

What impact does government advertising have on shaping citizenship and identity?

Grade 9 Critical Challenge using Technology

Guiding Question and Overview:

How do governments use advertising to promote their policies and shape public opinion?

One of the ways that governments at all levels impact the behavior and attitudes of citizens is through advertising. In fact, the settlement of Alberta itself was largely due to the hugely successful marketing campaign of Canada's early federal governments called, "The Last, Best West" (see briefing material). This lesson is designed to introduce government advertising, to critically assess the persuasiveness of government advertisements and political campaigns, and to foster an appreciation for contemporary issues that impact quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada by designing persuasive advertisements using technology.

Curriculum Outcomes

Social Studies:

Values and Attitudes

- 9.1.2 Students will appreciate the various effects of government policies on citizenship and on Canadian society.
- 9.1.3 Students will appreciate how emerging issues impact quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada.

Knowledge and Understanding

- 9.1.4 Students will examine the structure of Canada's federal political system by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:
 - How are laws passed in the federal political system?
 - What is the role of political parties within Canada's federal political system?
 - What is the role of the media in relation to political issues?
 - How do lobby groups impact government decision-making?

ICT:

- **Communication of a Unified Message** (C1.3.6, C7.3.2, P6, 3.1, 3.2)
- **Processes for Productivity** (P.1, P.3, P.4)

Technology/Materials Needed:

Technology:

- Internet access, LCD projector and audio support to show examples from Activity 2
- Software applications compatible with the learning objectives outline in Activity 3 where students will design their own digital advertisement. Examples include PowerPoint, iMovie, and podcasts using Garageband.
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Important: Please be sure to abide by the **copyright** rules & regulations when you are importing images from websites. If the copyright is not listed as either public domain, or for public use, then you must email the web-host and get permission to use in an educational and non-profit way.

Assignment

Activity 1: Introduction to Government Advertising^{1*}

1. Ask students to brainstorm the ways in which government impacts the behaviors and attitudes of citizens. Some of the ideas that should come up include making and enforcing laws, protecting our rights, taxing certain products and communicating their ideas through advertising. Another option is to pose the following question to students: How might the government influence people to do certain things such as:
 - a. Leading a healthy life-style
 - b. Supporting a new government program (ex. climate change policy, health care reform, curb side recycling)
2. Ask students if they know of any examples when Canadian governments have used advertising campaigns to influence behavior and to gain support of their policy ideas.
3. Remind or introduce students about the “The Last, Best West” campaign that was used by the federal government at the turn of the century to **persuade** people to settle present day, Western Canada.
4. Review the advertisements and information located on [“The Last, Best West” website](http://www.civilization.ca/hist/advertis/ads1-01e.html) (<http://www.civilization.ca/hist/advertis/ads1-01e.html>) In particular, view (or print and handout) the four images that are posted on the introduction page ([image 1](#), [image 2](#), [image 3](#), [image 4](#)).
5. Ask students to make a list of the elements in the advertisements that make them persuasive. This may also be accomplished in a jigsaw format (divide into four groups, and then compare the different lists by reassembling into sharing groups).
6. As a class, review the lists of persuasive techniques, and as a class, co-create criteria for a persuasive advertisement. Use this [comprehensive list](http://wwwstatic.galileoweb.org/gems/moffett/PersuasionTechniques.htm) (<http://wwwstatic.galileoweb.org/gems/moffett/PersuasionTechniques.htm>) as a teacher resource.
7. **Extension:** find additional examples of government advertisements and assess their persuasiveness using the criteria that the class has created.

Activity 2: Critical Assessment of Government Advertising

1. Remind students that last class, they explored how governments have used ‘hard copy’ advertisements in places such as newspapers, magazines, and billboards to persuade and influence people. Ask students what other means by which governments advertise? TV, online and radio should come up as examples.
2. Show students the following clips of advertising campaigns, and using the criteria for persuasive advertising, assess the effectiveness of each advertisement.
 - a. Influencing behavior: [Smoking](http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/cig.mov) <http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/cig.mov>
[Drinking alcohol](http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/cig1.mov) <http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/cig1.mov>
 - b. Promoting policy: [the GST](http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/feds.htm) <http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/feds.htm>
[Health care reform](http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/feds.htm) <http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/canada/feds.htm>
 - c. Gaining political support: [the 2004 federal election](http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/2004/2004.htm) <http://www.queensu.ca/politics/politicalads/2004/2004.htm>
3. During the class initial class discussion, attempt to illustrate how these clips have been used as:

^{1*} Activity 1 and 2 are adaptations of the critical challenge *Behind the Image* in Selected Critical Challenges in Social Studies-Intermediate/Middle School. Series Editors, Roland Case and LeRoi Daniels. The Critical Thinking Consortium 2004. Pages 121-135

- An example of particular type of government attempting to create public support for a policy or law
 - An example of a particular political party seeking political support by illustrating their position on a particular issue
 - Media as part of the political process
 - An example of lobby groups impacting decision-making
4. Using the criteria of an effective advertisement that was created with students in Activity 1, provide students with a graphic organizer and ask them to conduct a comparative analysis of 2-4 of the advertisements. (see handout section)
 5. **Assignment:** Ask students to provide a written recommendation for the most persuasive advertisement. Students should base their written recommendation on their comparative analysis. (see handout section)

Activity 3: Exploring Contemporary Issues by Designing a Government Advertisement

Objective: Students will create a persuasive government advertisement.

