



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 7: Module 2B: Unit 3: Lesson 3

Determining Central Ideas: Media Literacy



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text. (RI.7.2)

I can determine an author's point of view or purpose in an informational text. (RI.7.6)

I can analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in different media and formats. (SL.7.2)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can determine central ideas in the concept of media literacy.
- I can determine an author's point of view or purpose in informational text.

Ongoing Assessment

- Ad Analysis homework (from Lesson 2)
Researcher's notebook



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ad Analysis Task: Part I/Unpacking Learning Targets (10 minutes) 2. Work Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Jigsaw: Media Techniques (15 minutes) B. Theme Sort: Media Techniques (10 minutes) 3. Closing and Assessment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ad Analysis Task: Part II (10 minutes) 4. Homework <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Be sure to continue your independent reading. B. Complete the Ad Analysis homework, Lesson 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson deepens the knowledge students have acquired about media literacy by having them examine in depth the central idea of persuasive techniques used in advertising. Students will examine a bank of 15 basic persuasive techniques developed by the Media Literacy Project, sort them thematically, and use them to examine ads from this lesson forward. • An essential point in this lesson is that the <i>persuasion</i> in advertising is not the same thing as an <i>argument</i>. Recall that students wrote argument papers in Unit 2. While argument is a form of persuasion, it makes a claim based in logic, sound reasoning, and evidence; advertising, on the other hand, uses persuasive techniques that are not always logical and evidence-based, such as appealing to emotion. Savvy students will point out, rightly, that this is not always a clear distinction, and that sometimes argumentative pieces make use of other methods of persuasion; also, ads can use logic and evidence. The key here is for students to distinguish between when an ad (or, by extension, any kind of communication) is using argument, and when it is using other methods of persuasion. An anchor chart illustrating these relationships is included in the supporting materials for your optional use. • In this and future lessons, a general approach to ad analysis is described. Select specific ads to use as you see fit. Modern and vintage advertisements have strengths; use your professional judgment to determine which ads best suit your students' interests. Also consider clips of television and Internet ads as well as print advertisements. Consider also using "real time" ads that are posted in your school environs; a Gallery Walk through the school grounds and identifying ads allows students some physical movement and a change of pace. • In advance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Copy, cut, and collate the Basic Persuasion Techniques cards, one set per Jigsaw group. – Conduct an Internet search to find your own relevant and appropriate ads. A great resource to find ads is the following website: http://genderads.com/. Search under the keywords "Roles," "Mothers and "Males" to find relevant ads for this unit. Be careful to screen the ads you will show in advance, as only certain ones are appropriate for 7th graders. – Choose the ad you will present at the beginning and end of class and prepare for its presentation: either copying for students, making a poster-size version, projecting the Web site, preparing the document camera, and so on. Make sure that the pertinent information in the ad, needed to answer the questions on the Ad Analysis task, is clearly visible.



Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review the Ad Analysis task and be prepared with answers that apply to your chosen ad. Note that this task is broken up into two parts: Part I takes place in the Opening, and Part II in the Closing and Assessment. Students will likely not be able to answer the Part II Questions 4 and 5 until later in the lesson, when they have learned more about persuasive techniques. – Bear in mind that ads chosen for analysis should be easily deconstructed and linked to the issues discussed in the research sources in the unit. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female gender roles • Male gender roles • Body image expectations in males and females • Gender roles as represented through toys • Post: Learning targets; Basic Concepts of Media Literacy anchor chart; and Persuasion, Argument, and other Appeals (optional).

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>persuasion, association, bandwagon, bribery, explicit, intensity, testimonial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad Analysis task (one per student) • Ad for Analysis (see Teaching Notes) • Document camera • Internal and External Identity anchor charts (from Unit 1, Lesson 10) • Domain-Specific Vocabulary anchor chart (begun in Lesson 1) • Basic Persuasion Techniques (one per student) • Basic Concepts of Media Literacy anchor chart (from Lesson 2; one to display) • Basic Persuasion Techniques cards (one set of cards per Jigsaw group) • Ad Analysis homework, Lesson 3 (one per student) • Persuasion, Argument and Other Appeals anchor chart (optional; one to display)



