

# 4

## Discussing persuasion

December 2022

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# Activity introduction

## Quick summary

This lesson is the second in a pair focused on exploring the strategies and impact of gambling advertisements. In the previous lesson, students watched a variety of television advertisements based upon gambling and identified the strategies being used to persuade the audience. In this lesson, students develop an essay responding to the topic: *Gambling advertisements manipulate their audience by presenting an unrealistically positive view of the gambling context. Discuss.*

## Learning intention

To analyse how advertisements shape perception of reality.

## NSW Syllabus outcomes

- **EN5-1A** responds to and composes increasingly sophisticated and sustained texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure
- **EN5-2A** effectively uses and critically assesses a wide range of processes, skills, strategies and knowledge for responding to and composing a wide range of texts in different media and technologies
- **EN5-3B** selects and uses language forms, features and structures of texts appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts, describing and explaining their effects on meaning

## General capabilities

Critical and creative thinking  
Literacy  
Ethical understanding  
Personal and social capability

## Relevant parts of Year 9 and 10 achievement standards

## NSW Stage 5 English Syllabus Statement

By the end of Stage 5 students respond to and compose a comprehensive range of imaginative, factual and critical texts using different modes and technologies. They enjoy, reflect on, critically assess and articulate processes of response and composition. They respond to and compose a wide range of simple and complex texts for pleasure, critical analysis and information-gathering, varying their approach according to a text's purpose, audience and context. They focus on details of texts to analyse meaning, perspective, cultural assumptions, ideologies and language.

Students use varying technologies to compose texts. They apply their knowledge of the

## Activity introduction

elements that shape meaning in texts. They use a range of strategies to shape their texts to address purpose and audience in different contexts. They conform to or challenge an audience's preconceptions and expectations about content and form, and they evaluate the effectiveness of each approach. Students display a developing personal style in their personal, imaginative, critical and analytical compositions. They work through the composing process, including planning, researching, drafting, conferencing, editing and publishing. Students reflect on their composing process and how it has affected the final version of their text.

Students respond to texts from different cultures that offer a range of perspectives. In considering possible meanings, they develop sustained interpretations supported by evidence and think creatively beyond the text. They infer and interpret, and investigate the similarities and differences between and among texts. Through close and wide engagement with texts students extend their imaginations and engage with images of their real and imagined worlds. They respond imaginatively and critically to verbal and visual imagery and iconography, considering how these and other features reflect the cultural context of the text. By critically evaluating texts, students identify strengths and weaknesses and are able to articulate coherent responses. From their responses to individual texts they generalise about views of the world and strategies that are used to communicate and sustain such views.

Students reflect on their own and others' learning, assessing learning strategies and purposes to adapt their knowledge, understanding and skills to new contexts.

### Australian Curriculum Year 9 Level Description

Students create a range of imaginative, informative and persuasive types of texts including narratives, procedures, performances, reports, discussions, literary analyses, transformations of texts and reviews.

### Australian Curriculum Year 10 Level Description

Students create a range of imaginative, informative and persuasive types of texts including narratives, procedures, performances, reports, discussions, literary analyses, transformations of texts and reviews.

#### Topic

Advertising

#### Unit of work

Stage 5 English

#### Time required

70 minutes

#### Level of teacher scaffolding

The level of teacher scaffolding for this session is medium-high and will depend on the skill level of your students in essay writing. Confident, independent writers may require less prompting to develop and organise their ideas. Other students may require support to develop their stance and identify and organise supporting arguments.

#### Resources required

- 'Example essay – The reality of advertising'
- 'Advertising essay – text features' handout
- 'Gambling advertising essay – task sheet'
- PIP Feedback sheet
- Learning Intention resource (optional)

#### Keywords

Advertisement, perception, strategies, persuasive techniques, reality, impact, ethics.

# Teacher worksheet

## Teacher preparation

This is the second in a pair of lessons exploring gambling advertisements. In the previous lesson, students viewed a range of television ads and considered the images of gambling that they develop. They then explored the reality of the context and compared the two, considering the impact of unrealistic portrayals on the audience. In this lesson, students develop an essay focused on the topic: *Gambling advertisements manipulate their audience by presenting an unrealistically positive view of the gambling context. Discuss.*

Given that gambling can be a high-risk activity and is a priority concern for young people it is recommended that teachers and parents read the Facilitator pack before implementing the lesson. The pack provides teachers and parents with essential information about gambling harm amongst young people and clarifies the nature of gambling-related behaviours as well as how to approach sensitive topics.

## Learning intention

To analyse how advertisements shape perception of reality.

## Success criteria

Students can:

- structure their essay with an introduction, series of supporting paragraphs and a conclusion.
- construct paragraphs using the TEEL structure.
- include evidence which directly supports their arguments.

