

**Lesson Plan Title:** Analyzing Advertisements – Media Literacy

**Subject:** English

**Grade:** 9

**Objective:** Students will be able to...

1. Analyze and deconstruct visual advertisements in print and video form to become media literate.
2. Support and present their findings through class discussion.
3. Compare visual and print forms of an advertising campaign to comprehend variations in how a message is conveyed to an audience through differences in media.

**Common Core State Standards:**

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7](#): Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.4](#): Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1](#): Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.7](#): Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2](#): Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1](#): Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4](#): Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

**Materials:** Basic concepts of media literacy hand out, power point, deconstruction worksheets x2, Taylor Swift advertisement, Taylor Swift video advertisement:

<http://youtu.be/PwcYnJ4HVXg>

**Procedure:**

*Motivating Activity*- Pairs, 3 min: When students walk into classroom, they will be asked to open up their homework and discuss the print advertisement they brought into class with their peers, their answers for why they find the advertisement interesting, and how they think it influences people.

Whole class, 2 min: The teacher will ask volunteers to discuss their findings with the class.

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Whole class, 10 min: The teacher will explain that “media messages affect our thoughts, attitudes, and actions” and that this idea is a media literacy concept that people should know when looking at media and analyzing it. The print advertisements that we discussed are considered a medium, and others exist such as television commercials. The teacher will then ask students to name more media they can think of. After this, the teacher will write down the first concept “media messages, attitudes, and actions,” and hand out a sheet depicting nine other media literacy concepts. Students will be called to read aloud these concepts. Afterwards, the teacher will explain that now that they know these basic media literacy concepts they can begin to analyze and deconstruct media messages. They can begin to fully understand media messages that they see on a daily basis.

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Whole class, 10 min: The teacher will use a PowerPoint to show the five main concepts for deconstructing media. She will then explain a concept and have students answer questions about this concept using a David Beckham Rolex advertisement. For example, the teacher will ask about the concept of Source, and the students will point out the source of this advertisement.

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Groups, 10 min: The teacher will then give students a Taylor Swift Diet Coke advertisement to examine and be asked to answer deconstructive questions on a worksheet.

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Whole class, 10 min: The teacher will have each group answer deconstructive questions about the advertisement. The whole class will then review their answers together. Since groups might have different answers, students will have to justify the answers they provided.

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*Closure:* Whole class, 10 min: Students will then watch Taylor Swift video advertisements for Diet Coke. The teacher will ask students to compare it to the written advertisements. Through whole class discussion they will answer the question: Is the video advertisement's message stronger than the print advertisement, and why or why not?

To expand on this idea, the teacher will provide another deconstruction worksheet that students will complete for homework. At the bottom of the sheet they will answer why they believe the video advertisement is stronger or weaker than the print advertisement and give evidence. Students will be provided the link of the video on the worksheet. The teacher will also distribute the link through email to students. Students will discuss these findings in their next class.

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**Assessment:** Students are formatively assessed through verbal responses of questions about the advertisements when discussing the five main concepts of deconstructing media. Students are summatively assessed through their answers on their deconstruction worksheet of the print and video advertisements.

**Resources:**

**All questions, concept, and definitions taken from:**

Media Literacy Project. "Introduction to Media Literacy." [Medialiteracy.org](http://Medialiteracy.org).

## Basic Concepts of Media Literacy

- 1. Media construct our culture.** Our society and culture – even our perception of reality - is shaped by the information and images we receive via the media. A few generations ago, our culture’s storytellers were people – family, friends, and others in our community. For many people today, the most powerful storytellers are television, movies, music, video games, and the Internet.
- 2. Media messages affect our thoughts, attitudes and actions.** We don’t like to admit it, but all of us are affected by advertising, news, movies, pop music, video games, and other forms of media. That’s why media are such a powerful cultural force, and why the media industry is such big business.
- 3. Media use “the language of persuasion.”** All media messages try to persuade us to believe or do something. News, documentary films, and nonfiction books all claim to be telling the truth. Advertising tries to get us to buy products. Novels and TV dramas go to great lengths to appear realistic. To do this, they use specific techniques (like flattery, repetition, fear, and humor) we call “the language of persuasion.”
- 4. Media construct fantasy worlds.** While fantasy can be pleasurable and entertaining, it can also be harmful. Movies, TV shows, and music videos sometimes inspire people to do things that are unwise, anti-social, or even dangerous. At other times, media can inspire our imagination. Advertising constructs a fantasy world where all problems can be solved with a purchase. Media literacy helps people to recognize fantasy and constructively integrate it with reality.
- 5. No one tells the whole story.** Every media maker has a point of view. Every good story highlights some information and leaves out the rest. Often, the effect of a media message comes not only from what is said, but from what part of the story is not told.
- 6. Media messages contain “texts” and “subtexts.”** The text is the actual words, pictures and/or sounds in a media message. The subtext is the hidden and underlying meaning of the message.
- 7. Media messages reflect the values and viewpoints of media makers.** Everyone has a point of view. Our values and viewpoints influence our choice of words, sounds and images we use to communicate through media. This is true for all media makers, from a preschooler’s crayon drawing to a media conglomerate’s TV news broadcast.
- 8. Individuals construct their own meanings from media.** Although media makers attempt to convey specific messages, people receive and interpret them differently, based on their own prior knowledge and experience, their values, and their beliefs. This means that people can create different subtexts from the same piece of media. All meanings and interpretations are valid and should be respected.