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Unpacking Learning Targets/Ad Analysis Task: Part I (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet students and distribute the Ad Analysis task. • Present the Ad for Analysis using the document camera. Do not explain the ad or give any background information. • Have students complete the Ad Analysis task, but ask them to skip Questions 4 and 5 for the moment. • While students are working, collect Ad Analysis homework from Lesson 2. If time permits, consider sharing some exemplary work from the homework. • Review the Ad Analysis task as a class. If a student provides an inaccurate answer, “bounce” the question back to the class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How does that answer sound to everyone else? Does anyone have anything to add?” • Direct students to correct answers if needed. • Point out that Questions 4 and 5, the two “techniques” questions, discuss material, which the students may not have learned yet. These are listed as “optional” questions for now. Students are learning about persuasive techniques today and will revisit these questions with their new knowledge in the Closing and Assessment. • Wrap up by having students reflect on the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How do you think this ad would affect the identity of the person viewing it?” • Refer students back to the Internal and External Identity anchor charts if needed. • Direct students’ attention to the posted learning targets and read them aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can determine central ideas in the concept of media literacy.” * “I can determine an author’s point of view or purpose in an informational text.” • Let students know that the persuasive techniques they will read about today are some of the central ideas of media literacy. Review the definition of media literacy from the Domain-Specific Vocabulary anchor chart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informally assess the homework to determine how successfully students are learning to apply each set of questions, and which questions or concepts may require reinforcement. Assisting students in understanding these questions now will simplify the research and performance task in the future.



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Jigsaw: Media Techniques (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange students into groups of three. • Distribute and display Basic Persuasion Techniques. • Refer to the Basic Concepts of Media Literacy anchor chart specifically Concept 3. Explain that students are now going to learn some of the “language of persuasion” in an ad. This will allow them to decode and deconstruct any advertisement they see (refer to Concept 4), and help them become active consumers of media. Using the metaphor of a detective, or a code-breaker, might be useful in this explanation. • Ask students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What does it mean when you <i>persuade</i> someone?” • Ask for volunteers for the answer. Listen for answers that hit the basic premise that persuasion asks people to believe something through argument OR other methods. This is a subtle distinction, but very important, so use these probing questions if necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “If you were persuading your parents to buy you an iPod, what are some of the things you might say?” * “Do you always use facts or evidence when you persuade someone?” * “If I said, ‘You should get me an iPod, Mom, because all the other kids have one,’ am I using a fact about the iPod to persuade my mother? What if all the other kids <i>didn’t</i> have an iPod?” * “What if I said, ‘The members of my favorite rock band all have iPods; I should have one too’? Is that strong evidence? If it isn’t, why might it seem like strong evidence to you?” • Groups should now decide how they will divide up the text. One student should read Techniques 1–5; the second student should read Techniques 6–10; the third, Techniques 11–15. • Explain that students will now read their assigned techniques silently to themselves while annotating each technique in the margin, or below the technique with the “gist” of the technique. They will explain the “gist” of each technique to their group when everyone is finished reading. • Model Technique 1. Read the technique aloud. Then say something like: “This technique has viewers make a connection between the product and something they want. ‘If you want romantic love, use this deodorant!’ for example. So I might write in the margin, or at the bottom, ‘strong connection between product and something else important the person wants.’” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Media Literacy Project also has written “Intermediate” and “Advanced” persuasion techniques, located in the same PDF on their Web site as the Basic Techniques. Consider using these as an extension for your highly motivated and/or proficient students. • Consider preparing certain students who could benefit from advance preparation, or a confidence-booster, for the One-Example Whip-around. Give them a technique ahead of time, have them prepare an example, and call on them to share it at the appropriate time.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the groups read and annotate silently. Then, have each student in the group take turns explaining the “gist” of each of their five techniques. • Circulate during the Jigsaw, giving assistance and clarification where necessary. • Debrief as a whole class. Ask if any groups got stuck, or need further clarification. Answer any questions students have about the techniques. • To conclude, do a One-Example Go-round. For each of the 15 techniques, ask students to volunteer one brief example that they have seen or experienced in their own lives. Give them 1 or 2 minutes of silence to find their example, and then conduct the Whip-around. Encourage students to write down these examples for techniques they are still struggling with; you can model this note-taking under the document camera. 	
<p>B. Theme Sort: Media Techniques (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand out the Basic Persuasion Techniques cards. Explain that each group will now sort the techniques into groups, in any way that makes sense to them. Assure them that there are several appropriate ways to sort; as long as the groupings are logical, they are correct. • Model one grouping of techniques by demonstrating that Fear and Humor could go into a group together, because both techniques rest on evoking strong emotions. • Have student sort their cards. Circulate and give assistance where necessary. • Cold call two or three groups to share some of their groupings. Paraphrase and reflect back to the class on what you hear for the benefit of the other students. For example: “I can see that your ‘Strong Emotions’ group is really large. That makes sense to me, because so many of these techniques are about creating strong emotions in the consumer.” • To wrap up, ask students to reflect in their groups on this question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “We have been learning today about the language of persuasion in ads. In Unit 2, we worked on creating an argument: finding compelling, evidence-based reasons for a claim. How is <i>persuasion</i> different from <i>argument</i>?” • Ask for volunteers to share out. Listen for the insight that persuasion is not always grounded in evidence; often, it rests on emotional appeal, psychological associations, or cultural and social pressures. • Clarify that this does not mean that appealing to someone’s emotions is a bad thing: some of the best fiction, drama, and poetry do exactly that. However, when we are talking about informational texts such as ads, it is important to determine when the ad is using argument, and when it is using persuasion. 	