Procedure:

1. Ask to students to brainstorm a list of contemporary issues that are impacting quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada. Some examples might include climate change, health care reform, day care, skilled labor shortage, urban sprawl, privacy and protection, and immigration.
2. Students need to select an issue that they are particularly interested in. Teachers might decide to encourage students to select particular issues they are already studying or have studied in class.
3. Students will create a persuasive advertisement using some type of technology. Examples include [podcast](#) <http://edcommunity.apple.com/ali/story.php?itemID=13931&version=2983&page=2> [vodcast](#) <http://www.viddler.com/> , and [website](#) advertisement <http://pbwiki.com/>
4. Students should consider the criteria for a persuasive advertisement that they have co-created, as well as the assignment rubric when creating their assignment.
5. **Option:** Depending on technology capabilities, students might also create 'hard copy' advertisements using word processing software such as Microsoft word.

Student Example

1. Podcast example
2. Example script
3. [Podcast step-by-step](#) <http://edcommunity.apple.com/ali/story.php?itemID=13931&version=2983&page=2>

Handouts:

*The following handouts can be purchased from The Critical Thinking Consortium <http://www.tc2.ca/>

This organization has published a collection of critical thinking challenges. The particular challenge that includes the handouts below is called "Behind the Image" in [Selected Critical Challenges in Social Studies-Intermediate/Middle School](#). Edited by John Harrison, Neil Smith and Ian Wright. The Critical Thinking Consortium. 2004. Pages 121-135.

1. Comparative Analysis (Page 129)
2. Comparative Assessment (131)
3. My Recommendation (132)

4. Assessment Rubric (133)

Assessment

	3: Excellent	2: Proficient	1: Basic
Techniques of Persuasion	Ad clearly illustrates at least four persuasive techniques.	Ad clearly illustrates at least 2 persuasive techniques.	Ad attempts to illustrate at least one persuasive technique.
Purpose of Ad	Purpose of ad is clear and effective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for government policy or law • Political party seeking support • Media as part of the political process • Lobby group impact on decision-making 	Purpose of ad is clear, but is lacking in being effective. For example, there might be a disconnect being the purpose and the way a particular group or issue is being represented.	Clarity and effectiveness of ad are lacking.
Technology *based on podcast (can be modified to fit particular type of technology used in project).	Transitions are smooth, spaced correctly, and without noisy, dead space. Noise: Project makes every effort to anticipate and filter out unwanted ambient noise. Music: Effective use of music Length keeps the audience interested and engaged.	For the most part, transitions are smooth and spaced correctly; a minimal amount of noisy dead space can be heard. Music is somewhat effective. Length is adequate.	Go back to the editing board to eliminate "cut offs". Background noise needs to be filtered. Length is inadequate.
Creativity	Advertisement is creative and it supports the content in a way that helps facilitate interest.	Project is somewhat creative, and there are no features that take away from the "overall" message.	Project is lacking in creativity and/or has many features that take way from the 'overall' message.

Sample Script

Bringing the Village Back: Podcast Script

*This podcast is intended for educational purposes only, as an example for teachers to use with their students in analyzing and creating persuasive advertisements. The statistics below are adapted from "Filling gender gap would rouse economy; Women face hurdles to work, says study" in Calgary Herald by Daphne Bramham. Canwest News Service. 04-02-2008.

Script:

Everyday, we seem to be bombarded with images and stories of the social ills infecting our society; homelessness, labour shortages, lack of skilled workers, problems with immigration, crippling line-ups at hospitals. The funny thing is, all that is needed to overcome many of these problems is making it easier for women to be a part of the paid workforce.

Some people are under the impression that the women's movement has achieved the goal of equality. Not so. On average, women in Canada are still earning 23 percent less than the men doing the same job. As a result, men are three times more likely to be the higher wage earner. And even though $\frac{3}{4}$ of families agree that it is ideal to have a dual-income family, only half of families are able to live that way. Access to quality child-care that is affordable is one major reason why this is so; and as families struggle to find adequate childcare, the number of women leaving the paid workforce continues to be threatened. More and more women and families, educated women with skill sets that are in demand, should be asking themselves: What ever happened to the village raising the children?

The Village Party of Canada recognizes the tension women and families face in raising their children. We are committed to the belief that a village is needed to overcome the problems we face as a society. As a group of connected citizens, we have met qualified, educated childcare providers who cannot sustain themselves on the wages they are being paid. We have had conversations with mothers who want to return to their work as teachers, construction workers and managers, but who cannot afford the childcare that is available to them. When you vote on December 8th, vote for the party that will bring the village back.