## Teaching sequence

- 5 minutes - Lesson introduction
- 60 minutes - Part A: Essay writing
- 5 minutes - Reflection

## Lesson introduction

Display the learning intention and success criteria for the lesson. This can be written onto the board, or the included resource can be displayed. Invite students to read and discuss the learning intention and success criteria to ensure understanding before beginning the lesson.

# Part A:

# Essay writing

## Step 1

Explain to students that in this lesson they will be writing a discussion essay about the impact of gambling advertising, but first they will explore a related example to consider the nature of the task.

Provide them with 'Example essay – Reality of advertising' and discuss the text, considering:

- The focus of the essay
- The structure
- Whether it contains facts or opinions
- If and when author opinion is included
- What evidence is given to support the points

Emphasise that a discussion text is about presenting the facts of the situation in an unbiased manner for others to consider and this is what should be done in their work.

## Step 2

Provide students with the 'Gambling advertisement essay' task sheet and explain to students that they will construct an essay response to the following topic:

*Gambling advertisements manipulate their audience by presenting an unrealistically positive view of the gambling context. Discuss.*

## Step 3

Provide time for students to work independently to construct their essay. While students are working, roam around the class, offering support to individuals as needed.

## Step 4

As students complete the drafts of their essays, prompt them to share their work with another class member for feedback, providing them with the 'PIP Peer feedback sheet' as a prompt.

## Step 5

Allow time for students to revise and complete their essays in light of the feedback received.

## Reflection

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to discuss the following question:

*The media is very present within our lives. In the digital world, we are exposed to frequent advertising.*

***Why is it important for us to be critical of what we see?***

### Differentiation

This lesson provides the opportunity for students to develop a discussion essay. Each student will create a piece of writing of a different level of complexity, which reflects their knowledge, skills and capability. The nature of the feedback provided should suit their zone of proximal development and guide them to take the next steps in their learning.

**Extension** - During the peer feedback stage of the lesson, pair advanced writers with others working at a similar level to them. This will allow students to give each other specific and targeted feedback and also view other pieces of writing that may model text features and language use that they could consider adding to their own work.

**Provisions for Learning Support** - Some students may find it challenging to develop and organise ideas. For students in this situation, it is important to conference with them early in the writing stage of the lesson and plan ideas collaboratively. This will then act as a scaffold to independent writing. Alternatively, if there are a number of students facing this challenge, they can work together in a small group with the teacher to complete the task collaboratively.

# Example essay - The reality of advertising

**Topic:** Advertising in the beauty industry serves to perpetuate unrealistic ideals, damaging to the health and wellbeing of those in our community. Discuss.

Hair colour. Skin care. Makeup. Lashes. Nails ... The beauty industry is premised on the fact that we are not worthy just as we are, that adjustments should be made to our general appearance for us to be more acceptable to others. While beauty products exist for men and women alike, advertising is much more heavily targeted towards the feminine audience and perpetuates the idea that part of the female identity requires a commitment to high standards of physical beauty. The standards shown in advertisements for beauty and personal care products are often unrealistic and unattainable, and this causes great harm to society, negatively impacting the health and wellbeing of many members of our community.

One much talked about element of beauty advertising is the use of ‘photoshopping’ in promotional material. This refers to the digital editing of images after shooting to ‘perfect’ their appearance. As can be seen in examples such as the video [Time-Lapse 6 Hours of Retouching in 90 Seconds](#) the appearances of images after these alterations are significantly different from the originals, with skin imperfections being removed, the shape of features being adjusted and some features being removed altogether. When considering the use of this in advertising, the adjustment of images serves to create unrealistic representations of beauty. Not only does this give a false impression of what the products being advertised are able to achieve, it sets a standard of beauty that is quite literally impossible to achieve. These images become a reference point for those who view them, creating a target for themselves that they will never be able to reach. This can lead to individuals feeling as though they can’t live up to expectations, and can create a poor sense of self-worth, reducing self-esteem. As summarised in Pamela Paul’s New York Times article *Flattery Will Get an Ad Nowhere* “Beauty product ads make women feel ugly.”

While some companies are now moving away from this form of editing, CVS’ ‘Beauty in Real Life’ campaign being one example of a step away from this digital editing, the advertisements produced by these companies still remain problematic. Even without any digital adjustments, the models used in the promotions for the products have had hours of makeup application and hair styling from experienced professionals, not to mention any prior procedures they may have undertaken to remove blemishes or adjust their appearance. So while this small change does mean that the looks displayed are technically ‘possible’ to achieve, for the majority of the population having the time and money to allocate to this level of beauty regime is well out of reach.

As well as the unrealistic nature of the images in beauty advertising being concerning, the promotion of physical appeal as a priority for feminine beauty serves to perpetuate the objectification of women. Images such as those in Maybelline’s mascara and lip product ads or in many of Lancome’s magazine advertisements or posters, show women frozen in unnatural positions, portraying themselves as statues or mannequins with little representation of personality. Placing such a large emphasis on appearance as a defining trait implies that for females, it is important to prioritise physical appeal and focus on being something pleasant to view, rather than considering personality, contribution to society and/or academic endeavours. Ultimately this serves to develop a demeaning perspective of what it means for females to achieve success in the world.



