

Teacher's notes

It is important for people to recognise what makes them interested in buying or wanting products, then to consider how this impacts on individual's choices. Choices will differ depending on cultures, age and other social circumstances, but our choices are also heavily influenced by the media

- Television
- Radio
- Magazines/ newspapers
- Bill boards
- Celebrities promoting products
- Branded goods – i.e. Heinz Baked Beans or Nike Trainers

It is a well know fact that advertisers particularly home in on children with free toys, colourful packaging, peer pressure influence which puts pressure onto parents/ carers into buying these products. As children get older they then are allowed to make their own consumer choices where advertising continues to influence them.

Examples of effect of advertising

- Disappointment when not given an exact make or model
- Anxiety at not having the best
- Wanting something because a TV star uses it
- Belief that the product is the best
- Spending more on a certain product because of the name or make

Methods used in advertising

- Catchy jingles (songs or themes)
- Colourful object
- Celebrities
- Surveys that say the product is the best
- Free gifts
- Use of popular cartoon/ TV characters
- Bargain in large print with terms and condition in small print – often too small for some people to read or language that is hard to understand.

Discussions about advertising

Getting students to consider what it is they like about a certain type of product. This can then lead into students developing informed choices. Issues to consider

- Value for money
- Peoples feelings if they have bought you a gift
- Product challenge – remove name of product and get students to choose which one they like and why; this is particularly easy with food, drinks etc...

- Ability to use the product

Advertising can work positively by potentially drawing our attention to helpful things we didn't know existed. For example

- Bargains/ discounts/ special offers
- Useful products
- Donating to good causes
- Locations of useful stores
- Promoting healthy lifestyles/ diets etc...
- Legal changes – voting

There is a wealth of resources, newspaper cuttings and video recordings of adverts that are available to us through the media that can be used with students to highlight the effect of advertising on consumer choices.

It is important to stress that the students' choices are not necessarily wrong but to consider other options available and essentially what it is they like/ need/ want out of certain products.