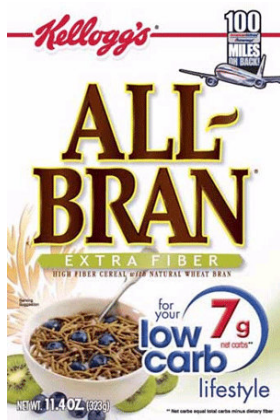


Video Voter Project

Media Literacy Exercise

Candidates as Cereal Boxes

Part I - (approximately 15 minutes) Students are presented with two very different cereal boxes - one that is primarily a sugar-based cereal, the other a healthier choice.



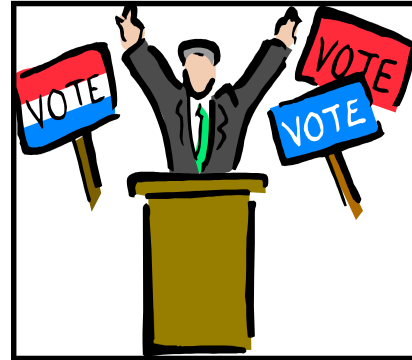
Students are split into two groups and asked to come up with a marketing campaign for their box of cereal. Students are encouraged to use all aspects of the box and it's contents: design, colors, text, ingredients, prize inside, etc. in their marketing campaign.

After both groups have pitched their cereal, ask the students the following questions:

- 1) Which cereal do you want ?
- 2) What is different about the "appearance" of both boxes? The use of colors, images and text...
- 3) What audience is each box marketed towards?
- 4) What ingredients are in each of the cereals?
- 5) What is more appealing, appearance or ingredients?
- 6) What is emphasized on the boxes, ingredients or appearance?

Part II (15 minutes)

Now shift the discussion from cereal boxes to Candidates. Show a Political ad for candidates running for the same office.



- 1) What are the similarities? differences?
- 2) How does the appearance of Candidates influence how citizens might vote?
- 3) How do we know that what the candidates say or is said about them is true?
- 4) What techniques are used in the ad; voice-over, pace of ad, edits, music, etc?
- 5) Who are you likely to vote for based on the paid ads?
- 6) Are Candidate platforms and voting records relevant?
- 7) What audience are the ads appealing to?

Part III (15 minutes)

Now have the students take what they have learned from Part I & II of this exercise and have them develop a platform for a candidate that is running for the School Board. You could actually choose students to run as candidates and hold a debate, with a moderator. Students could develop the questions and then evaluate the performance and knowledge of each candidate by having a mock election. Students could then be asked to provide reasons for why they voted the way they did.

Additional Curriculum Materials

GRIID Media Literacy Election Exercises

<http://www.griid.org/instruct-election.shtml>

The Role of Media in Elections: Helping Students Understand Media's Influence

<http://www.med.sc.edu:1081/mediapolitics.htm>

The Democracy Project (PBS)

<http://pbskids.org/democracy/educators/whyvote.html>

In addition GRIID provides information and examples of local news coverage on an ongoing basis, plus previous reports of local news election coverage.

<http://www.griid.org/griidreports.shtml>