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Ad Analysis Task: Part II (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have students take out their Ad Analysis task from the beginning of class.• Redisplay the ad the class examined in the Opening.• Ask students to individually fill in the “optional” Questions 4 and 5, now that they have learned about persuasive techniques.• Cold call several students for their answers.• Collect the Ad Analysis task.• Hand out the Ad Analysis homework, Lesson 3. Suggest that students take home their Basic Persuasion Techniques handout so they have a resource for their homework.	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be sure to continue your independent reading.• Complete the Ad Analysis Lesson 3 homework. <p><i>Note: Use the thematic groupings of your students from Work Time B wherever possible to construct and post an anchor chart on Basic Persuasive Techniques for use during the rest of the unit.</i></p>	



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Supporting Materials



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Ad Analysis Task

Name:

Date:

Ad Name/Description: _____

Questions about Meanings and Messages	Answers
1. What is this ad about (and what makes you think that)	
2. What ideas, values, information, and/or points of view are overt? Implied?	
3. What is left out of this message?	
4. What techniques are used? (OPTIONAL!)	



Ad Analysis Task

.....
Name:
.....

.....
Date:
.....

Ad Name/Description:

Questions about Meanings and Messages	Answers
5. Why were those techniques used? How do they communicate the message? (OPTIONAL!)	
6. How might different people understand this message differently?	
7. What is my interpretation of this and what do I learn about myself from my reaction or interpretation?	



Basic Persuasion Techniques

Name: _____

Date: _____

- 1. Association.** This persuasion technique tries to link a product, service, or idea with something already liked or desired by the target audience, such as fun, pleasure, beauty, security, intimacy, success, wealth, etc. The media message doesn't make explicit claims that you'll get these things; the association is implied. *Association* can be a very powerful technique. A good ad can create a strong emotional response and then associate that feeling with a brand (family=Coke, victory=Nike). This process is known as *emotional transfer*. Several persuasion techniques below, like *Beautiful People* and *Warm & Fuzzy*, are specific types of association.
- 2. Bandwagon.** Many ads show lots of people using the product, implying that "everyone is doing it" (or at least, "all the cool people are doing it"). No one likes to be left out or left behind, and these ads urge us to "jump on the bandwagon." Politicians use the same technique when they say, "The American people want ..." How do they know?
- 3. Beautiful People.** *Beautiful People* uses good-looking models (who may also be celebrities) to attract our attention. This technique is extremely common in ads, which may also imply (but never promise!) that we'll look like the models if we use the product.
- 4. Bribery.** This technique tries to persuade us to buy a product by promising to give us something else, like a discount, a rebate, a coupon, or a "free gift." Sales, special offers, contests, and sweepstakes are all forms of *bribery*. Unfortunately, we don't really get something for free—part of the sales price covers the cost of the bribe.
- 5. Celebrities.** (A type of *Testimonial*—the opposite of *Plain Folks*.) We tend to pay attention to famous people. That's why they're famous! Ads often use celebrities to grab our attention. By appearing in an ad, celebrities implicitly endorse a product; sometimes the endorsement is explicit. Many people know that companies pay celebrities a lot of money to appear in their ads (Nike's huge contracts with leading athletes, for example, are well known) but this type of testimonial still seems to be effective.



