

Analyzing TV Commercials

Sandra Gutiérrez

Background:

Unit: Persuasive Writing and Media

Lesson Topic: Analyzing TV Commercials

Length of Lesson: 90 minute Language Arts block.

Background to Lesson: This lesson introduces the second half of a unit on persuasion in writing and advertising. During the first part of the unit, students analyzed persuasive essays to identify the different techniques writers use to persuade their audiences (expert opinions, data, moral arguments, etc). They also wrote two persuasive essays; the first one as a class, and the second one individually. During the second part of the unit, they will analyze visual and aural techniques that the creators of TV commercials utilize to persuade their target audience(s) to buy a particular product. As their culminating activity for the unit, students will work in teams to create a TV commercial using several of the visual and aural techniques they learned.

English proficiency levels: Mixed class of native English speakers and English language learners. English language learners range in their level of proficiency from low intermediate to advanced.

Grade: 8

Standards: Massachusetts English Language Arts Standards:

26.1: Identify techniques used in television (*animation, close-ups, wide-angle shots, sound effects, music, graphics*) and use knowledge of these techniques to distinguish between facts and misleading information.

26.5: Analyze visual or aural techniques used in a media message for a particular audience and evaluate their effectiveness.

Preparation

Content Objectives: Students will be able to
identify the forms, audiences, topics and purposes of TV commercials
analyze TV commercials' target audiences, messages, and visual and aural techniques.

Language Objectives: Students will be able to discuss in pairs

students questions and/or sentence steps to support their writing (For example: "What product or service is your favorite commercial trying to sell? What happens in your favorite commercial? Why is this your favorite commercial?") After about five minutes, ask students to share what they

Remind students that the FAT-P strategy could be used to analyze any piece of work or to plan before writing or creating a piece. Provide examples.

Presentation

Explain how the FAT-P strategy works when analyzing TV Commercials:

Form is TV commercial - a short clip of video that uses both visual (what you see) and aural (what you hear) input.

Audience is the group of consumers the commercial was targeted to convince to buy a particular product. Audience are a piece. 5Tm2466.7mB1 0 0 1

Display the TV Commercial Analysis Sheet transparency. Explain that this sheet will help them to analyze TV commercials and to plan before they write an essay about a commercial. Preview questions and then have students watch the first TV commercial. Discuss and fill out the TV Commercial Analysis Sheet as a class.

Use pair talk throughout the discussion so that everyone gets a chance to process and participate. Have students answer the easier questions on their own, but provide more support through think-alouds and modeling when they are tackling the higher order thinking questions about the message(s) of the commercial or techniques used in the commercial. Students might need to watch the TV commercial a couple of times in order to be able to answer all the questions.

Application

Have students watch one more TV commercial and work in pairs to fill out a second TV Commercial Analysis Sheet. Ask students to use their vocabulary notes as a resource. Move around the class to monitor student understanding and provide feedback and support as needed. When students finish, explain that they will use their complete TV Commercial Analysis Sheets to write a TV commercial analysis essay during the next class.

Review/Assessment

At the end of the lesson, review key vocabulary by throwing a plastic ball

TV Commercials Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Picture or examples that will help me remember the word
Target audience or target group	The main group of people that the commercial is trying to reach and convince. A target audience can be people of a certain age group, gender, marital status, etc.	White women in their 30s Single and divorced males

TV Commercial Analysis Sheets

Directions: Answer the following questions about the TV commercial that we watched in class. Write in complete sentences. Your answers will help you write an essay about the commercial.

I. Describe the commercial:

1. What product or service is the commercial trying to sell?
2. Where was the commercial set? Describe the setting(s).
3. Who was in the commercial? Describe the people in the commercial.
4. What objects were in the commercial? Describe the objects.
5. What happened in the commercial? Provide as much detail as you can.

II. Analyze the purpose of the commercial:

1. Who is the target audience of the commercial? Explain how you know.
2. What is the message of the TV commercial? In other words, what do the commercial's creators want the target audience to believe about the product?

III. Analyze the techniques the commercial's creators used

1. What visuals techniques do the commercial creators' use to convince us of their message? Pick two and explain how they help support the message.
2. What aural techniques do the commercial creator's use to convince us of their message? Pick two and explain how they help support the message.