

Lesson Plan: Media Detectives & Positive Influencers

Materials Needed:

- A whiteboard or large piece of paper
- Markers or pens
- A few examples of different media (e.g., a children's magazine, a newspaper, access to a kid-safe website with ads, a short, pre-screened commercial on a tablet/computer)
- Poster board or large construction paper
- Art supplies: markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue stick, old magazines for collage
- "Ad Detective" worksheet (can be a simple lined paper with two columns: "What is the ad selling?" and "How does it try to convince me?")

1. Learning Objectives (The Goal for Today)

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- **Identify** at least three different types of media used to share information.
- **Analyze** a simple advertisement to determine its message, purpose, and target audience.
- **Create** a unique advertisement (a poster) that promotes a positive social message.

2. Curriculum Standard Alignment

This lesson aligns with typical 4th Grade Social Studies standards focusing on civic engagement and information literacy. For example: *"Students will analyze how media and technology are used to communicate information and ideas, and how they can influence behavior."*

Lesson Activities & Procedure

Part 1: The Warm-Up - Media Brainstorm (10 minutes)

Goal: To activate prior knowledge and define "media" in simple terms.

1. **Ask the student:** "If you wanted to tell everyone in our town about a lost puppy, how could you do it?"
2. Write down all their ideas on the whiteboard (e.g., make posters, post online, tell the local news).
3. **Explain:** "All of these ways of sharing information are called 'media'. Media is just a tool we use to communicate with lots of people at once."
4. Together, brainstorm a list of all the types of media you can think of. Write them down. (Examples: TV shows, websites, books, magazines, commercials, radio, video games, social media, newspapers).

Part 2: The Investigation - Ad Detectives (15 minutes)

Goal: To practice analyzing how media is used to influence or persuade.

1. **Introduce the activity:** "Companies use media to influence us to buy their products. This is

called advertising. Today, you are going to be an 'Ad Detective'. Your job is to figure out the secret messages in ads."

2. **Choose an ad:** Pick a simple, age-appropriate ad from a magazine or a short video commercial (e.g., for a toy, cereal, or movie).
3. **Analyze together:** Look at or watch the ad with the student. Use these guiding questions to help them investigate:
 - **The "Who":** "Who do you think this ad is for? Kids? Parents? Why do you think so?" (Look at the colors, characters, and activities).
 - **The "What":** "What is this ad trying to get you to do or buy?"
 - **The "How":** "How is it trying to convince you? Does it use bright colors? Funny characters? A cool song? Does it make you feel happy, excited, or hungry?"
4. **Record Findings:** Have the student fill out their "Ad Detective" worksheet for the ad you just analyzed. Repeat with one more ad if time allows, letting the student take the lead more.

Part 3: The Creative Project - Be a Positive Influencer! (25-30 minutes)

Goal: To apply understanding of media influence by creating a positive message.

1. **Explain the mission:** "You've learned how companies use media to influence people. Now, you get to use that power for good! Your mission is to create a poster ad that influences people to do something positive for our community or the world."
2. **Brainstorm positive messages:** Ask the student to come up with ideas. If they need help, suggest topics like:
 - Read a book every day
 - Be kind to animals
 - Recycle your plastic bottles
 - Play outside for 30 minutes
 - Help your family with chores
3. **Plan the Ad:** Once they choose a message, ask them to think like an advertiser:
 - **Who is your ad for?** (Kids? The whole family?)
 - **What is your key message?** (Make it short and clear, like a slogan!)
 - **How will you convince them?** (What pictures, colors, and words will you use to make them feel good about your message?)
4. **Create the Poster:** Give the student the poster board and art supplies. Encourage them to be creative and make their poster eye-catching and persuasive. This is their chance to be the artist and director!

Part 4: The Wrap-Up - Show and Tell (5 minutes)

Goal: To summarize the lesson and reinforce the learning objectives.

1. Ask the student to present their "Positive Influence Poster."
2. Have them explain their message, who their target audience is, and why they chose their specific drawings and words.
3. **Discuss:** "What did you learn today about media? Do you think you'll look at commercials differently now? How can we use media to be helpful and kind?"
4. Hang their poster up in a prominent place!

Assessment & Feedback

The success of the lesson will be measured through:

- **Formative (Observation):** Listening to the student's contributions during the brainstorm and

their analysis during the "Ad Detective" activity. Are they able to identify the purpose of an ad?

- **Summative (The Poster Project):** The final poster serves as the main assessment. Use this simple checklist:
 - ☐ Does the poster have a clear, positive message?
 - ☐ Is it clear who the poster is for (the target audience)?
 - ☐ Does it use creative and persuasive elements (color, images, strong words)?

Differentiation & Extensions

- **For Extra Support:** Provide a template for the poster with pre-drawn boxes for the "Picture" and "Slogan." Offer a list of 3-4 specific positive messages to choose from. Work side-by-side to analyze the first ad very slowly.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Ask the student to create a short script for a 30-second video commercial for their positive message. They could even act it out! Or, have them compare two different ads for the same type of product (e.g., two different cereal commercials) and explain which one is more effective and why.