Basic Persuasion Techniques

- 6. Experts.** (A type of *Testimonial*.) We rely on experts to advise us about things that we don't know ourselves. Scientists, doctors, professors, and other professionals often appear in ads and advocacy messages, lending their credibility to the product, service, or idea being sold. Sometimes, "plain folks" can also be experts, as when a mother endorses a brand of baby powder or a construction worker endorses a treatment for sore muscles.
- 7. Explicit Claims.** Something is "explicit" if it is directly, fully, and/or clearly expressed or demonstrated. For example, some ads state the price of a product, the main ingredients, where it was made, or the number of items in the package—these are *explicit claims*. So are specific, measurable promises about quality, effectiveness, or reliability, like "Works in only five minutes!" Explicit claims can be proven true or false through close examination or testing, and if they're false, the advertiser can get in trouble. It can be surprising to learn how few ads make explicit claims. Most of them try to persuade us in ways that cannot be proved or disproved.
- 8. Fear.** This is the opposite of the *Association* technique. It uses something disliked or feared by the intended audience (like bad breath, failure, high taxes, or terrorism) to promote a "solution." Ads use fear to sell us products that claim to prevent or fix the problem. Politicians and advocacy groups stoke our fears to get elected or to gain support.
- 9. Humor.** Many ads use humor because it grabs our attention and it's a powerful persuasion technique. When we laugh, we feel good. Advertisers make us laugh and then show us their product or logo because they're trying to connect that good feeling to their product. They hope that when we see their product in a store, we'll subtly re-experience that good feeling and select their product. Advocacy messages (and news) rarely use humor because it can undermine their credibility; an exception is political satire.
- 10. Intensity.** The language of ads is full of intensifiers, including *superlatives* (greatest, best, most, fastest, lowest prices), *comparatives* (more, better than, improved, increased, fewer calories), *hyperbole* (amazing, incredible, forever), *exaggeration*, and many other ways to hype the product.
- 11. Maybe.** Unproven, exaggerated, or outrageous claims are commonly preceded by "weasel words" such as may, might, can, could, some, many, often, virtually, as many as, or up to. Watch for these words if an offer seems too good to be true. Commonly, the *Intensity* and *Maybe* techniques are used together, making the whole thing meaningless.



Basic Persuasion Techniques

- 12. Plain Folks.** (A type of *Testimonial*—the opposite of *Celebrities*.) This technique works because we may believe a “regular person” more than an intellectual or a highly paid celebrity. It’s often used to sell everyday products like laundry detergent because we can more easily see ourselves using the product, too. The *Plain folks* technique strengthens the down-home, “authentic” image of products like pickup trucks and politicians. Unfortunately, most of the “plain folks” in ads are actually paid actors carefully selected because they look like “regular people.”
- 13. Repetition.** Advertisers use repetition in two ways: within an ad or advocacy message, words, sounds, or images may be repeated to reinforce the main point. And the message itself (a TV commercial, a billboard, a Web site banner ad) may be displayed many times. Even unpleasant ads and political slogans work if they are repeated enough to pound their message into our minds.
- 14. Testimonials.** Media messages often show people testifying about the value or quality of a product, or endorsing an idea. They can be *experts*, *celebrities*, or *plain folks*. We tend to believe them because they appear to be a neutral third party (a pop star, for example, not the lipstick maker, or a community member instead of the politician running for office). This technique works best when it seems like the person “testifying” is doing so because they genuinely like the product or agree with the idea. Some testimonials may be less effective when we recognize that the person is getting paid to endorse the product.
- 15. Warm & Fuzzy.** This technique uses sentimental images (especially of families, kids, and animals) to stimulate feelings of pleasure, comfort, and delight. It may also include the use of soothing music, pleasant voices, and evocative words like “cozy” or “cuddly.” The *Warm & Fuzzy* technique is another form of *Association*. It works well with some audiences, but not with others, who may find it too corny.



Basic Persuasion Techniques Cards
(For Teacher Reference)

Fear	Humor
Warm & Fuzzy	Bandwagon
Association	Plain Folks
Beautiful People	Explicit Claims
Experts	Testimonials
Repetition	Maybe
Intensity	Bribery
Celebrities	



Ad Analysis Homework

Lesson 3

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.....

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Ad Name/Description:

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Persuasion, Argument and Other Appeals (optional)