**9. Media messages can be decoded.** By “deconstructing” media, we can figure out who created the message, and why. We can identify the techniques of persuasion being used and recognize how media makers are trying to influence us. We notice what parts of the story are not being told, and how we can become better informed.

**10. Media literate youth and adults are active consumers of media.** Many forms of media – like television – seek to create passive, impulsive consumers. Media literacy helps people consume media with a critical eye, evaluating sources, intended purposes, persuasion techniques, and deeper meanings.

(Placed in Powerpoint)

Key concepts for deconstructing media

- **Source**

All media messages are created. The creator could be an individual writer, photographer or blogger. In the case of a Hollywood movie, the scriptwriter, director, producer, and movie studio all play a role in creating the message. Ads are usually put together by ad agencies, but the “creator” is really the client – the company or organization that’s paying for the ad. The key point is: Whose message is this? Who has control over the content?

- **Audience**

Media messages are intended to reach audiences. Some – like primetime TV shows – are designed to reach millions of people. Others – like a letter or email – may be intended only for one person. Most media messages are designed to reach specific groups of people – defined by age, gender, class, interests, and other factors – called the “target audience.”

- **Text**

We often use the word “text” to mean “written words.” But in media literacy, “text” has a very different meaning. The text of any piece of media is what you actually see and/or hear. It can include written or spoken words, pictures, graphics, moving images, sounds, and the arrangement or sequence of all of these elements. Sometimes the text is called the “story” or “manifest text.” For most of us, the text of a piece of media is always the same.

- **Subtext**

The “subtext” is an individual interpretation of a media message. It is sometimes called the “latent text.” The subtext is not actually heard or seen; it is the meaning we create from the text in our own minds. While media makers often create texts that suggest certain subtexts, each person creates their own subtext (interpretation) based on their previous experiences, knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and values. Thus, two people interpreting the same text can produce two very different subtexts.

- **Persuasion techniques.**

Media messages use a number of techniques to try to persuade us to believe or do something. If we can spot the techniques being used, we’re less likely to be persuaded, and more likely to think for ourselves.

Some persuasion techniques:

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.
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.”

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. 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.

### • Point of view

No one tells the whole story. Everyone tells part of the story from their point of view. Deconstructing a media message can expose the values and biases of the media maker, and uncover powerful ideological and value messages.

Advertisement used for Powerpoint:

DAVID BECKHAM

HIS CHARISMA IS KNOWN THE WORLD OVER. WITH AN UNSURPASSED LEVEL OF RESILIENCE HE HAS SURPASSED THE EXPECTATIONS OF MANY. IT HAS SINCE CARRIED HIM TO THREE WORLD CUPS. HE IS SIMPLY SENSATIONAL - ON AND OFF THE FIELD.

ROLEX. LIVE FOR GREATNESS.

OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST

ROLEX

FOR AN OFFICIAL ROLEX JEWELER CALL 1-800-347-6239.  
ROLEX \* OYSTER PERPETUAL AND DATEJUST ARE TRADEMARKS. NEW YORK

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Deconstruction Activity

**Directions:** Deconstruct the advertisement by answering the following questions in full sentences.

1. Whose message is this? Who created or paid for it? Why?

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2. Who is the “target audience”? What is their age, ethnicity, class, profession, interests, etc.? What words, images or sounds suggest this?

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3. What is the “text” of the message? (What we actually see and/or hear: written or spoken words, photos, drawings, logos, design, music, sounds, etc.)

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4. What is the “subtext” of the message? (What do you think is the hidden or unstated meaning?)

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5. What “tools of persuasion” are used?

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6. What positive messages are presented? What negative messages are presented?

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7. What part of the story is not being told?

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Taylor Swift print advertisement:

