



# The Fine Art of Persuasion: Television & Advertising

## Pre-Visit Activity:

Through the following exercise, you and your students can explore advertising and better understand its tools and techniques.

## Vocabulary

*Begin by asking students to define and discuss the following words. Students should become familiar with these words and concepts as they will be referenced in the class.*

**Advertising:** The communication of information through various media that is persuasive in nature, about products, services, or ideas, and is usually paid for by identified sponsors.

**Brand:** A unique and identifiable symbol, association, name, or trademark that serves to differentiate competing products or services.

**Jingle:** A short, catchy song, usually mentioning a brand or product benefit, used in a commercial.

**Logo:** A design of characters and/or graphics used to identify a company.

**Media/Medium:** Forms of public communication (such as newspaper, radio, television, Internet, direct mail, and billboards) that are designed to reach large numbers of people.

**Slogan:** A memorable phrase that says something positive about a product or idea.

**Target audience:** A specified audience or demographic for which an advertising message is designed. The members of a target audience often share certain characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnicity, values, or lifestyle.



Branding is an effort by advertisers to differentiate one product from another and to make this product as attractive and unforgettable as possible to the consumer. Music, sound effects, jingles, special effects, slogans, and a variety of other persuasive techniques and devices are used to accomplish this. Because we live in a media-saturated culture that is often driven by advertising, we often are able to identify a product instantaneously from just one sound, one phrase, or a fragment of an image.

American Alphabet is an example of this. It was created by artist Heidi Cody and was part of the exhibit Branded, presented in 2000 at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Each of its twenty-six letters is part of the graphic image of a popular American consumer product. Show students American Alphabet (see attached) and let them study it for several seconds.