While it could be argued that many of the products promoted by the beauty industry are helpful as they can assist individuals to treat conditions, feel more confident in themselves or outwardly express their unique identities in positive ways, this is generally not the position taken in beauty advertisements. The fun and creative possibilities of the range of beauty products available are endless, but these possibilities are not central to product advertising, as most images portray classic beauty. The presence of bold colour in advertisements for nails, hair or eyes is limited, and when it is promoted, it is often balanced out by subdued tones elsewhere. Similarly, the practical use of 'problem solving' products such as deodorant, acne cream or moisturiser are often not associated with the realistic context of their use, but rather a means to perpetuate the unrealistically high standards of beauty. An example of this can be seen in the Nivea advertisements claiming their moisturising body wash (a practical product) to give 'irresistibly soft skin' (reinforcing objectification). Ultimately, opportunities for these products to be promoted in a manner more positive to the community are not embraced as well as they could be.

While there is a genuine opportunity for beauty products to help individuals by caring for features such as skin and hair and allowing for unique self-expression, advertising within the industry primarily promotes unattainable standards of physical beauty, creating a climate which positions all as 'not worthy'. This creates an environment in which individuals are encouraged to be overly self-critical and consume copious amounts of beauty products at high expense. It is time that the industry is held accountable for the impact their advertising has on the wellbeing of individuals and a new approach is developed.

# Advertising essay – Text features

Opening paragraph introduces issue and gives a preview of perspectives.

Hair colour. Skin care. Makeup. Lashes. Nails ... The beauty industry is premised on the fact that we are not worthy just as we are, that adjustments should be made to our general appearance for us to be more acceptable to others. While beauty products exist for men and women alike, advertising is much more heavily targeted towards the feminine audience and perpetuates the idea that part of the female identity requires a commitment to high standards of physical beauty. The standards shown in advertisements for beauty and personal care products are often unrealistic and unattainable, and this causes great harm to society, negatively impacting the health and wellbeing of many members of our community.

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Paragraph(s) explaining reasons 'for' the issue.

While some companies are now moving away from this form of editing, CVS' 'Beauty in Real Life' campaign being one example of a step away from this digital editing, the advertisements produced by these companies still remain problematic. Even without any digital adjustments, the models used in the promotions for the products have had hours of makeup application and hair styling from experienced professionals, not to mention any prior procedures they may have undertaken to remove blemishes or adjust their appearance. So while this small change does mean that the looks displayed are technically 'possible' to achieve, for the majority of the population having the time and money to allocate to this level of beauty regime is well out of reach.

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## Text features

Present tense

Third person

Connectives

TEEL structure for each paragraph:

*Topic sentence*

*Elaborate/explain*

*Evidence/examples*

*Linking sentence*

## Discussion conventions

Conditional language

Balanced perspective

Unbiased, objective perspective

Paragraph(s) explaining reasons 'against' the issue.

females, it is important to prioritise physical appeal and focus on being something pleasant to view, rather than considering personality, contribution to society and/or academic endeavours. Ultimately this serves to develop a demeaning perspective of what it means for females to achieve success in the world.

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Conclusion or recommendation, giving an objective overview of the issue or a suggestion for progress or improvement based explicitly on stated facts.

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# Gambling advertising essay – Task sheet

## Learning intention

I analyse how advertisements shape perception of reality.

## Success criteria

I can:

- Structure my essay with an introduction, series of supporting paragraphs and a conclusion.
- Construct paragraphs using the TEEL structure.
- Draw on evidence from sources explored to support their arguments.

## Task outline:

For this task you are to work on your own to write a discussion essay focused on the topic:

*Gambling advertisements manipulate their audience by presenting an unrealistically positive view of the gambling context. Discuss.*

## Task expectations

### Text structure and features

The key focus of this lesson is writing a well structured, impactful discussion essay. Refer to the example essay when developing your writing, and ensure that you:

- Structure your text to include an introduction, paragraphs explaining different arguments and perspectives and a conclusion.
- Develop each paragraph using the TEEL structure.
- Write in present tense with a third person perspective.
- Write using conditional language and an unbiased/objective point of view.
- Refer to specific examples from the advertisements and facts sheets explored in the previous lesson to back up your assertions.

### Content – clarity of thought

Each point made in your essay should be clear to the reader and understood without the need for them to conduct any outside reading or research. Ensure that in each paragraph, your topic sentence is clear and the subsequent information in the paragraph directly supports the point you are making. Each paragraph should link directly to the essay topic, providing evidence about the view of gambling developed by advertisements.

## PIP Peer feedback sheet

Students work:

Students providing feedback:

Task expectation	Positive	Improvement idea	Positive
Clarity of ideas			
Language features			

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Language features			

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