



# ARE YOU GETTING THE MESSAGE?

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**TEXT TYPE:** Non-fiction: Persuasive—Magazine Article  
**GUIDED READING LEVEL:** R

**SUMMARY:** Marketers spend billions of dollars annually on advertising to ‘twens’ and teens. This article looks at the many techniques that are used to persuade young consumers that certain products are not only cool, but essential. But who really benefits?

## FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- evaluating

## FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- making connections: text to text
- inferring
- synthesizing

## ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Say and Switch strategy
- discussing with a group
- answering questions
- sharing ideas
- discussing mechanics of marketing (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

## WORKING WITH WORDS

- language predictability: using context to work out word meanings

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- state and support opinions
- identify examples of persuasive elements from text
- locate other people’s points of view
- identify features of a magazine article
- read and recognize quotes and their function within a magazine article

## ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Evaluating Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

## TEXT FEATURES

- title/subtitle
- headings
- quotes
- captions
- magazine style format with columns

## VISUAL LITERACY

- photographs

## TEXT SUPPORTS

- topic of interest to students
- familiar popular culture references
- captions

## POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- use of quotes
- subjects being interviewed/citing roles and organizations
- students may be unfamiliar with concept of marketing
- multi-syllabic words and challenging vocabulary, e.g., ‘marketers,’ ‘advertising campaign,’ ‘manipulation’

## BEFORE READING

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### Making Connections: Text to Text and Evaluating

#### **Activate and build prior knowledge**

- Engage students in a brief discussion about magazine articles. What do they already know about magazines and their content/conventions? Hand out copies of the article. Read the title aloud, as well as the question and statement that follow it. Say, *This is a persuasive magazine article. In this case that means the author is trying to convince us that companies have a goal to profit by marketing and selling you their products, and that owning the latest advertised product might not make us as popular as we hope. What do you think about marketing things to young people? Do you think you will agree with what the author might say?*

### Text Features and Inferring

#### **Introduce supports and challenges**

- Explain to students that this article is designed to persuade the reader of an argument through the use of the information presented and the opinions and comments from experts and young people. Ask students to read along as you read aloud the first three paragraphs. Ask them to identify the speaker in the second paragraph (Carly). Then ask for a volunteer to read aloud the words that Carly actually said. Direct students to identify who is being quoted in the third paragraph (Josh Golin). Ask for another volunteer to read aloud the words that Josh Golin actually said. Ask students, *What do you notice about the text where Carly and Josh Golin are being interviewed? How can we recognize that these are someone else's words—not the author's? Say, We call these 'quotes,' and they are always indicated in the text with the use of 'quotation marks.'* Say, *Again, look at the third paragraph. Why do you think the word 'It' in the last sentence is placed in brackets? Then ask students to think about the phrases "Buy this cellphone, and you'll be popular," and "Wear these jeans, and you'll be beautiful." Ask, Who, or what, is being 'quoted' here?*

### Language Predictability

- Students should think about what challenging words or phrases might mean, based on their context. Point out the word 'commercials' in the second paragraph. Say, *It says 'commercials advertise all the cool things...,' So what is a commercial? Then direct students to Josh Golin's organization in the third paragraph: 'Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood.' Ask, What do you think Golin's organization does? Does the word 'Commercial' have the same meaning here as in the second paragraph example we just looked at? Say to students, Ask yourself: 'If there is a word or phrase that I really cannot work out the meaning of, and it is preventing me from understanding a sentence or paragraph, might thinking about the context in which it appears in the text help?'*

### Evaluating

#### **Set a purpose for reading**

- Tell students they are reading to find more information about marketing and advertising to young people. While they are reading, they should think about how persuasive the article is. Do they agree with the author? Write a key question on a whiteboard: *Do I agree with the author's opinion about marketing to young people? Why or why not?*

### **Provide for early finishers**

- Any students who finish early can think about a time when they bought something they saw advertised. With another early finisher, ask students to discuss their purchases given what they have read in this article. Were they marketed to successfully? Which recent advertisements do they consider effective? Why?

## **DURING READING**

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### **Monitor reading**

- To check comprehension, you might question individual students' understanding of what they read, e.g., *What are some of the different ways in which marketers reach young buyers? What is one of the most important mediums marketers are using right now? What are you thinking about advertising to young people, now that you have read part of this article?*

### **Observe**

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Evaluating Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*.)

## **AFTER READING**

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### **Revisit the purpose for reading**

- Ask students to read the question that was written on the whiteboard before they began reading. Use the Say and Switch strategy (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*). Students should turn to a partner. The first student begins to respond, while the second carefully listens. When you give a signal, the roles reverse, with the second student now being responsible for continuing or completing the first student's line of thought before introducing new ideas. Allow 2–3 minutes for a number of role switches, at unpredictable intervals.

### **Check on outstanding challenges**

- Discuss any outstanding challenges students experienced in evaluating this text. Were they able to find examples to inform and support their thoughts/opinion? You might need to model this with an example, e.g., *I think the author feels strongly and did a good job of arguing that too much time and money is spent on advertising to teens. I think this because she included fascinating facts such as the one that marketers in Canada spend more than \$2 billion a year on advertising to young people. The author also went to the effort of including other people's thoughts and opinions on this subject, which demonstrates to me that this issue is important to many people.*

## **Evaluating**

### **Note successful strategy use**

- Provide positive feedback to students about their ability to identify the author's opinions as well as their success in explaining their own. Note particularly effective use of supporting examples from the text.

## **FOCUSED REREADING**

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Three options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or you might select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 6 Literacy Support Guide*.

### **Written**

#### **Evaluating**

- Have students write a letter for submission to a school paper, in which they express a reason for reducing the amount of advertising that students are exposed to in school. Students could begin by making a list of all the ways that students are influenced through marketing. These might include food served, candy/pop machines, clothing, corporate-sponsored play centres, the Internet, and so on. Students should offer ways to reduce the exposure, and might begin to explore the role of visible 'sponsorships' in school. Stress development and organization of their ideas before writing is undertaken. The most appropriate ideas should be used for their article, and should be organized with the main idea and supporting details grouped into multiple paragraphs that form a structured letter.

### **Artistic**

#### **Synthesizing**

- Have students design a poster aimed at persuading young people to be aware of marketing techniques. They could display their posters in the school hallways for maximum effect. Say to students, *When creating your poster, think about why it is important for young people to have this information.*

**ESL NOTE:** This activity allows for visual support and is very hands-on. As a result this may work well with your ESL students.

### **Oral/dramatic**

#### **Analyzing and Synthesizing**

- Ask students to reread the first paragraph under the heading 'HOT MARKET.' Say to participants, *As a group I'd like you to discuss who produces these ads. What kind of professions would be involved in promoting a product in print, TV, video game, or product placement advertising (as seen in the American Idol example)? If so much money is being spent on advertising to young people, can we begin to break down how this money is spent and what the various roles include?* Provide guidance and assistance with this discussion as required.