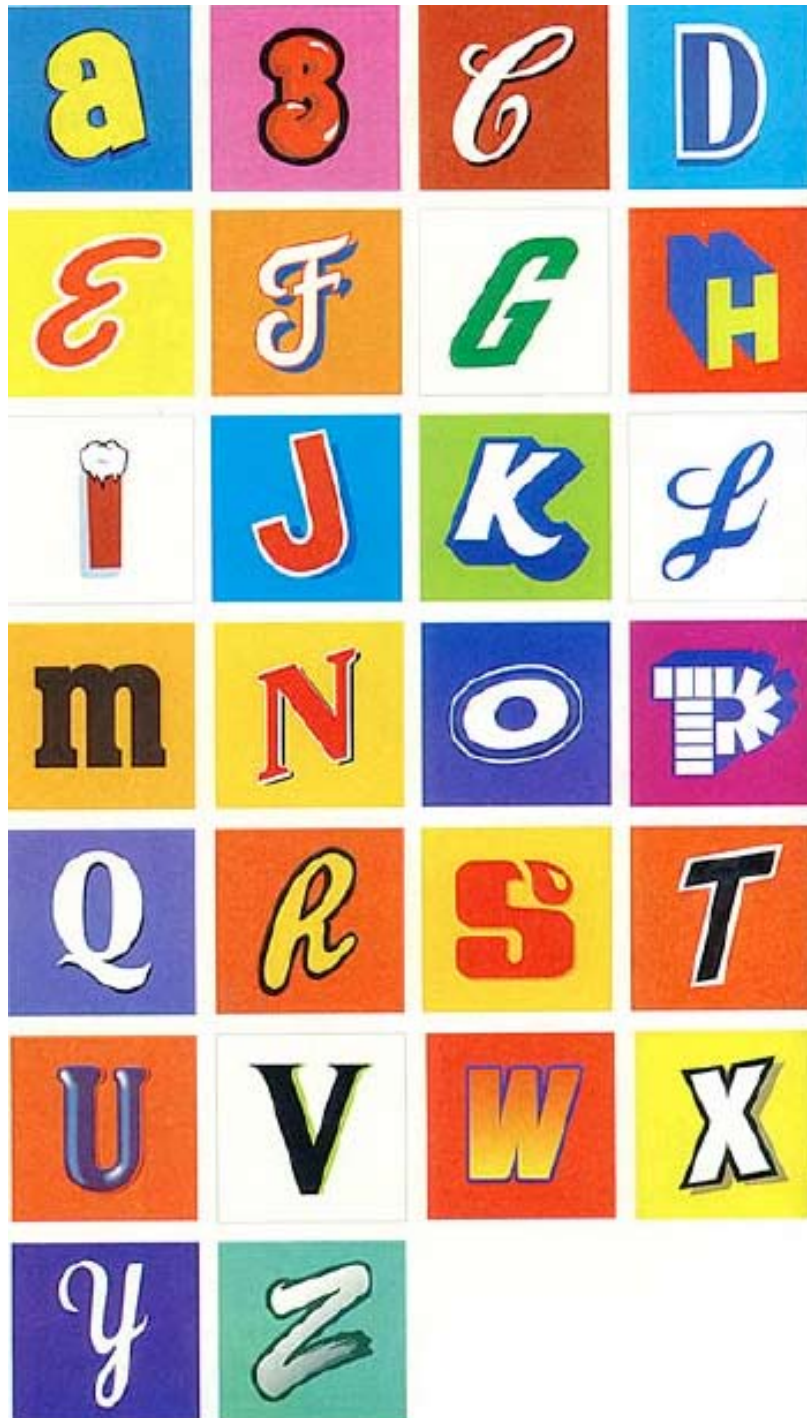
### Discuss

1. How many brands do you recognize from the letters in American Alphabet?
2. How do the letters differ from one another?
3. How do you think the letters and their backgrounds relate to and reflect the products with which they are associated? (Consider color, size, shape, and other factors.) Explain your answers.
4. What does American Alphabet make you think about the relationship between advertising and American culture



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# CLASS PROGRAM





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## American Alphabet Answer Key:

- A All
- B Bubblicious
- C Campbell's Soup
- D Dawn
- E Eggo
- F Frito
- G Gatorade
- H Hebrew National
- I Ice
- J Jell-o
- K Kool-Aid
- L Lysol
- M M&M's
- N Nilla Wafers
- O Oreo
- P Pez
- Q Q-Tip
- R Reese's
- S Starburst
- T Tide
- U Uncle Ben's
- V V8
- W Wisk
- X Xtra
- Y York Peppermint Pattie
- Z Zest



# The Fine Art of Persuasion: Television & Advertising

## Post-Visit Activity:

### Create Your Own Commercial

Divide the class into small groups. Each group will create an ad for one of the following: a food vendor, a nonalcoholic drink, or an item of clothing.

Based on what you already know as consumers and on what you've learned through our discussion about television advertising, each group should present an idea for a commercial with the storyboard they have created for it. The attached worksheet will help to market the "product" most effectively.

For your campaign, please identify:

1. Name and type of product:
2. Target audience:
3. Persuasive techniques (humor, celebrity endorsement, etc.):
4. List the programs on which the ad will run.



# CLASS PROGRAM

5. Select the time slots and broadcast or cable networks that will be most effective in delivering your message to the target audience:

Time of Day	Network				Cable				
	NBC	ABC	CBS	Fox	ESPN	MTV	BET	Nick	TOON
<b>AM</b>									
12 am – 2 am									
2 am – 4 am									
4 am – 6 am									
6 am. – 8 am									
8 am – 10 am									
10 am – 12 pm									
<b>PM</b>									
12 pm – 2 pm									
2 pm – 4 pm									
4 pm – 6 pm									
6 pm. – 8 pm									
8 pm – 10 pm									
10 pm – 12 am									

Where in the United States should the ad run most frequently? Where should it run least frequently? Why?



6. For your ad campaign, create at least one of the following to represent your product:

- a slogan
- a logo
- a jingle

7. Plan the casting and action of your commercial:

<b>Characters (list and describe)</b>	<b>Action (briefly describe the “plot” of your commercial)</b>

8. Write a plan for your commercial (called a storyboard). Either describe your idea to the class or present it as a skit. Be prepared to justify your choices and explain why your commercial will be effective and appropriate for the target audience you have identified.

For more information on advertising, visit this website:  
<http://pbskids.org/dontbuyit/advertisingtricks>