Analyzing Appeals in Advertisements
Foundation Lesson

About this Lesson
Students are inundated with advertisements: on billboards, in schools, on brand-name clothing, and in the print and electronic media that surrounds us all. Advertisements do not merely sell material goods; they also "sell" cultural identities, political and social philosophies, and image makers such as athletes, actors, or politicians. Because advertisements are such powerful, persuasive tools, it behooves teachers to help students recognize how advertisements incorporate elements of argumentation that influence audience attitude and behavior. To this end, students should understand how advertisers and writers use the following appeals in their attempts to persuade:

Types of Rhetorical Appeals
Logical appeal (logos)—an appeal based on logic or reason
Emotional appeal (pathos)—an appeal based on emotion
Ethical appeal (ethos)—an appeal based on the character of the speaker or writer

The object of this lesson is to have students articulate <u>how</u> writers and artists create persuasive appeals in visual texts. The appeals—logos, pathos, and ethos—are not devices to be identified as separate, concrete entities within an argument (e.g., *"Find an example of logos in this advertisement"*). Instead, students must look for the techniques, devices, and strategies used by writers that create specific appeals (e.g., *"What emotional effect is created by the advertisement's use of color?"*).

This lesson is included in Module 9: Understanding the Appeals.

Objectives
Students will

- identify the devices, strategies, and techniques advertisers use to create logical, emotional, and ethical appeals.
- analyze how rhetorical appeals support a writer's or advertiser's claim.

Connection to Common Core Standards for English Language Arts
LTF® Foundation Lessons are designed to be used across grade levels and therefore are aligned to the CCSS Anchor Standards. Teachers should consult their own grade-level-specific Standards. The activities in this lesson allow teachers to address the following Common Core Standards:

Explicitly addressed in this lesson

Code	Standard	Level of Thinking	Depth of Knowledge
R.1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it. Cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	Understand	III

R.2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	Analyze	III
R.3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	Analyze	III
R.4	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	Analyze	III
R.6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	Analyze	III
R.7	Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	Evaluate	III
R.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	Evaluate	III
L.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.	Understand	II
L.5	Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	Understand	II
L.6	Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	Understand	II
SL.1	Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	Understand	II
SL.2	Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	Evaluate	III
SL.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.	Evaluate	III

Implicitly addressed in this lesson

Code	Standard	Level of Thinking	Depth of Knowledge
R.10	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	Understand	II
L.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Understand	I

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L.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Understand	I

LTF Skill Focus

The foundation for LTF English lessons is the Skill Progression Chart that identifies key skills for each domain, beginning with grade 6 and adding more complex skills at each subsequent grade level while reinforcing skills introduced at previous grade levels. The Skill Focus for each individual lesson identifies the skills actually addressed in that lesson.

Levels of Thinking					
Remember	**Understand**	**Apply**	**Analyze**	**Evaluate**	**Create**
Close Reading *written, spoken, and visual texts*		**Grammar** *purposeful use of language for effect*		**Composition** *written, spoken, and visual products*	

Reading Strategies
 Determining Audience
 Determining Author's
  Purpose
 Determining Main Idea
Literary Elements
 Detail
 Imagery
 Mood
 Tone
Figures of Speech
 Metaphor
 Paradox
 Pun
Sound Devices
 Alliteration
 Consonance
 Onomatopoeia
Literary Techniques
 Allusion
   historical
   literary
 Argumentation
   emotional appeals
   ethical appeals
   logical appeals
 Hyperbole
 Irony
   verbal					

Connections to AP*

Students must perform rhetorical analysis on both the multiple choice and free response sections of the AP English Language exam. Analyzing an argument's use of appeals is an essential component of any rhetorical analysis activity.

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Materials and Resources
- copies of the Student Activity
- "Analyzing Advertisements" PowerPoint®, available on the Teacher Resources section of the website under "Understanding the Appeals"
- handout: "Creating Appeals," available on the Teacher Resources section of the website under "Understanding the Appeals"

Assessments

The following kinds of formative assessments are embedded in this lesson:
- guided questions
- frame statements

Teaching Suggestions

Teachers should review the different appeals for students and stress that appeals are created by a writer's use of devices and techniques. The handout "Creating Appeals," with its illustrative Venn Diagram, is a useful resource for both teachers and students to see the different tools writers use to create appeals and how the categories can, at times, overlap.

As teachers show the PowerPoint slides, they should use the Student Activity's questions and prompts to guide students' discussion of the advertisement's use of appeals. While not all the questions will be relevant for each ad, teachers should make sure that students can articulate the ad's claim, audience, and use of appeals.

A Prezi has been created for classroom use to supplement the discussion of the United States Army advertisement (slide one of the "Analyzing Advertisements" PowerPoint presentation). Teachers may access this Prezi at http://bit.ly/yQHSMp.

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Advertisements are visual arguments. When you first examine an advertisement analytically, you should consider what techniques, devices, and strategies the advertiser uses to create **appeals** that might persuade you to adopt a certain position or to buy a specific product.

