

The Consumer World

Unit 3: Advertising and the Code of Practice

Aims

- To test comprehension skills by careful close reading of a long text and to create advertisement from the information
- To listen and match poor / unacceptable advertisements to the Code of Practice regulation
- To practise oral presentations
- To practise writing an argumentative piece of writing / debate speech

Materials

- CW3.1 Student's File The Code of Practice
- CW3.2 Student's File Writing/Designing a Bad Ad
- CW3.2 Teacher's Resource Kit "Bad Ad" Ideas
- CW3.3 Student's File 20 "Bad Ads" (Listening Two)
- CW3.4 Student's File School Sponsorship
- CW3.5 Student's File Writing Activity
- CW3.5 Teacher's Resource Kit Debate Speech Model

Procedure

1. In CW 3.2 students are asked to design advertisements in breach of the Code, in other words unacceptable advertisements. This tests comprehension skill and requires some exercise of imagination. Ask students to share their creations. If they have problems thinking of ideas, give them a copy of Teacher's Resource Kit CW 3.2 to help them.
2. The students now do the exercise in reverse, listening to imaginary advertisements in CW3.3 and relating them to the code. As the advertisements are short and unaided by visual material, it will be necessary to play them 2 or 3 times. Later the students can compare their decisions.

This exercise is intended to be helpful in developing skills needed in the Practical Skills Paper.

3. CW3.4 covers the topic of advertising and commercial sponsorship in schools. In the United States this has reached a level unknown in Hong Kong, and it is hoped that the topic will be new and interesting to the students.

4. CW 3.4 is a Use of English oral exercise. Students should be put into groups of 4 and each given a reading passage (one of Passages A, B, C and D) to read. They then take 10 minutes to prepare a presentation of 1.5 - 2 minutes based on the passage read. As one group is doing the presentation the other groups make comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation based on the suggested points given in CW3.4.
5. After the presentation, the group should discuss the comments made on one another's presentation. The group then put together the four presentations to make a list of all the ways companies try to have an impact on schools.

The nine methods are as follows:

- School radio advertising
 - Sponsorship of teams, magazines etc
 - Ads on school buses
 - Giving equipment
 - Competitions
 - Free magazines
 - Educational materials
 - Give-aways
 - Textbook ads.
6. A discussion follows. For ten minutes the group should try to think of their own arguments for or against allowing advertising etc into school. Students might like to imagine some bizarre consequences [e.g. Form 1 classes named after Macdonald's products]. There are some questions to ensure that they have been thinking along the correct lines.
 7. CW3.5 is a writing activity. There are 3 choices - and help in planning is offered in each case. Maybe different groups can do different work so they can then compare the results. If enough students write debate speeches, it would certainly be interesting for two or three to be read to the class.
 8. Teachers have their own preferences (as do students) so the writing in CW 3.5 may be done individually or in pairs. It would be desirable to give some feedback. Reading quickly without correcting would be reasonably fast and could lead to a few helpful comments.

It is envisaged that introducing the topic, doing the oral work and hearing some of the work will take over 2 hours.

An example of a piece of writing is given in TRK CW3.5.

Teacher's Resource Kit CW 3.2

“Bad Ad” Ideas

- V.5.a. Are you heartbroken? Does someone close to you take drugs? Is a young person in your family ruining their life?

Well, don't despair - at No Drug Clinic we can cure drug addiction. It's our business to save lives.

- V.10.b. Chan's Shark's Fin Soup is more than a meal - it is made from a secret recipe handed down in the Chan family since the Tang Dynasty. Ancient scholars and magic workers created the perfect soup.

Could this be the secret of long life?

- VI.1.b. Mother's Day is coming - and, you know, there's only one way a good child can really show their love and gratitude to Mummy - and that's a shopping voucher from Insincere Store. Show your love and concern - and make Mummy happy for a whole year.

- VI.1.g. A drawing will be necessary.

- VI.2.b. Child A: Hey, piggy, you eat too much. Give me your french fries. Thanks. If you hadn't had been quick I'd have punched your fat face.

Lai's french fries. People fight over them!

