

YOUR FINANCIAL ROAD MAP: WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO?

DAY: 11

TITLE: YOUR MONEY: Consumer Awareness – Consumption

TARGET COMPETENCY: Understand the influence of advertising and examine the impact of our own consumption on our financial health and the environment

OBJECTIVES:

- Recognize the connections among advertising and consumption choices
- Become critical consumers of youth-directed advertising and marketing
- Determine whether corporations have a responsibility to disclose information to consumers
- Examine the impact of your own consumption on the world
- Consider the impact of consumption on your overall financial health

HANDOUTS/MATERIALS

- Computer/internet for showing *The Story of Stuff*
<http://storyofstuff.org/index.php> (Watch online or download for free; can also request a free DVD from website).
- Lesson 6 – from Buy, Use, Toss? A Closer Look at the Things We Buy
<http://www.facingthefuture.org/Curriculum/BuyCurriculum/BuyUseToss/tabid/469/Default.aspx>
- Hand out: *Analyzing an Ad* (from Why Buy? lesson)
- Hand out: *Marketing to Teens – Advertising Strategies*
http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/handouts/advertising_marketing/mtt_advertising_strategies.cfm

LESSON SUMMARY:

Students begin by considering the purpose of advertising. Each student critically analyzes an advertisement that appeals to him or her, weighing advertised information against their needs as consumers. Students discuss whether additional information should be included in product advertisements and how advertising connects to consumption choices.

LESSON OUTLINE:

MINUTES	CONTENT
	Alternative Lesson: Practical Money Skills, Lesson 11: Consumer Awareness https://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/foreducators/lesson_plans/teens.php Before Class: Ask students to bring an advertisement they find compelling. It

	<p>can be any medium: online, print, TV or radio, bumper sticker or t-shirt, etc. Also, post an “Agree” sign and a “Disagree” sign on opposite walls of your classroom.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Becoming A Smart Consumer - Advertising</p> <p>Follow Lesson 6 from <i>Why Buy?</i> (From <i>Buy, Use, Toss: A Closer Look at the Things We Buy</i>).</p> <p>Activity: Focus on Youth-directed advertising.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask student to decide whether they agree or disagree with the following statement: “The point of an advertisement is to make us unhappy with what we have.” 2. Ask students to decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement. Tell them to move to the sign that best represents their opinion. 3. Ask for volunteers from each group to explain why they agree or disagree. If a student makes a persuasive argument for one side, encourage students to switch their “votes” and move to that side of the room. 4. After the debate, students may return to their desks. 5. Share the following statistics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 31.6 million 12-19 year-olds in the US, the largest generation every (Census Bureau, 2000). • Teens are exposed to an estimated 3,000 ads a day. (Adbusters) • The average young person in America watches about 40,000 TV ads per year (American Academy of Pediatrics). • Companies spent \$100 million advertising to kids in 1983. By 2007, they were spending \$17 billion per year (write the numbers on the board to emphasize the growth). • Teens in the US spend around \$160 billion a year (Teen Research Unlimited, 2005) 6. What kinds of ad techniques appeal to youth? 7. Ask students why they think youth advertising has boomed so much in recent years? 8. Ask them to identify some positive effects of advertising. Conversely, what are some negative effects? 9. How does advertising influence consumption?
<p>15</p>	<p>Consumption</p> <p>Video: Watch the fifth segment of the Story of Stuff (about 7 min). It can be downloaded for free or viewed online: http://storyofstuff.org/index.php</p>