Three Types of Appeals

- **Logical appeal** (*logos*)—an appeal based on logic or reason. Logical appeals use devices such as statistics, facts, research, and reason to persuade the audience.
- **Emotional appeal** (*pathos*)—an appeal based on emotion. Emotional appeals use literary devices such as imagery, sound devices, figurative language, and connotative diction to appeal to the audience's emotions or feelings.
- **Ethical appeal** (*ethos*)—an appeal based on the character of the speaker or writer. An ethical appeal relies on the character, reputation, or expertise of the writer to give the argument validity or persuasiveness.

Appeals are not specific devices you can point to in a text; for example, you can't physically put your finger on an example of a logical appeal in an advertisement. Instead, writers and artists use devices and techniques such as word choice, imagery, sound, figurative language, humor, or statistics to create a persuasive effect.

As you view the PowerPoint® presentation on appeals in advertising,
answer as many of these questions as possible for each slide.

Background Information:
1. What specifically is the product being advertised?
2. Who seems to be the primary intended audience for this ad?
3. In what kind of publication(s) do you think this ad would be most likely to appear?
4. What is the primary purpose of this ad?
5. Does this ad rely primarily on text, visuals, or on a balance of the two to achieve its purpose?
6. What claims does the ad make for the product being advertised?

Visual Elements:
1. Where does your eye go first?
2. How do you view the ad: top to bottom, left to right, inside to outside, etc.?
3. What is the main image? If there are smaller images, what are they?
4. What colors do you see? What associations do you have with these colors (happy, businesslike, childlike, patriotic, earthy, soothing, energetic, etc.?)

Emotional Appeals

Identify **two key feelings** advertisers want us to have about the image(s). Advertisers want viewers. . .

   _____to fear that…   _____to feel happy or excited that…
   _____to imagine or wish that…   _____to feel caring or sympathy for…
   _____to admire or respect…   _____to be angry or indignant about…
   _____to be amused by…   _____to be amazed or surprised by…

Advertisers also have a variety of strategies they use to establish an advertisement's emotional appeal. Some techniques include using **connotative diction**, **comparisons**, **images**, **repetition**, **humor**, and **exaggeration**. Other techniques an advertiser might use to create an emotional appeal include

- **Distortion**—a change or twist to a word's, phrase's, or statement's original meaning
- **Puns**—a play on words based on the similarity of sound between the two words with different meanings (e.g., *son* and *sun*; *I* and *eye*)

Check any of the following techniques of pathos, or emotional appeals, used in the ad.

☐ Allusions	☐ Humor
☐ Connotative diction	☐ Images
☐ Comparisons	☐ Puns
☐ Distortion	☐ Repetition
☐ Exaggeration	☐ Sound devices

For each checked box, list one example from the ad that specifically reflects the identified technique. You may use a technique more than once.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Logical Appeals

Writers and advertisers use a variety of techniques to establish their advertisement's logical appeal. Some techniques include presenting **facts** and **statistics**, citing **experts** and **authority figures**, or appealing to the audience's **common sense** or sense of **tradition**. Some other techniques writers use to establish a logical appeal include

- **Allusion**—a figure of speech that makes a brief reference to a historical or literary figure, event, or object
- **Cause/effect**—a logical argument that suggests if one event occurs, then a specific result will follow
- **Irony**—a figure of speech that occurs when a writer or speaker says one thing while meaning the opposite
- **Precedent**—an act or event that serves as a guide or as justification for a future or subsequent act; an established reputation of quality or excellence in service

Check any of the following techniques of *logos*, or logical appeals, used in the visual.

☐ Facts	☐ Irony
☐ References to authority figures	☐ Precedent
☐ Statistics	☐ Common sense/shared values
☐ Allusions	☐ Tradition
☐ Cause/effect	☐ Analogy/comparison

For each checked box, list one example from the ad that specifically reflects the identified technique. You may use a technique more than once.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Ethical Appeals

An ethical appeal, or *ethos*, is created when advertisers rely on the character and reputation of **celebrity endorsers** or **experts** to help support their claim. Other ways advertisers establish an ethical appeal include using a **setting, situation, or context that is familiar to the audience** or **establishing the credentials, effectiveness, and sound reputation** of the business, product, or service being advertised.

Check any of the following techniques of ethos, or ethical appeals, used in the ad.

☐ Celebrity endorsement	☐ Using a setting/situation/context that is familiar
☐ Using well-known figures that can be trusted	☐ Establishing the artist's, writer's, or business's credentials and sound reputation

For each checked box, list one example from the ad that specifically reflects the identified technique.

- _____
- _____

Analysis and Evaluation

1. What overall effect or message is communicated by the ad?
2. What is the most important element in communicating that effect or message?
3. What are the unspoken assumptions of this ad?
4. Do you think the ad will be persuasive to its target audience? Explain your answer.
5. Is there anything you would change about this ad to make it more persuasive to its target audience?