Student's File CW 3.3. (Key)

II.	Product: Quit Nature: Anti-smoking tablets Problem: Smoking cures are unacceptable [Appendix V.4.a]
III.	Bubbles Beer Alcohol portrayed as indispensable to popularity [8.d.iv]
IV.	Kill Insecticide Could be regarded as disturbing with persistent repetition [7.b]
V.	Bubbles Beer Children not permitted [8.d.i]
VI.	Dry Umbrella Depending on context could seem like part of a programme, not clearly advertising material [4.b.vii]
VII.	Supersoft Bed. They seem separate, but very similar ads [7.d]
VIII.	Wondergrow Hair-restorer Unacceptable product [Appendix V.4.b]
IX.	Madam Helen Fortune-teller Part I - unacceptable services [8.j.iii] but the magazine is acceptable
X.	Love Charity Seems OK. If not paid, not even an ad. [4.b.v]

Student's File CW 3.3 (Key) (cont...)

XI.	MacEggs Fast food Seems to be part of a programme. Acceptable [4.vii]
XII.	Sugarlove Sweet Encourages child to demand the product [Appendix VI.1.e]
XIII.	Bright Washing powder Disparages other products [7.c]
XIV.	Li's Funeral parlour Unacceptable service [8.j.iv]
XV.	Popsi Soft drink Seems to be an imitation of Pepsi [8.m]
XVI.	Lovely Beauty clinic No ads on slimming and cosmetic surgery [Appendix V.5.b]
XVII.	Partners Bar/club Unacceptable services [8.j.x]
XVIII.	Smooth Face-cream Use of superlatives [7.c]
XIX.	New Life Heart tonic Dramatises illness and describes symptoms [Appendix V.7]
XX.	Model School bag Suggests child is inferior [Appendix VI.1.c]

Teacher's Resource Kit CW 3.5

Debate Speech Model

You arrive in school, walk past a few advertising posters and go to your locker to get out your books for the first lesson. Their covers are stamped with Coci logos, and in the backcovers there are some smart ads of cool guys running round in Nike sports shoes. Your favourite songs playing on the school radio, followed by ads for a new restaurant nearby: "Sally's noodles are best" You might give them a try. Ah Kwok runs by in his new basketball shirt - from Ballini - their names on the ball he's bouncing as well.

First lesson is Geography. You watch a really good film on the oil business, and then do a worksheet. Lovely graphics, you think, and it's so reassuring to know that actually oil spills are very rare and can be cleaned up without much trouble at all. And then your form-teacher hands out a Maths magazine. You intend to read it some time, but just now your attention for Joe Chung's new C.D. You must get it. After all with this \$10 off coupon, it's very good value.

If some people have their way this could be a picture of a school in a few year's time - and already you will find many schools in the States not so different from the description above. What we have to ask before it happens here is whether this represents progress or decline.

First, we will look at some of the arguments in favour of allowing advertising and commercial sponsorship of various sorts into schools. The principal one is quite simply money. More and more we expect institutions to raise some of their own money. Simply relying on the tax-payers is not good enough. One of the most available sources of money is big business. In return for being allowed to advertise, they will make payments to schools, supply equipment and provide fine educational materials. And it is clear that companies have the best resources for this purpose, and produce very high quality films, books and worksheets. It would be silly for schools not to make use of these opportunities.

Secondly, it can be argued that schools are part of the world, and exist to prepare students for the world, so they should not cut themselves off. Our society is a commercial, consumerist one and our schools should reflect this and not hide from reality.

Thirdly, if there are possible dangers, teachers are there to deal with them. If a company produces materials with slight bias, the teacher can always point this out, and discuss advertising and commercial strategies with the students making them more aware of the issue. The adverts can become teaching materials themselves. And obviously schools will not allow sponsorship from companies that produce harmful or 'adult' products.

That's one side of the case. But there are many arguments on the other side. The one I most want to emphasise here is that schools should try to discourage materialism. Schools must prepare people for life, but they are also centres of learning and values.

Teacher's Resource Kit CW 3.5 (cont...)

They in some ways offer children an alternative to hamburgers, CDs and sports shoes. Schools should not be seen to endorse all these products that children are already over-exposed to. We are all very impressionable and easily affected by advertising. This is never more so than when we were young. Schooltime should be a period away from ads, shopping and empty consumer desire.

It is difficult to be objective, but, at least, we should try. It is doubtful if commercial forces even try. Educational materials should rather come from the Education Department, curriculum developers, and publishing companies which, at least have no further motive than just to sell their books.

I feel then that although there are arguments in favour of allowing companies to advertise in school, and although finance is an important factor, we should, on the whole, try to make schools special places where youngsters should have a chance to think of something other than consumption.