

**Part 1 :**  
**UNDERSTANDING ADVERTISING TECHNIQUES**  
 Read the text and complete the vocabulary exercise that follows.

**Understanding persuasive techniques can help you evaluate the messages that surround you and identify misleading information... HERE'S HOW :**

**Strategy 1: Consider the message and the audience.**

The obvious goal of most ads is to get you to buy a product or buy into an idea. When you understand the message and audience, you can determine which techniques are being used and why. Ask yourself:

- What is the message? What does the ad want the consumer to buy?
  - Who is the target audience? Ads are often customized to appeal to a certain audience : for example, is the ad gender-targeted ? Or is it aimed at a particular age group, social status, family group, or individual type ?
- Does the ad appeal to certain emotions or beliefs? What do those emotions or beliefs tell you about the audience?

**Strategy 2: Spot the persuasive techniques**

Advertisers strive to make each ad memorable, convincing, and exciting. Characters, slogans, text, and sounds are all part of the persuasive technique. Ask yourself:

- Who appears in the ad?
- The people who appear in the ad often reflect the target audience or whom members of that audience are likely to admire. Advertisers might choose specific celebrities to endorse products because they want the audience to associate the celebrity with the product. Actors or models might be chosen for many reasons. For example, they might be people just like the audience (plain folk), rebellious or unique (individuality), or "one of the crowd" ( bandwagon).

<i>Persuasive technique</i>	<i>How it is used</i>	<i>Intended effect or Appeal</i>
The « one of the crowd » or 'Bandwagon' technique [ 'bænd,wægən ]	Uses the argument that a person should believe or do something because "everybody else" does (From the idiom « to jump on the bandwagon » = to join a group, cause, or movement that appears to be gaining popular support or becoming successful)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers buy the product because they want to <u>fit in</u>.</li> <li>• Consumers assume that if others buy it, the product must be good.</li> </ul>
Celebrity endorsement	Uses a celebrity or famous person to endorse a product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers transfer admiration or respect for the celebrity to the product.</li> </ul>
Individuality	Appeals to consumers' desire to be different from everyone else; the opposite of the bandwagon appeal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers celebrate their own style, or rebel against what others are doing.</li> <li>• Consumers perceive the product as unique, stylish, or cool.</li> </ul>
Plain Folk	Shows ordinary people using or supporting a product or candidate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers trust the product because it's good enough for <u>regular</u> "folks."</li> </ul>

- Does the ad appeal to emotion or to logic?

Many ads today don't provide information about the product, and some ads don't even show the product. Instead, the ads appeal to the audience's emotions, such as pity, fear, or vanity.

For example, commercials for telephone companies often appeal to viewers' emotions of happiness or nostalgia to leave them with a positive feeling about their product and company. Some ads use humor to persuade an audience.

<i>Persuasive technique</i>	<i>How it is used</i>	<i>Intended effect or Appeal</i>
Emotional appeal	Make viewers feel certain emotions, such as excitement, sadness, or fear	• Audience transfers that feeling to the product.
Rational appeal	Use logic and reason to persuade consumers with reliable information such as statistics, facts, cost...	• Consumers are persuaded that they make a rational choice in choosing this product
Appeal to credibility	Uses testimonies from experts or from other consumers	• the audience is convinced that they can trust this brand
Positive generalities	<u>Emphasizes</u> highly valued beliefs, such as patriotism, peace, or freedom	• Consumers remember the ad and associate positive feelings with the product.
Humour	Used to make audiences laugh, but provides little information about the product or service	• Consumers remember the ad and associate positive feelings with the product.
Product comparison	Compares a product with the "inferior" competition	• Consumers believe <u>the feature product</u> is superior.

- What language is used?

Every word in an ad counts, but not all the words actually inform the audience. Loaded language, including purr words (= positive words), appeal to the audience's emotions rather than their reason. For example purr words such as "tasty" and "sensational" can make a product seem more desirable.

<i>Persuasive technique</i>	<i>How it is used</i>	<i>Intended effect or Appeal</i>
Loaded / connoted language	Uses words with positive or negative connotations to describe a product or that of the competitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The words appeal to consumers' emotions rather than their reason.</li> <li>• Purr (positive) words, such as "fresh" or "juicy," make a product seem more desirable.</li> </ul>

- Does the slogan stick?

The best slogans are memorable and create an "image" of the product. Slogans are less about the actual product and more about the audience recalling a catchy phrase and associating it with the product.

### **Strategy 3: Understand the intended effects on the target audience.**

Most ads don't employ just one persuasive technique. They often use several. Each technique is chosen to appeal specifically to the product's target audience. Ask yourself: Why do I think these techniques were chosen?

**Vocabulary :** Choose among the words that have been underlined in the text to find the equivalents to the following words or phrases :

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • identify                                      | • the customers the ad wants to attract |
| • real  | • words that are connoted positively    |
| • conform to a group, feel integrated           | • connoted words                        |
| • remembering                                   | • persist in your memory                |
| • an individual that belongs to a group         | • focuses on                            |
| • words that capture your attention             | • normal people                         |
| • believe in                                    | • adjusted to a male or female audience |
| • personalized, adjusted to a type of consumers | • work hard, make a great effort        |
| • really, truly                                 | • the product that is being advertised  |
| • promote                                       | • designed for                          |

## Part 2 : PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES IN SUPER BOWL COMMERCIALS

1. Revisit your notes from the Super Bowl commercial you chose.
2. Add vocabulary you learned in Part 1 and further analyze your commercial, including the advertising techniques that are being used (remember : most ads resort to several techniques at the same time).
3. Find a partner who chose a different commercial, then present and discuss the ad to your partner.

Try to answer the following questions more specifically, and include them in your presentation:

- Who is the target audience ? (define it in terms of age, gender, social status, family group or individual,...)
- What needs or desires are being targeted ?
- Does the ad appeal to emotions or reason/logic ? → Are any fears being suggested ? Are any stereotypes being presented ? Or on the contrary, does the ad rely on testimonies of experts or other consumers ?...
- Does the ad use any positively loaded language ? What is the underlying message in the ad ?
- Is the ad memorable ? → Do you remember any significant visual image ? Do you remember catchy words or a slogan ?
- What is your personal reaction to this ad ?

### USEFUL PHRASES FOR PRESENTING YOUR IDEAS

- ***This is an advert for...*** / *This advert seeks to sell...*
- ***We believe the ad is meant to appeal to...*** / *We think the ad is targeted at....* / *The ad is customized for...*
- ***The ad features / represents...***
- ***The ad uses several techniques. First it resorts to the technique called « ... ». This is quite clear because...*** / ***The ad also relies on the technique of...*** / ***Another techniques that the ad uses is...***
- ***We believe the ad is quite persuasive / convincing / successful because***

