

ACTIVITY 1: Medicine Advertising

Teacher Information

It is important that the general public (including teens) learn about advertising, including the intent of ads and the persuasive appeals that are used to get people to buy products. These skills are referred to as **media literacy**, which has been defined as “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms, including print and non-print messages”. **This activity is designed to help develop media literacy skills using prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medication advertisements as examples.**

Note: Teachers will need to provide samples of advertisement “pairs” for this activity. Use the internet or magazines as a source of advertisement “pairs.” You can do a Google search online for medications and look at the images. For example you could provide advertisements for these products:

- *Nexium (prescription) and Prilosec (OTC)*
- *Claritin (prescription) and Claritin (OTC)*

Along with printed copies of the ads, the following resources should be made available to students in either printed or electronic form. The student worksheet explains what these documents can be used for while completing the activity.

- **Basics of Drug Ads**
<https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/PrescriptionDrugAdvertising/ucm072077.htm>
- **Product Claim Ad**
<https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/PrescriptionDrugAdvertising/ucm082284.htm>
- **Persuasive Techniques in Advertising** (page 1 only)
http://www.classzone.com/cz/books/ml_lit_gr12/resources/pdfs/media_analysis/H_S_15_Ad_Techniques2.pdf

You may want to show this video before you begin the activity:

- **Five Essential Media Literacy Questions for Kids**
<https://www.common sense.org/education/videos/5-essential-media-literacy-questions-for-kids>

Another option is to find a food ad and go through the questions on the worksheet as a practice before the students begin working on the medication ads.

These are additional teacher resources that you may find helpful:

- **Media Smarts**
<http://mediasmarts.ca/media-literacy-101>
- **What are the rules for promoting medications to consumers in the U.S.?**
<https://www.express-scripts.com/art/pdf/kap55Medications.pdf>
- **Changes in Direct-to-Consumer Pharmaceutical Advertising Following Shifts From Prescription-Only to Over-the-Counter Status**
<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1357255>