	<p>Highlight vocabulary from the video clip:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials economy: the natural and human-made structures, systems, rules, policies and practices that guide how materials move from extraction to production to distribution to consumption to disposal. In other words: <i>Extraction > Production > Distribution > Consumption > Disposal.</i> • Planned obsolescence: designing and producing products in order for them to be used up (obsolete) within a specific time period. Products may be designed for obsolescence either through function, like a paper coffee cup or a machine with breakable parts, or through “desirability,” like a piece of clothing made for this year’s fashion and then replaced by something totally different next year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask for examples of other planned obsolescence. • Perceived obsolescence: the part of planned obsolescence that refers to “desirability”. In other words, an object may continue to be functional, but it is no longer perceived to be stylish or appropriate, so it is rendered obsolete by perception, rather than by function. Fashion is all about perceived obsolescence, and it could be said that perceived obsolescence is the number one “product” of the advertising industry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask for examples of other perceived obsolescence.
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<p>30</p>	<p>Analyzing an Ad</p> <p>Distribute and review the handout: Marketing to Teens - Advertising Strategies Advertisers have many methods to try and get you to buy their products. Lots of times, what they are selling is a lifestyle, or an image, rather than the product. Here are some tricks of the trade</p> <p>Activity: Tell the students they are going to discover how advertising impacts their own consumption.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute the handout, <i>Analyzing an Ad</i>. 2. Ask each student to use the handout to analyze the ad he or she brought to class. 3. Have the students get into small groups and have them present their analysis to their group. Then ask for a volunteer from each group to present their analysis to the class. 4. Facilitate a discussion (see “Why Buy” lesson plan for more questions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does advertising relate to consumption? • If you lived in a different country, and your only knowledge of US culture come from watching American commercials or magazine ads, what would you think were the most important values of our society? Do you think these are an accurate reflection of your culture?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some strategies teens today can use to be savvier consumers? • Do you think advertising helps or hurts your financial health? Why or why not?
5	<p>Assessment</p> <p>Determine if these statements are True or False:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials economy is the system that guides how materials move from extraction to production to distribution to consumption to disposal. 2. A porcelain coffee mug is an example of planned obsolescence. 3. Perceived obsolescence refers to an object that may continue to be functional, but is no longer perceived to be stylish or appropriate, so it is rendered obsolete. 4. The following are example of strategies advertisers might use to sell their products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bandwagon - an appeal to join the crowd • Omission – important detail about the product are not included • Star Power – when a celebrity says the product is great • Weasel Words - use misleading words or phrases, like “natural flavors...” 5. Companies are spending over \$17 billion per year advertising to youth.

HOMEWORK:

Read and complete the 6-page Money Talks – Shopping Savvy Guide

http://moneytalks4teens.ucdavis.edu/newsltr_shopping_savvy.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The Story of Stuff – DVD Downloads

<http://storyofstuff.org/downloads.php>

You can watch the film for free on the website and YouTube channel. You can also download the films and related materials to help spread the word about The Story of Stuff Project. Downloading and sharing our films in their entirety for non-commercial use is

***NOTE:** This video has a distinct point of view and has thus sparked some controversy, but I still think the section on consumption is worth viewing with a critical mind. For teachers, there is some good debate on the film’s Wikipedia page: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Story_of_Stuff*

Buy, Use, Toss? A Closer Look at the Things We Buy)

<http://www.facingthefuture.org/Curriculum/BuyCurriculum/BuyUseToss/tabid/469/Default.aspx>

Partner with The Story of Stuff, Buy, Use, Toss? A Closer Look at the Things We Buy is an interdisciplinary curriculum that will lead your students through an exploration of the system of producing and consuming goods that is called the materials economy.

- **Lesson 6: Why Buy**

Students individually decide what types of things positively contribute to their quality of life. They compare their ideas about quality of life to national statistics related to how Americans spend their time, and determine how Americans could restructure their time to improve quality of life. Students also evaluate their own progress toward “the good life” and how their personal consumption habits impact their progress.

Fast Food Nation - book

Chapter 2, “Your Trusted Friends,” discusses the history of fast-food marketing to kids. Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* (New York: Perennial, 2002), pp. 30-57.

The Merchants of Cool: A Report The Creators and Marketers of Popular Culture for Teens (PBS Frontline video)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/>

Media Awareness

http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/handouts/advertising_marketing/mtt_advertising_strategies.cfm

Media Literacy 101

<http://depts.washington.edu/taware/view.cgi?section=s1>

Practical Money Skills, Lesson 11: Consumer Awareness

https://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/foreducators/lesson_plans/teens.php

Money Talks Teen Guide Series

http://moneytalks4teens.ucdavis.edu/newsltr_shopping_savvy.pdf

- Shopping Savvy guide
- Teachers lesson plans and activities