

DESIGN YOUR OWN CEREAL BOX

Extension Activity

These classroom activities correspond to the **Don't Buy It** game *Design a Cereal Box* at <http://pbskids.org/dontbuyit/advertisingtricks/cerealbox.html>.

The techniques used in selling breakfast cereal include some of the most obvious packaging and promotional ploys used in marketing.

Objective

- Understand how and why marketing messages work
- Learn about target audiences

Materials

For each group of two or three students:

- collect a variety of empty cereal boxes
- a large cereal box (or create a box)
- white craft paper
- markers, pens, stickers and other art supplies
- old magazines and newspapers

Procedure

Begin by having the class review cereal boxes.

- What is the target audience for a particular box of cereal? For example, Special K is aimed at health-conscious women; Fruity Pebbles is aimed at young children. Why do you think so?
- What marketing techniques are used to sell this cereal to that target group?
- What images or special offers are included on the box of cereal that might be appealing to consumers?
- Have the class compare and contrast images used on cereal boxes aimed at adults versus those aimed at children. What do they notice?

Divide the classroom into small groups of three or four people. Using an empty box and collage materials, have the students create their own cereal box.

Ask students to:

- Determine what age group their cereal will appeal to
- Consider the techniques reviewed in the last exercise. How will they "sell" their cereal to their target audience? (For example, free prizes?)
- Determine a price for their cereal
- Note the government requirement for posting a list of ingredients and their nutritional values

Additional Activity

Working in a group, have the students create an ad campaign for the cereals. Consider using print and/or video.

Alignments

— McREL Art Standards

Standard 1: Understands and applies media, techniques and processes related to the visual arts. Level 3 (Grades 5–8) —

BENCHMARK: Understands what makes different art media, techniques and processes effective (or ineffective) in communicating various ideas. BENCHMARK

VOCABULARY: art medium, art technique, art process, communication, camera, easel, kiln, knife, lathe, press.

— McREL Media Standards

Standard 10: Understands the characteristics and components of the media.

Level 2 (Grades 3–5) —

BENCHMARK: understands that media messages and products are composed of a series of separate elements (e.g., shots in movies, sections of a newspaper).

BENCHMARK VOCABULARY: media message, product, separate elements, camera shot, movie, newspaper section.

— McREL Thinking and Reasoning Standards

Standard 3: Effectively uses mental processes that are based on identifying similarities and differences. Level 3 (Grade 6–8) —

BENCHMARK: Compares consumer products on the basis of features, performance, durability, and cost, and considers personal tradeoffs. BENCHMARK

VOCABULARY: consumer, product, feature, performance, durability, cost, tradeoff.