend to not be natural (e.g. daylight). Even if “natural” lighting is used in a print advertisement, it is assumed in analysis that such light is used to create a particular effect, that is to say, to convey a particular meaning.

In print advertisements, as in cinema, light as a “code”, with such things as the degree of brightness and the direction of the source of the light signal meaning to the reader. For example, shadows might suggest to the reader that something is being concealed about a character. Bright light might suggest a sense of hope or, directed at a particular section of the image, highlight something significant, giving a dramatic feel to the image. Softer light may create a light or romantic feel.

The most common form of lighting is three point lighting made of the key, fill and back light.

- The key light is the main source of illumination and is directed on the subject, usually from 45 degrees above and to one side of the camera. It is a hard, direct light which produces sharply defined shadows. It can be bright (high intensity) or dim (low).
- The fill light is a soft or indirect light that “fills on” the shadows formed by the key light.
- The back light shines from behind the subject, usually to differentiate it from the background.

Colour

Colour is another code used by image makers to establish a particular relationship with the reader. The use of particular colours may represent particular moods or feelings. The symbolic meanings we attach to particular colours may change according to the context of the visual image. Red, for example, may suggest passion in one context, danger in another context, or both at the same time in a third context; at the same time it might suggest warmth in a representation of fallen leaves in an autumnal scene.

Colour can be described in terms of tone and saturation:

- tone is the degree of lightness or darkness of a coloured area (e.g. “dark tone)
- saturation is the degree of purity in a colour (e.g. “highly saturated”).

Modality

You have already looked at visual images in terms of representation: with images that are abstract or concepts being seen as not “natural” and not attempting to represent the world as we recognise it directly. Meaning, rather, lies in the symbolism we recognise as being attached to such images.

A central element of communication in all its forms (written, spoken or visual) is the reliability of messages. The credibility, or “believability”, of messages is attached to the degree of authority the receiver of the message is willing to ascribe to the message and the manner in which it is conveyed. Modality is a concept which helps us to analyse how texts are constructed to represent the “truth”. It is important to understand that this concept of modality must be judged in context.

- As with all other texts, visual images can be constructed to represent characters and objects as if they are real or as if they are imagined and fantasies. Visual realism is judged by “photo-realism”, or how “natural” a visual image appears in keeping with the defining standard of 35mm photography. (Think of the sort of colour photographs a reasonably expert photographer, or better, can take with a good camera.) This is the standard for truthfulness because it is, in the context of our culture, so familiar. We all take such colour “snaps”.



- Colour saturation is an important determinate of modality in visual images. An absence of colour (black and white) in certain contexts equates with the lowest modality, the most removed or distant from reality in our culture. The exception to the “photo realism” codes for modality are scientific and technical visuals such as photographs and diagrams, which have high modality, even if in black and white, as they represent objects as they supposedly “really are”. A still from surveillance camera footage is an image captured not requiring colour for its purpose to be fulfilled, and the floor plan for a house or building would be examples of this. Colour in such images would have low modality as it is useless to the purpose.
- Maximum colour saturation is the other extreme where the colours appear “hyper-real”, or so emphasised that they are more than natural or real. (Although there will be exceptions to this in certain contexts, such as photographs of food which are designed to make the food being presented highly appealing to our senses: as real as in their natural state, if not more so, as well as being designed to give psychological pleasure.)
- Lighting is also an element in modality. Naturalistic representations (i.e. those which appear to represent the world and reality as we know it) will feature characters and/or objects as they are affected by a particular source of light. An image which is either overly bright (saturated with light) or under-lit (heavily shadowed) may appear unreal or unnatural and have low modality. Other images which appear unreal or unnatural (i.e. have low modality) may use shadow to highlight shapes and forms in the characters and/or objects which are being represented in a way that does fit the logic of illumination and would not happen in the natural or real world.

Follow-up activity

- Return to your group and revise the reading you provided to your allocated visual image in a previous lesson.
- Discuss that image in terms of how meaning is made according to the codes outlined above and further develop your reading.
- Make notes on your discussion in the spaces provided below.

Code	Notes from discussion
Angles: Vertical	
Angles: Horizontal	
Framing	
Lighting	
Colour	
Modality	